

# Oremus

## Westminster Cathedral Magazine



The reredos of the high altar of Avila Cathedral would have been a familiar sight to St Teresa of Jesus, one of our women Doctors of the Church.

If you can, please make a donation for your copy to cover its production cost. Thank you.





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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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*Pedro Berruguete contracted for the main altarpiece of Avila's Cathedral of the Saviour in 1499. Upon his death (1503), Bartolomé de Santa Cruz continued the work and Juan de Borgoña finished it in 1512). The architectural setting is by Maestro Roldán and Vasco de la Zarza.*

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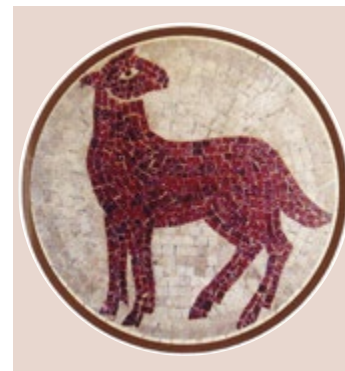
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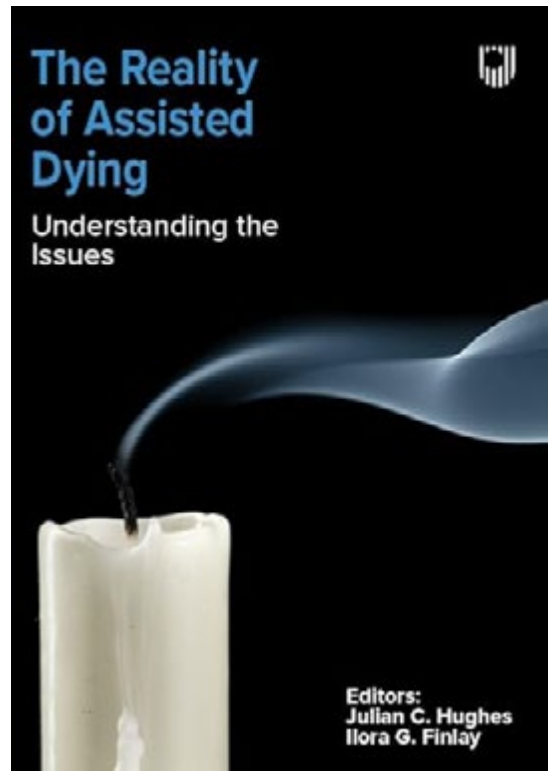
# Food for Informed Thought

A new book *The Reality of Assisted Dying: Understanding the Issues* has been published by Open University Press. The book, which is edited by Professor Julian Hughes and Baroness Finlay of Llandaff, appears at a critical moment in the UK debate. It provides up-to-date reflections from a broad variety of international experts on the profoundly important issues that surround changes in the law.

The authors include people who have taken part in euthanasia and people who approve of a change in the law. But all of them write from a standpoint of profound concern that any change in the law will bring potentially dire consequences for our society.

The book looks at the legal, medical, ethical, philosophical, and religious issues raised by assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Baroness Hollins writes in the book about the real worries concerning people with intellectual disabilities. Professor John Keown examines and dismisses some commonly raised arguments in favour of a change in the law. Professor David Albert Jones provides an incisive critique of issues surrounding the notion of suicide. And much more.



It's a book that must be read by anyone wishing to engage with the debate. Moreover, we should all be encouraging our MPs to read a copy.

More information about the book can be found here: [www.mheducation.co.uk/the-reality-of-assisted-dying-understanding-the-issues-9780335253173-emea-group](http://www.mheducation.co.uk/the-reality-of-assisted-dying-understanding-the-issues-9780335253173-emea-group)

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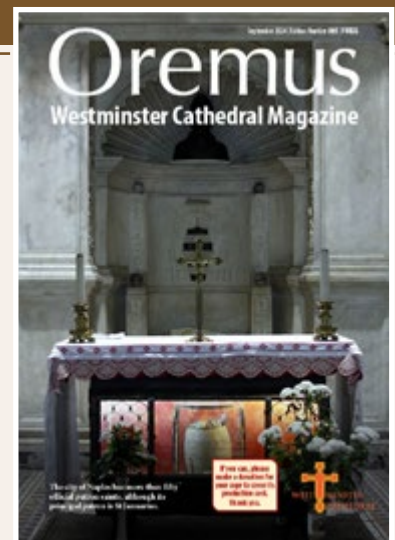
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# Fr John writes



**Good and bad news for us this month. You will know that I have always tried to keep the issue of euthanasia or 'assisted dying' before our eyes, as it relates to our most basic beliefs about our human rights and dignity, whatever our condition of life may be. Last month we saw that yet another Parliamentary attempt is likely to be made to introduce new legislation,**

**despite the failure of so many previous proposals, so can I commend to you a new book on the subject which may help us to think clearly? Further details are on page 4.**

After the recent annual London *March for Life* comes news of the imminent imposition of 'buffer zones' around clinics where abortions take place. It appears that a whole raft of activities will now be illegal in such zones, so Bishop John Sherrington on behalf of the Bishops' Conference rightly terms this an attack on religious freedom and speech. Let us keep in our prayers our fellow Catholics and others who perseveringly campaign for the unborn.

Now to happier things; the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was a day of great joy in the Cathedral as we kept our mini Eucharistic Congress. It is so heartening to be able to celebrate our faith together in large numbers. I have reprinted Fr Alan Robinson's homily in this edition and he tells me how delighted he was that people asked him: 'Can we do this again?' Of course, the success of the event also owed much to the presence of the relic of Carlo Acutis, whose short life seems to have had such a electrifying effect in the Church – a saint, indeed, for the 21st century.

One story may have passed you by from the 'Celtic Fringe'. Pope Francis has approved the creation of a new diocese of Cardiff-Menevia for South Wales and parts of Herefordshire.

As we all belong together in one ecclesiastical province and have given Cardiff two Westminster clergy for Archbishop – George Stack and Mark O'Toole – let us offer also a prayer for the wellbeing of the new diocese.

*Fr John Scott*

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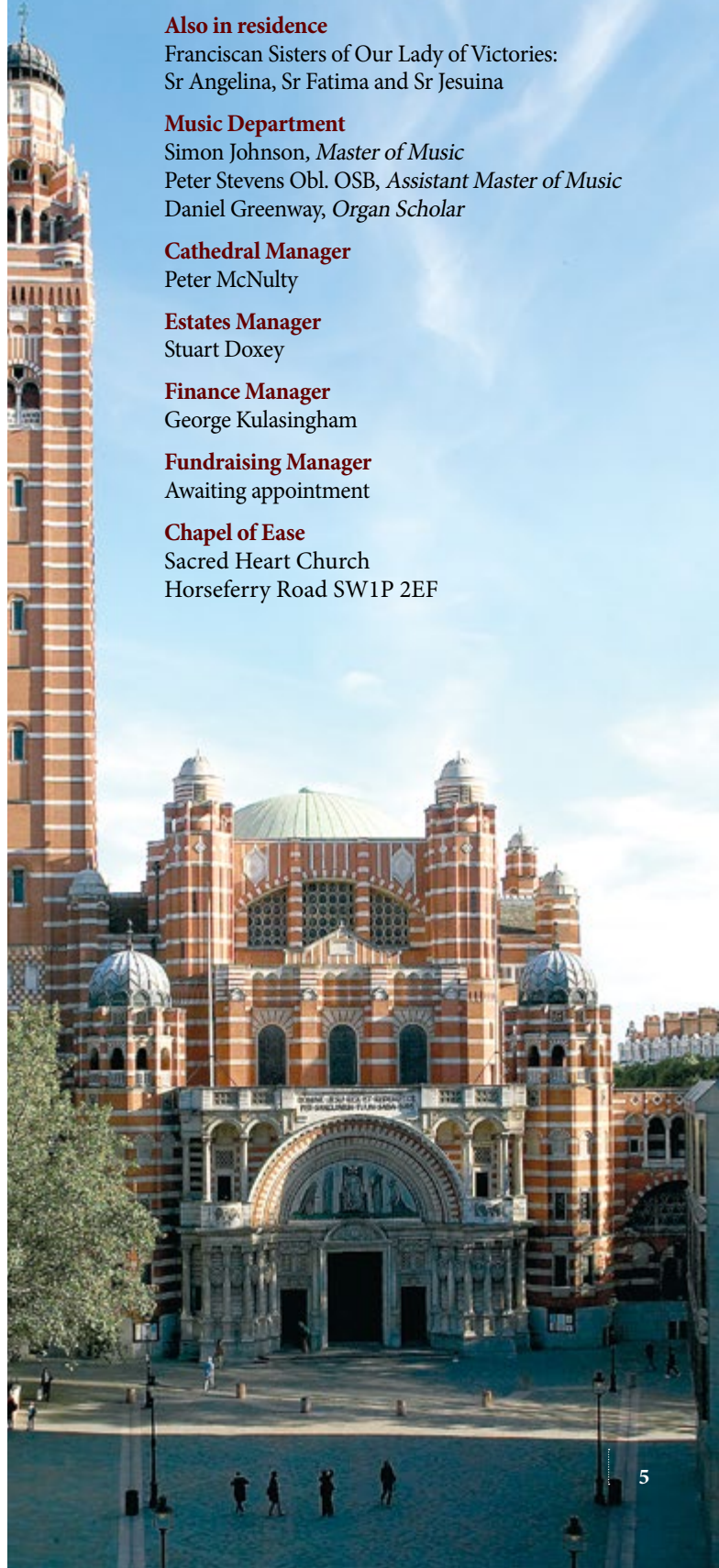
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# Watch Where You Pray

Bishops' Conference / SPUC

**The UK Government has announced that legislation to enact 'safe access zones' or 'buffer zones' outside abortion facilities in England and Wales will come into force from 31st October.**

This legislation, contained in section nine of the Public Order Act 2023, criminalises a range of activities within a 150-metre perimeter of an abortion facility. Such activities potentially include prayer, thought, peaceful presence, consensual communication and offers of practical support to women in vulnerable situations, should any of these be deemed to influence or interfere access to the clinic.

A similar ban was introduced in Northern Ireland last year and another will come into force in Scotland on 24 September.

Bishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, said in a statement: 'As the Catholic Bishops' Conference repeatedly stated during the passage of the Public Order Bill last year, 'safe access zone' legislation is unnecessary and disproportionate. We condemn all harassment and intimidation of women and hold that, as was accepted in a Home Office Review, there are already laws and mechanisms in place to protect women from such behaviour.

'In practice, and despite any other intention, this legislation constitutes discrimination and disproportionately affects people of faith. Religious freedom is the foundational freedom of any free and democratic society, essential for the flourishing and realisation of dignity of every human person. Religious freedom includes the right to manifest one's private beliefs in public through witness, prayer and charitable outreach, including outside abortion facilities.

'As well as being unnecessary and disproportionate, we have deep concerns around the practical effectiveness of this legislation, particularly given the lack of clarity in relation to the practice of private prayer and offers of help within 'safe access zones'.

'As Pope Francis has reminded us, 'a healthy pluralism, one which genuinely respects differences and values them as such, does not entail privatising religions in an attempt to reduce them to the quiet obscurity of the individual's conscience or to relegate them to the enclosed precincts of churches, synagogues or mosques.'

This would represent, in effect, a new form of discrimination and authoritarianism. By legislating for and implementing so-called 'safe access zones', the UK Government has taken an unnecessary and disproportionate step backwards in the protection of religious and civic freedoms in England and Wales.'

Alithea Williams, Public Policy Manager The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) said: 'This is a dark day for democracy in this country. From 31st October, it will be a crime to pray against abortion, to offer women help, and, ludicrously, to attempt to 'influence' someone on abortion within 150m of facilities that carry out abortions.

'Worryingly, this announcement has been made before the guidance has been published. While the guidance produced by the last Government was a reasonably liberal interpretation of the law, the rhetoric from Jess Phillips is not encouraging.

'The pro-abortion lobby continues to lie about the nature and practice of pro-life vigils, where selfless individuals offer help, moral support and real choice to women in crisis pregnancies.

'There is no "fundamental right" to abortion, whatever Ms Phillips might say, and there is nothing "pro-choice" about denying help to pregnant women.

'Various studies, including a Home Office report, have found no evidence of harassment of women outside abortion facilities. Rather, it is pro-life men and women who have been harassed and threatened with fines or prison time in recent months.'



# Your Lottery Ticket could save your Church

Bishops' Conference

Archbishop George Stack, Chair of the Patrimony Committee of the Bishops' Conference, has welcomed a new multi-million pound initiative that could see significant sums of money earmarked for urgent repairs and restoration projects for historic places of worship including Catholic church buildings.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has announced a three-year strategic initiative to invest £100m to help UK places of worship meet long-standing repair and conservation challenges.

'I am both grateful and delighted at this significant announcement by the Lottery Heritage Fund,' said Archbishop Stack.

'Our churches are places of encounter with Christ through prayer, peace and inspiration, as well as consolation, for those who visit for many different reasons. These sacred spaces are an indispensable part of our rich and varied history and cultural heritage.

'Inevitably, with the passage of time, they become subject to the generational

cycle of requiring capital funded repairs. These need to be undertaken, often with extreme urgency, in order to secure and extend a church's life and service at the heart of so many local communities.

'The generous recognition and priority of the National Lottery Heritage Fund in making grants available for this important work will be a source of encouragement to those who care for and use these beautiful buildings.'

Part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund's ten-year strategy, Heritage 2033, the initiative is designed to ensure that the UK's much-loved places of worship can enjoy a long and sustainable future.

Sophie Andreae CBE, Vice Chair of the Bishops' Patrimony Committee, who has spent a career helping to protect historic buildings and promote them to a wider public audience, said:

'There are around 750 listed historic Catholic churches in England and Wales and a number of them are in urgent need of funding for capital repairs way beyond the means of their local congregations.



The amazing interior of St Walburge's church in Preston

'Buildings constructed during the Victorian period have now reached a point where, despite maintenance, materials such as slates and leadwork need replacing, and some highly inventive, indeed iconic, churches of the 20th century are also in need of repair due to new design methods and materials turning out to be less long-lasting than thought at the time.

'Recognition that these buildings are an important part of the nation's heritage and deserving of funding is truly welcome.'

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Liverpool Street Station concourse, the location for this story

# What can help?

Steve Burrows

It was a late summer evening a few years ago when I came across the incident. But let me say, straight off, so you know, that it was a sad thing. Sadness floated through it from first to last. It was like this. I realised, en route to my train, that an altercation was happening ahead of me on the concourse of Liverpool Street station. A suited man in his early 30s was calling back in an angry tone, "No, you pushed me first." as he walked energetically away from a man and woman. The man responded; but I didn't catch his reply. He looked ill-nourished and poorly dressed, smallish and thin. But his reply must have been defiant, because the other man stopped and turned around and said, "What? Come here then!" Whereupon the couple started to walk towards him, and he exclaimed, "Oh, yeah!"; and you could see he was muscular and strong. Then, from a standing start, he burst into a short run and swung a punch at the side of the shorter man's head. You heard a sort of smack, but the strike was baffled a little by a reflexively raised arm.

That was it. The attack had not really been effective. No one seemed hurt. But everyone – the man and woman, various bystanders, and the perpetrator himself – was assimilating the fact that a blow had been struck, and now everything had changed. We were in a new dimension.

Apparently the woman knew how to use her voice. "You can't do that! You can't do that!" She continued to repeat this whilst pointing her finger and advancing on the smartly-dressed man. Now she was announcing to everyone, with increasing vehemence and confidence as the moments passed, "He hit him! Did you see that? He hit him!" Now she added a jabbing to her finger, and reverted to, "You can't do that!" The victim joined in, following her lead. "You hit me. You can't do that!" Both were closing in on the puncher, when a uniformed employee, quick and keen, ran – actually ran – out on to the concourse towards him.



I moved on then, but glanced back to see the culprit taking out his wallet as if to show his ID to the railway man. I kept going, but heard the woman's voice protesting loudly, "He says he's sorry. He can't say he's sorry. He hit him." The next time I looked back the perpetrator was dodging through the barrier towards a stationary train. The official and the duo were following him. He was in a world of trouble.

We can't say what led up to this event. Some drink taken? A long, bad day at the office? Character traits and/or behaviours fostered instead of being faced and countered? We may never have biffed a stranger in a quarrel. But we remember that, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8.) In different ways, and varying degrees, it may be that there but for the grace of God go others among us.

**What can help?**

- 1) Kenneth Kirk said: 'The root of the world's crisis were men's untamed passions, and worship had its vital and powerful role in bringing those passions under the control of God'. (from 'Lift High the Cross' by John Gunstone, p320)
- 2) 'Worship brings us to being more fully human. It is in worship we find out who we are. Worship is necessary for human beings, we are made for it'. (from the homily at an Epiphany mass at St Anselm and St Cecilia, Lincoln's Inn Fields on 6th Jan 2013.)
- 3) '.... We are made so as to see and worship God. We only find peace in God. But our Earthly state and, more so, our sins prevent us from seeing God. So there is a restlessness in us all. God sent his Son, incarnate as Jesus Christ, to be a sponge to soak up our sins, and so enable us to worship and to praise God. God sent Jesus Christ to be our salvation'. (from the homily at the 1.05pm mass at St Mary Moorfields on Thursday 2nd Jan 2020 at which the psalm antiphon was, 'O Lord, all the earth sees thy salvation')
- 4) '.... ultimately it is what you worship rather than what you will, that makes you what you are. It is what dominates your imagination, fills your thoughts, what haunts you, so to speak, that determines your character and action. This is to repeat the experience of St Paul, 'The good that I will to do, I do not. The evil that I will not to do, I do. O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.' (From the chapter on 'Salvation from Sin', in 'The New Man in Christ' by G Studdert Kennedy, 1932.)
- 5) 'To praise God is to become who we really are, since we are created to live for the praise of God's glory (Eph 1:12). Our Lady teaches us through her song of praise, the Magnificat. She exclaims, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour.' .... the Magnificat reveals ... that as we praise God, he is magnified in our own hearts and understanding. .... As we praise God, our spirits become awakened and alive to his love. Our minds become aligned with his purposes, .... Even more, praise effects the spiritual world. Evil spirits cannot bear to be present where God is being honoured. Our praise makes demons flee. .... After praising God, other forms of prayer .... flow more from the leading of the Holy Spirit and less from my limited human ideas. I am able to pray with a heart more attuned to God's will .... and purposes." (Prof Mary Healy, of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, from 'Magnificat' magazine March 2020, P374.)
- 6) (Jesus said,) "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." (Mk 1:15)

# Autumn Events

Joe Allen, Co-ordinator

**After our customary summer hiatus from events a flurry of activity is about to commence. October and November will see events to suit a range of different tastes, with the opportunity to get involved from home, at the Cathedral, and across Greater London at various points. Meanwhile, restoration work to the nave parquet flooring commences this month – testament to the impact of the incredible generosity of the Cathedral's benefactors, of whom The Friends form an intrinsic and valuable part.**

Our events are open to all, so please do come along. We offer fellowship, entertainment, and myriad trips, tours, and talks. In turn, your fees and ticket purchases combine to raise incredible amounts of money to make lasting and valued contributions to the fabric of the Cathedral.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Thursday 17 October, 3pm Catholic History Walk from Richmond upon Thames to Ham**

Join Joanna Bogle as we walk from St Elizabeth of Portugal Church (meeting 3pm) to Newman's Childhood Home at Ham. Tickets £10 – advance booking encouraged (so we can communicate any changes to the schedule/route).

**Monday 21 October, 2pm Private Visit to the Farm Street 175 Exhibition**

By kind permission of the archivists, we will enjoy a private visit to this exhibition telling the story of the history of Farm Street Church in its 175th anniversary year. Tickets (£10) are strictly limited and must be booked in advance.

**Wednesday 6 November, 7pm Online Talk: Music-making from the world to the cloister (and back again)**

We hear many stories of people entering the religious life... but what about those leaving? Join musician and composer Caroline Leighton to hear about how she discerned her musical vocation into and back out of the cloister. Tickets £5, prebooking essential. This talk will be online only.

**Thursday 7 November, 6:30pm Quiz Night with Fish & Chip Supper**

By popular demand, sometime Vice-Chair of The Friends Andrew Sanders reprises his role as quizmaster for our next fixture. Tickets (£20) must be booked in advance and include admission and food. Raffle and refreshments available on the night.

**Saturday 16 November, 3pm Visit to St James's Church, Spanish Place**

We are very grateful that Mgr Philip Whitmore will give us a tour of the beautiful St James's and some of its treasures. Tickets are £10 and can be purchased in advance or on the day. Holy Hour follows after the event.

Tickets and full information via Eventbrite (google 'Westminster Cathedral Eventbrite'), email friends@rcdow.org.uk, or in writing to The Friends, Clergy House, 42 Francis Street, SW1P 1QW. You can also get in touch this way to enquire about membership, with forms also available at the back of the Cathedral.

Check back in next month's *Oremus* to hear about our Advent and Christmas plans!



# Preparing for Heaven

Fr Alan Robinson KHS

**Today, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, we gather around our Eucharistic Lord, with great joy in our hearts. For both the Cross of Jesus and the Most Blessed Sacrament turn sorrow into great happiness, with the hope of new life for us.**

We are reminded at Mass today, that Jesus assumed the condition of a slave, one who freely accepted punishment and death on a cross – although sinless. Our Blessed Saviour accepted this terrible death for you and me. Why? Because it was the only way that we could be redeemed, the only way that we could be saved and set free from the power of sin. Through His once and once only self-sacrifice – He opened the gates of Heaven – and changed the future hope for each and every one of us here today. But not just us, but everyone; past, present and future. We all share in this hope of spending eternity in heaven, seeing God face to face. The terrible cruel agony of the cross is changed into the triumph of God over sin and suffering; death is no longer the end, but the way to eternity. The sacrifice of Jesus is our way to eternal happiness. As Jesus Himself tells us, when speaking with Nicodemus, ‘God gave His Son, so that **everyone** who believes in Him might have eternal life’. Isn’t that a great comfort to us!

Every time we walk into this Cathedral we have a powerful reminder of this saving event. Speaking of the magnificent crucifix over the altar, Pope Benedict told us in his homily here in September 2010, ‘The Lord’s outstretched arms seem to embrace this entire church, lifting up to the Father all the ranks of the faithful, who gather around the altar of Eucharistic Sacrifice and share in its fruits.’

Pope Benedict was reminding us that the Cross of the Lord and the altar of the church have a great connection – for they are both places of the sacrifice of the Love of God. The Cross, where the body of the Lord was broken and His blood

poured out for us: and the altar, where the Eucharistic mystery brings into the present, the true and living sacrifice of Jesus, achieved through simple gifts of bread and wine. And the fruits achieved? Forgiveness – reconciliation – Eucharistic union and the hope of eternity with Him. Jesus made this very clear with the words He used the night before he died, the words we still use every time the Mass is celebrated; ‘his is my body broken for you, this is my blood poured out for you’. We see very clearly the connection between these two events – as the cross of the Lord and the cross of the altar win for us life eternal.

The Most Blessed Sacrament – the abiding presence of Jesus with us – whether at the celebration of the Mass or in the Tabernacle of the church – is that which gives us the life of God to the Church and unites us with Him. Receiving Holy Communion when we are able – or kneeling before Our Blessed Saviour, truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar; we know that **God is with us**, as He is right at this very moment. We know that God comes and touches our lives, our hearts and our minds – and makes his home within us, revealing His love for us. This is the closest we can get to Him this side of Heaven.

The daily celebration of the Mass brings God into this world; heaven and earth are united. As we journey through this world – whatever the nature of our life might be – God humbles Himself again and again – coming to us from heaven under the form of Eucharistic Food. In moments of sorrow or joy, happiness or despair, as we just get on with our daily life – we know, and we can be sure, that God always responds to the call of the Mass, where His saving sacrifice is offered yet again, and we receive its benefits. It is the Eucharist above all else which sustains our Catholic life and faith in this world.

But I’d like us to think about one particular event in our faith journey, one which is common to all of us, and a moment when we will all need our Eucharistic Jesus with us so very much. I’d like us to think about the end of our earthly life – the moment when we prepare to leave this world for the next.

For at the end of our life-journey comes a very special and precious moment – a moment which happens just once – when we receive what is called *Viaticum* – which means the ‘provision or food for a journey’ – our final journey. This is the giving of the Holy Eucharist to a dying person, which ensures that instead of dying alone, **they die with Risen Christ who promises them eternal life**”.

As a priest, like all priests, I have been called to the bedside of many dying people: at home, in hospital, young and old, event at the side of a road: to hear their Confession, to give them the Apostolic Pardon, to anoint them with Holy Oil, to commend them to God and to pray for and with them as their life ebbs away – **and to give them *Viaticum* – their last act of Holy Communion here on earth. That incredible moment when Jesus and the dying person are united.** I’ve seen what an incredible moment this can be for those who have faith – those who have been close to the Lord throughout their lives – and now look expectantly towards being welcomed to the new life in the Kingdom of the Father – **as Jesus comes in that small, precious, consecrated host, full of eternal life** – to lead the dying person to Heaven.

As a priest, I have naturally wondered what it will be like to be on the receiving end – to be the person who is lying in bed when the priest arrives with Jesus **to minister to me**, as my earthly life draws to a close

At the end of our earthly life, everything we have is left behind. All you and I can offer to God is **OUR**



LIFE – THAT WHICH IS WITHIN US – NOTHING ELSE. As a Priest, God is going to look at my priestly life, and see how I've lived it, as I hand it back to Him. So – what do you think I can offer? In humility, this is what I might say to God:

- I've always tried to live my life as a priest in the right way – and when I have sinned, I get to the Confessional as soon as I can.
- I've always tried to say my prayers faithfully and to celebrate the Mass reverently and with due preparation – **knowing it is the most important thing I do each day**: meeting with the Lord and giving Him to others.
- I've always tried to be available in the Confessional – helping the faithful to be reconciled with God and His Church.
- I've always tried to be diligent in looking after and praying for those in my care
- As far as I'm aware, I've always taught the authentic Faith of the Church.

And I pray, that at that moment, when the priest approaches me – when he puts a purple stole around his neck and invites me to make my Confession for the very last time – I trust I'll be recollected and prepared to offer the sins of my life, in hope of God's mercy and forgiveness, and to receive the Apostolic Pardon. **And then will come that sublime moment – when JESUS HIMSELF will come to call me, under the form of Eucharistic Food – the Bread of Heaven – as He is placed on my tongue.** As I receive *Viaticum*, the Food for the Journey, He will make His home in me for the last time in this world – assuring me that I will not die alone but with Him, and make the final journey with Him. And as I take my last breath, He and His Blessed Mother (whose wonderful image is on the reverse of the great cross above me) will lead me from this world to the next. What a joy and ecstasy that moment will be: when all the difficulties of this life will be as nothing, as please God, heavenly bliss will be my eternal reality.

**Well: that's how I'd like it to be:** but that will certainly depend on the way I've lived my Catholic life and continue to live it up until the moment of my death. The sacramental events I've described will be your story, too – for we will all have to



*Exposition at Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane*

face that moment: and God will want to hear your story, of how you have lived your life for Him. He will want you to be reconciled with Him, to be saved – and He will come to you in that small precious host – and call you home to Himself.

As we spend some time in silence now before our Eucharistic Lord – let us think about these things in relation to ourselves.

And in charity, let us pray for all those who have gone before us from this world – that they may see the Risen Lord face to face – the same Jesus they received, here on earth, in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar.

*Fr Alan is Rector of Corpus Christi Church in Covent Garden, the Diocesan Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament.*



# Almsgiving

Edward Kendall

**In the Sermon on the Mount Our Lord spoke of three duties which His disciples will, as a matter of course, perform. These three duties are – prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.**

Much attention has been given by spiritual writers to prayer and fasting, but I fear that sometimes the practice of almsgiving is ignored by writers or assumed to be inherently understood and known about by Christians. However, this practice has long roots and a depth of spirituality behind it which it would be a pity to ignore or assume to be common knowledge.

Almsgiving is the Christian weapon against worldliness. When we give our alms, we are making acknowledgement that nothing we have really belongs to us; all our possessions are lent to us by God to make use of for His glory, as the master in the parable entrusted the talents to his servants (Matthew 25.14-40). People are often apt to forget this important truth and to use what they have only for their own comfort and enjoyment; and often people allow themselves to become much too fond of money, and to set before themselves money-making as the chief object in their lives. Money, and all that money can do, is one of the snares set for us by our great enemy

the world, whose pomps and vanity we promised at our Baptism to renounce. If we truly desire to conquer this enemy we shall use against it the Christian weapon of almsgiving. If we do so carefully and regularly we shall find gradually growing within ourselves the spirit of poverty, which all can have, whether they are rich or poor.

This poverty of spirit, blessed by our Lord (Matthew 5.3), is not related to the material poverty that we read about in news headlines. Rather it is an attitude. The attitude which helps us all care so little for our riches that we can readily and cheerfully give it all up if God calls us to do so.



Giambattista Pittoni (1687–1767)  
*St Elizabeth of Hungary distributes alms*

Christian almsgiving is divided into two parts – giving to God and giving to neighbour. We give our alms directly to God's service when we give them to support the work of the Church at home or abroad. That can and should include something as rudimentary as the upkeep of the church building we worship in – in our case a magnificent Cathedral, but one that is expensive to maintain. If all Christians really did their duty in this matter the Church's work would not suffer, as it now so often does, from lack of support. It is also the duty of Christians to provide for their poorer neighbours; in doing this we must remember that we

are really giving to God; this was taught plainly by Our Lord in the parable of the sheep and the goats. Often, we shall find that here it is not so much our money that is of use as our time and care and sympathy. Those who spend anything of this nature on behalf of their poorer neighbours are giving alms in the truest sense, even if they have not given any money; and these are the ways in which poor people themselves can and do give alms.

Nevertheless, we ought to give at least some of our money away towards the upkeep of our church and a regular payment system like a standing order is much better than the haphazard coin on the plate. The ancient Hebrews used to give a tenth of their goods to God – a practice known as tithing. Christians, as a rule, should not try to do less than this – and often they are able to do more; in any case our almsgiving should be regular and generous. Whether we are rich or poor we must do as much as we can in this way. We need never be ashamed of giving little, if that little is the best we can do, remembering our Lord's blessing upon the widow's mite (Mark 12.41-44).

Each of us should ask ourselves whether we have given as much as money as we could afford for the work of the Church, and where better place to start than towards the mission of the Cathedral – the mother church of Catholics in England and Wales.



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# Renovations at Holy Martyrs School Malimili, Kenya



This school is remote. It is run by Br Erick Nyabicha of the Brothers of St Charles Lwanga. It was set up for children affected by poverty, the loss of a parent, for those with AIDS/HIV or the child of someone with the disease. The destitute families pay nothing while others are subsidized. Consequently, there is no possibility of parents funding necessary repairs to the classrooms.

Br Erick has requested £4,600 which will renovate several classrooms, including replacing some of the roofs, repairing the floors, plastering and painting the walls and installing some windows.

Can you help us to improve this school?

*Thank you!*



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# Animals in the Cathedral: The Mammals

Patrick Rogers

Having spent the last two years writing about mosaics, now for something completely different. There is a surprising number of animals portrayed in Westminster Cathedral – more than 500 in fact. They range from lions to ladybirds and dolphins to doves. Here are some of them.

Starting with the king of beasts first, a winged lion is the emblem of St Mark the Evangelist and it appears at the top of the great 30 foot high crucifix which hangs above the sanctuary, also on the left of the blue mosaic above the sanctuary and finally at the foot of the figure of St Mark on the side of the pulpit. Another lion, wingless and looking decidedly (and understandably) irritated, is on the inner wall of St Paul's Chapel, but this lions relates to the riddle of Samson: 'Out from the strong came forth sweetness' (Judges 14:14) and refers to the conversion of St Paul. In the Vaughan Chantry there are four lion's heads at the corners of Cardinal Vaughan's sarcophagus, and finally in St Peter's Crypt the heads of four more lions crown one of the great red granite columns.

St Luke, another of the evangelists, has a winged ox as his emblem; this also appears on the crucifix, in the blue mosaic and on the pulpit. It is St Luke's gospel that tells us most about Our



A winged ox (symbol of St Luke). The sanctuary arch mosaic.



A lion's head. A column capital in St Peter's Crypt.

Lady and so, at the end of the line of little pictures which portray her life, in the Lady Chapel, there is St Luke busily writing away with a little ox above him. On the other side, and a bit further up, is another ox (no St Luke this time), peering in at the Nativity scene. This includes shepherds and three wise men who have clearly just arrived by camel, two of which are behind them - maybe they took turns to ride?



A donkey. The Flight into Egypt in the Lady Chapel.

Looking in with the ox is, of course, an equally entranced donkey (ass) and it, or possibly a relation, is shown a little further on, carrying Jesus and Mary away on their flight to





*A roe deer. The west wall of St Andrew's Chapel.*

Egypt. A reliable donkey this, sturdy and determined and totally unperturbed by the pagan idols exploding as the Holy Family passes by.

Moving to St Andrew's Chapel, roe deer are to be found either side of the saint here, with sheep above the altar opposite. I think these are the only sheep in the Cathedral not associated with sacrifice. I should really say 'whole sheep,' for there are also 12 marble rams' heads below the cornice in the Lady Chapel and 28 more above the little columns in St Patrick's Chapel. The old Irish regimental badges in this chapel also often have animals in their design, such as a tiger and an elephant, but of course these do not relate directly to the Cathedral. However, I think we can include the two griffons inlaid in the wooden panelling in the sanctuary.



*The Lamb of God. The floor of St Joseph's Chapel.*

Perhaps the nicest animal symbol in the Cathedral is the lamb, as shown on the front of the pulpit representing Christ, the Lamb of God. The same symbol appears on the floor of St Joseph's Chapel and in the centre of the vault in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. As you pass under this Chapel's entrance arch, guarded by two archangels, you will find Noah to the right about to offer up a lamb after the flood, Abel preparing to do the same on the left and, a little further on, the ram caught in a thicket, which Abraham will also subsequently sacrifice (much to the relief of Isaac).

The most recent mammal to arrive in the Cathedral is a bear. It stands on the shield of one of the assassins of St Thomas Becket and is on the west wall of the Becket Chapel, also called the Vaughan Chantry. In a last visit to the Lady Chapel, if you look high up to the right as you enter, you will find a rabbit clutching a fir cone. Almost directly opposite on the left is a red squirrel, with another amongst the foliage in a window arch, half way along on the right. These are the two squirrels which children are often asked to find; there are two more in St Joseph's Chapel but I will leave you to find these for yourselves.



*A bear. The west wall of the Chapel of St Thomas Becket.*

And finally to St George's Chapel and the missing monkey. When the sculptor, Eric Gill, carved the altar piece for this chapel in the late 1930s, he included a monkey in the bottom left-hand corner, reaching up to hold St Thomas More's hand. More had a number of animals at his house in Chelsea, with the monkey as a special pet. In carving the animal, Gill was trying to show the deeply human nature of the saint. Gill died in 1940 before the altarpiece was finished and, because of the war, it was not erected until late in 1946. Meanwhile Cardinal Griffin had become Archbishop of Westminster. He decided that the monkey was too frivolous and ordered it ground out, a decision which aroused a good deal of criticism at the time and was one reason for the re-establishment of the Art and Architecture Committee. In any event, if you look about six inches below St Thomas More's lower hand, you may see a little white paw, and gradually you will be able to follow the monkey's arm downwards until more and more of the animal emerges. So the missing monkey is not entirely missing after all!



# Daily life

Philip Hodges

**The housekeeper-in-chief at the Choir School was a Miss Bangs, a tubby little elderly spinster whose path one would not dare to cross with impunity. She hardly ever appeared in public and governed the domestic staff from her sanctum in the basement. On the very rare occasions when I went into the kitchen she was cutting up raw horse meat for her sickly-looking marmalade cat which she called ‘Gingy’. She would be responsible for all the provisions of the school. She seemed to be feared by her staff.**

There was an aged old crone called Martha who sometimes appeared upstairs in the regulation uniform of a parlour maid. Also on the staff was a rather good-looking cleaner woman who lived out. I was told that she had been abandoned by her husband. I was once singing the burden of a current popular song ‘I’ve a girl in U-S-A who is thinking of me every day’. She said to me with some acidity: ‘Don’t be too sure of that, young man.’

The woman with whom we came into daily contact was the matron, Miss Rose Chapman, whose room was near the dormitory. She was responsible for the laundering of our underwear. After two years my ‘Etons’ were a little the worse for wear and becoming too small for me. My mother was friendly with Mary Carol, a matron of one of the ‘houses’ at Eton College. It was from her that I was fortunate in getting replacements from the cast-offs of some of the noble sons in her charge. Hence my Eton jacket was labelled ‘Tweedmouth’, formerly the property of the Marquis of Tweedmouth and some of my stiff linen collars were marked ‘Majoribanks’ from another patrician’s son at Eton. Miss Chapman humiliated me by quizzing me about the source of these garments.

She could bandage cut fingers but any abdominal complaint received her one and only panacea for all ills which she called ‘Lickerish’. She supervised our weekly baths, coming into the bathroom without a by-your-leave. At age 13 I was becoming more sex conscious and dared to lock the door which she rattled in anger because I would not let her in until I was suitably clothed.

During the sporadic air-raids she would run out in her dressing gown with her hair streaming down her back. She was extremely panicky, running around the dormitory calling out, ‘Come on, hurry, hurry, the BANGS are coming.’

She was also responsible for fitting us out with choir-dress which was a purple cassock made of good quality worsted and surmounted by a deep well laundered surplice and an Eton collar. We did not wear the goffered ruffs of our Anglican counterparts.

The surplices of the clergy and the Guild of St Gregory were finely goffered and all the cathedral laundry was marked “E.M.W.”, i.e. “*Ecclesia Metropolitana Westmonasteriensis.*”

We wore stout black slippers with a ‘silver’ buckle over the instep. But for ordinary school wear, we wore black boots similar to those worn by the boys of Westminster Public School up the road. They wore top hats and their boots were incredibly dirty. I could never reconcile their top hats and their filthy footwear.

In our boot room we had to keep our footwear in trim by using ‘Dickensian blacking.’ This was a hard black slab wrapped in grease-proof paper. One mixed this with water, more often with simple spit, and polished it vigorously until a semblance of shine appeared.

The ‘bogs’ or ‘Jacques’ as we called them, were in a small corridor adjoining the boot room and appear to have been added as an afterthought by the architect for they were not incorporated in the main building. In deference to the urinating carelessness of the male of the species, the loo seats were counterbalanced and therefore always raised unless required to be down. After sitting on them they automatically returned to the vertical.

All of which reminds me that, as far as I know, Westminster Cathedral has no public convenience (of course, it now does *Ed.*) The nearest public loo is close to Victoria Palace. One may speculate on the architect, Bentley’s, utilitarian ideas when he was dreaming up his Byzantine masterpiece. Of course, the grandeur of York Minster or Canterbury did not include such mundane necessities when conceived, as they were, *‘Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam’*. Maybe the ancient designers regarded a graceful flying buttress as a place of retirement for the men or a convenient row of bushes as a refuge behind which the women could modestly squat.

I have remarked on the absence of hot water in all the boys’ washbasins of the school. Certainly there was hot water provided for the bathrooms and for the Rector’s quarters as well as the kitchens. Maybe the architect was instructed to economise somewhere for the building of the Cathedral and its ancillary premises was carried out on a very lean budget.

Lack of warm water at 6.30am tended to reduce the washing of the face, neck and ears to the irreducible minimum. The classrooms and the dormitory were heated by hot water radiators sparsely deployed and giving off a mere token suggestion of warmth.



*Claude Debussy, whose music was a favourite of the late Fr Messenger*

### The College Of Cathedral Chaplains

The College of Chaplains attached to the Cathedral were a very mixed bag but they seemed, for the most part, to keep the peace among themselves and gave the impression of a loyal team of professional men. There is a saying, 'scratch a priest and you will find a man underneath'. But one afternoon when choir and clergy had assembled in the sacristy in preparation for Vespers an altercation broke out between two of the Chaplains.

We boys were in the outer vestibule but could hear the voices raised in anger in the inner vestry hall. The exchanges became very heated and the language used was far from that to be expected from members of 'the cloth'. So scandalous was the invective that the Rector of the school slammed the doors of the inner vestry in a vain endeavour to occlude the vicious epithets from our ears. The two protagonists were eventually forced out of the ranks by the rest of the clergy and banished to the clergy house to cool off and the whole affair was hushed up discreetly.

One of our masters, Fr Ernest Charles Messenger (PhD Louvain) made a lasting impression on me and indeed upon many of my contemporaries. Slight in stature and not particularly robust, he had the courage of a lion. He was not athletic like some of his colleagues. In spite of his lack of physical prowess he left an indelible mark on our upbringing.

He taught maths but managed to introduce the elements of logic and philosophy into this sometimes-trying subject. On Sunday evenings the curriculum included 'spiritual reading' when the lives of various saints or some other pious effusions were read to us by one of the masters. The type of hagiography often read to us was sicklied o'er with the cloying sweetness of the late Victorian era. Cardinal Wiseman's 'Fabiola', 'Eric, or little by little' and other flaccid tales later lampooned by Belloc were considered suitable to tame the young animal that was in most of us.

Messenger sought to rectify this and introduced what he called 'the pill and the jam.' That is to say a quarter hour's piety and three quarters of an hour's extracts from, say, Stephen Lacock or the current issue of 'Punch.' He purchased an old 'Imperial' (belt-driven) motor bike and learned to ride it in our playground. He once did me the honour of taking me to his parents' home in Thornton Heath, then a remote suburb almost in the country.

But to me, his greatest attraction was his playing and interpretation of the piano works of Claude Debussy. In 1917 Debussy was a composer whose works were largely unknown to the great mass of music lovers in this country. I never hear 'jardins sous la pluie', 'La fille aux cheveux de lin' or 'La cathedrale engloutie' without calling him to mind. Later he became a well-loved P.P. of the lively parish of Ware and Buntingford in Hertfordshire and conducted an 'answers' column in the Universe newspaper where he brought to bear his brilliant mind to the many 'posers' offered to him by enquiring correspondents. Much later in life I kept in touch with him, and he told me about his book 'Two in one flesh', an introduction to sex and marriage, and what a hard job it was to get it past the theological censors. He claimed that it was his aim to put sex and marriage in their true light as good and holy and as a divine institution.

In 1952 I heard from his housekeeping secretary that he had undergone several painful operations before his eventual death on Christmas Day in 1951. I cherish his memory as one who had the greatest impact on my young and questing mind.

Fr Austin Oates had the look of belonging to the 'Bloomsbury' group. Elegant in style and having the mannerisms and demeanour of a literary gent, he wore his biretta well over his forehead and had a tart and cryptic sense of humour. One Saturday evening he hastened from his confessional box in the cathedral into the sacristy and hurriedly shut the door. I was passing at the time and wondered at this strange behaviour. I discovered later that some woman had been importuning him in this unlikely place. One would think that the Sisterhood of Courtesans, if there is such a thing, would censure this woman for damaging the good name of the profession. Some years later a Cathedral Chaplain successfully prosecuted a woman in the courts for similar behaviour.



## At a Tea Dance

The Filipino Club packed out Cathedral Hall for another successful afternoon of dancing and socialising.



## Knights and Dames attend Mass

The Knights and Dames of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem attended Mass on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Their work is described as: 'primarily to support the Christian presence in the Holy Land. It exists to arouse both prayers and assistance for the land of Jesus. It sustains and assists the religious, spiritual, charitable, social works and rights of the local Christians. Worldwide Catholics pledge their support, praying always for the freedom and exultation of Holy Mother the Church. Members pray daily in a special way for the Church in the Holy Land.'



## The Choir's new recruits

The Master of Music with his six new Probationers, who are already hard at work learning the repertoire of the Choir and its disciplines.



## The Eucharistic Afternoon

To mark the Feast of the Holy Cross, the Bishops' Conference organised an Eucharistic Congress Day at Oscott College outside Birmingham, to which all dioceses were invited to send a coach of representatives. However, so that more people could take part, the Cathedral laid on an afternoon of adoration, which happily filled the building. Mass, Confessions, Rosary and silence were all part of the programme; Fr Alan Robinson preached and Bishop Nicholas Hudson spoke about Blessed Carlo Acutis, whose relic was present and offered for veneration before the afternoon ended with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament.



*The congregation: rich and poor, young and old alike ...*

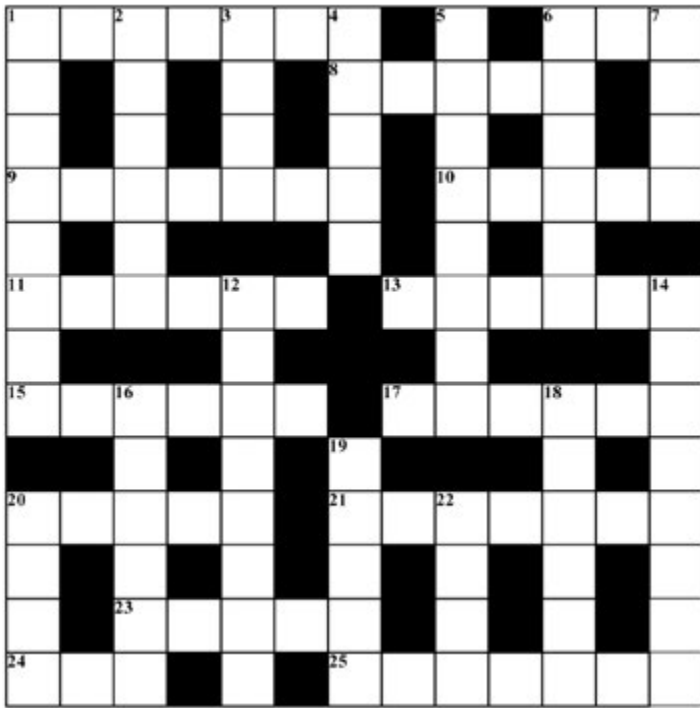


## The Dean at City Hall

The Dean was recently able to visit Councillor Rigby, our Catholic Lord Mayor of Westminster at City Hall on Victoria Street and to view some of the historic City impedimenta, including the Civic mace, still used formally, which is said to have aroused the contempt of Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell. *Oremus* trusts that there is less need nowadays for the use of the civic sword.







Alan Frost October 2024 – No. 125

**Clues Across**

- 1 Small decorated pieces of material decorating areas of the cathedral floor (7)
- 6 Blessed Joan of ---, mother of St. Dominic (3)
- 8, 20 & 22 Down: Our Lord's first public miracle (5,4,4)
- 9 Succeed in task (7)
- 10 Warning of danger or hazard (5)
- 11 'The ----- at Delphi' high priestess of Apollo in Greek myth (6)
- 13 Prejudice against people who are elderly (6)
- 15 Just and devout man who met Mary at the Presentation (6)
- 17 Formally proclaim seminarian as priest (6)
- 20 Country where St. Thomas founded Christian church (5)
- 21 See 3 Down
- 23 Value ----- Tax [VAT] (5)
- 24 Have legal possession of (3)
- 25 Charity providing temporary accommodation for the homeless (7)

**Clues Down**

- 1 They perform in bullrings (8)
- 2 Female Saint associated with Wisdom (6)
- 3 & 21 Across Where, off the Hampshire coast, Quarr Abbey located (4,2,5)
- 4 'O clement, O loving, O ----- Virgin Mary', Hail Holy Queen (5)
- 5 Visitor unknown to group (8)
- 6 Italian name in luxury fashion items (6)
- 7 'Would you ---- and Eve it?', Cockney slang (4)
- 12 Painter of 'The Virgin and Child with...' in the National Gallery (8)
- 14 Mythical creature, part bull, part man (8)
- 16 Insane dweller in Bedlam (6)
- 18 Silver in heraldry (6)
- 19 Cricket ground or Westminster House (5)
- 20 See 8 Across (4)
- 22 See 8 Across (4)

**ANSWERS**

Across: 1 Mosaics 6 Aza 8 Water 9 Achive 10 Alarm 11 Oracle 13 Ageism 14 Leonardo 15 Simeon 17 Ordain 20 India 21 Of Wight 23 Added 24 Own 25 Shelter  
 Down: 1 Matadors 2 Sophia 3 Isle 4 Sweet 5 Stranger 6 Armani 7 Adam 8 Lords 9 Into 10 Wine 11 Madman 12 Argent 13 Lords 14 Madman 15 Achive 16 Madman 17 Ordain 18 Lords 19 Lords 20 Into 22 Wine

**My Hope**  
*St Thérèse of Lisieux*

Though in a foreign land I dwell afar,  
 I taste in dreams the endless joys of heaven.  
 Fain would I fly beyond the farthest star,  
 And see the wonders to the ransomed given!  
 No more the sense of exile weighs on me,  
 When once I dream of that immortal day.  
 To my true fatherland, dear God! I see,  
 For the first time I soon shall fly away.

Ah! give me, Jesus! wings as white as snow,  
 That unto Thee I soon may take my flight.  
 I long to be where flowers unfading blow;  
 I long to see Thee, O my heart's Delight!  
 I long to fly to Mary's mother-arms, –  
 To rest upon that spotless throne of bliss;  
 And, sheltered there from troubles and alarms,  
 For the first time to feel her gentle kiss.

Thy first sweet smile of welcoming delight  
 Soon show, O Jesus! to Thy lowly bride;  
 O'ercome with rapture at that wondrous sight,  
 Within Thy Sacred Heart, ah! let me hide.  
 O happy moment! and O heavenly grace!  
 When I shall hear Thee, Jesus, speak to me;  
 And the full vision of Thy glorious Face  
 For the first time my longing eyes shall see.

Thou knowest well, my only martyrdom  
 Is love, O Heart of Jesus Christ! for Thee;  
 And if my soul craves for its heavenly home,  
 'Tis but to love Thee more, eternally.  
 Above, when Thy sweet Face unveiled I view,  
 Measure nor bounds shall to my love be given;  
 Forever my delight shall seem as new  
 As the first time my spirit entered heaven

June, 1894



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

## CATHEDRAL HISTORY A PICTORIAL RECORD

### The Crowning of the statue of Our Lady of Willesden Sunday 3 October 1954

Paul Tobin

As part of the Marian Year celebrations marking the centenary of the definition of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, a national rally was held at Wembley Stadium on Rosary Sunday of that year. This was to be third major Catholic event in four years that filled the famous stadium to capacity (approx. 94,000).

For the record, a Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Joseph Masterson of Birmingham at the conclusion of the Hierarchy Centenary Congress in 1950 with the final rally of Fr Patrick Peyton's Family Prayer Crusade being held two years later in 1952. It would be a further 28 years before the stadium hosted the Mass celebrated by Pope St John Paul II in 1982 as part of his pastoral visit to England, Scotland and Wales.

Devotion to Our Lady of Willesden goes back to the Middle Ages; there was known to be a shrine to the Black Madonna in St Mary's Church. At the time of the Reformation the wooden statue of Our Lady was burned on the orders of Thomas Cromwell in 1538.

In the later 19th century to meet the needs of the increasing Irish population in the area, a Catholic mission was established in 1885.



The nuns of the Convent of Jesus and Mary fostered devotion to Our Lady of Willesden and in 1892 a new statue, carved from an oak tree in St Mary's church was blessed by Cardinal Herbert Vaughan (Archbishop of Westminster 1892 - 1903). With the completion of the new church in 1931 this was declared to be the National Shrine for England.

Behind Cardinal Bernard Griffin (Archbishop of Westminster 1944 -1956) in a white dalmatic is Fr Thomas (Tommy) Kilcoyne, Headmaster of Westminster Cathedral Choir School (1954-61). To his left in the dark manteletta of a Privy Chamberlain is Mgr George Tomlinson (Cathedral Administrator 1964 - 67), one of two Privy Chamberlains who brought the two crowns for Our Lady and the Child and walked in the Cardinal's procession while the statue had been brought into the arena by Willesden parishioners.

After the Cardinal's address and crowning ceremony, a procession of some 2,000 men, including representatives of Catholic organisations, took the statue in procession to the shrine in Willesden. There it was received by the Cardinal and Bishops and placed in the Lady Chapel. Pontifical Benediction given by the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Gerald O'Hara. The statue was subsequently moved to the main sanctuary, where a vigil was kept until later that evening when the church closed.

*The author was present at this event and 12 years later in July 1966, and witnessed England winning the FIFA World Cup for the only time to date.*

Sources:

Westminster Cathedral Chronicle, September, October, November 1954  
Our Lady of Willesden 'A Brief History of the Shrine and Parish' Fr Nicholas Schofield (2022)

Image: Westminster Cathedral Chronicle, November 1954







Canon Cronin (left), with Mgr Martin Hayes, both Knights Chaplain of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem

## Canon Daniel Cronin KCHS, LL.M

**The older I get (I'm 72 now ~ hard as it may be to credit ) I find myself living by the aphorisms and wisdom of others more and more. The much loved and lamented Bishop Jim O'Brien (Big Jim as we students affectionately called him) would say to us endlessly: 'Gentlemen, you must never take yourselves too seriously, but always your Priesthood'. Throughout my 47 years of sacerdotal ministry I have attempted to live by those profoundly wise words. Cardinal John Carmel Heenan at funerals invariably said: 'No matter how good and holy a person may have been we must never rob them of our prayers'. As Archbishop from 1963-1975 he accepted me to train for the priesthood and I was sent to boarding school at St Hugh's College, Tollerton in Nottinghamshire.**

I suppose my first official appointment was as a student Master of Ceremonies and driver to the famous Bishop Christopher Butler OSB, former Abbot Downside and a Father of the Second Vatican Council. On the afternoon of the funeral of his devoted and 'larger than life' Priest Secretary, Fr Dick Sutherland, the Bishop asked me if I would look after him on Sundays and drive him to the parishes of Hertfordshire. I would remain remain with him throughout the day and then we would motor back to St Edmund's, Ware where he was the President of the College. He put total trust in me and I recall one seminary professor taking me aside and saying: 'You are likely to hear

things that no seminarian should hear. It is essential that you can hold your water and reveal nothing of what you may have witnessed to the other students or staff for that matter'.

In 1976 I was seonded to the lovely parish of St Bernadette's, Hillingdon under the very balanced and practical leadership of Canon Frank Martin ('Time spent in reconnaissance is never wasted'. One of the most humble, holy and respected parishioners there was Lew Collett, at that time diocesan President (later to become National President) of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, to this day one of the jewels in the crown of the Catholic Church universally. Lew was looking for a new diocesan chaplain and wrote to Cardinal Hume to ask if I could undertake that role. The Cardinal wrote back and said that I could become the chaplain on the day of my Ordination, May 29th 1977; five years later I became National Chaplain for two terms, amounting to 10 years in all. Then I insisted that the privilege should be entrusted to another priest from within England and Wales.

In 1978, whilst getting off the coach from Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church in Welwyn Garden City for the Chrism Mass, the Vicar General of the day took me aside and said the Cardinal wanted to appoint me as the Director of School Chaplains ('Don't underestimate your own abilities'. As a result of this it was decided that I needed to be in central London and so in 1980 I was asked

to go as an Assistant Priest at Our Lady of Victories, Abingdon Road, Kensington under the venerable and distinguished Mgr Maurice Kelleher, who himself had been President of St Edmunds' and Rector of Allen Hall Seminary. From my next appointment as Director of the Ministry to Priests Programme and Continuing Education for the clergy in 1985 Cardinal Hume ('One of the hardest jobs of my life is to have to muck up other people's lives – and I'm just about to muck up yours!') invited me to join his staff and become his MC at Westminster Cathedral ('Remember that the prayer life of the diocese will be in your hands'). After 14 months I was summoned up to his office and told peremptorily but kindly: 'You are to be the new Chancellor of the Diocese.'

During that time I had the great privilege of accompanying H.R.H. Katharine, Duchess of Kent into the Catholic Church in preparation for her Reception by Cardinal Hume in his Private Chapel in Archbishop's House. Katharine was the first member of the Royal Family to be received into our Church and that momentous and historic event took place exactly 30 years ago.

Perhaps the most traumatic ceremony I ever had to MC was Cardinal Basil's funeral in 1999 attended by Prime Minister Tony Blair and Taoiseach Bertie Ahern along with the great and good of our Church and way beyond. It was televised live for the whole country to follow.

Along came Cormac Murphy-O'Connor from Arundel and Brighton who after two years here at Westminster said: 'To be fair to you I don't think you should stay here for ever, so I am appointing you to St Mary's, Holly Place, in Hampstead. Also I don't want to make you a Monsignor and a Canon, so I'm appointing you to the Chapter, so that you will retain a very strong link to the Cathedral and I would like you to continue as my MC from the parish. In all I did 20 years in that ministry. Cardinal Vincent Nichols ('God is not a problem to be solved but a gift to be discovered afresh') who is our current Father in God very kindly allowed me to MC him on the occasion of Monsignor Canon Frederick Miles' Platinum Jubilee of Priesthood thus allowing me at a stretch to claim that I have been MC to three Cardinal Archbishops of Westminster.

Indeed it was my very good friend and mentor Mgr Miles who installed me as a Canon of the Metropolitan Chapter. So I now find myself approaching my Silver Jubilee as a Chapter Canon and was recently told by the Vicar General of St Briec who was a fellow concelebrant at Mont St Michel, that in French terms, I am now '*Le Doyen*' of the Chapter (as distinct from the Provost who is Canon Shaun Lennard, who in that role will install the next Archbishop of Westminster). Canon Shaun's mother and my father hail from County Kerry, in Southern Ireland. Cardinal Cormac's favourite mantra culled from a priest uncle of his was: 'Never forget the rock from which you are hewn'. We certainly don't as people whose parents proudly hailed from the Kingdom of Kerry.

In September of this year I was honoured to be made a Freeman of the City of London (apparently I now have the right to shepherd sheep across London Bridge). A new friend wrote to say: 'How helpful that you will have the role as an urban shepherd if you fancy a career change!'

On this latest honour, I know exactly what Cardinal Hume would have said to me: 'Beloved, enjoy. But don't inhale...!'

# On my Departure

Fr. Kaspar Chatla

**This year marks my 7th visit to Westminster Cathedral on summer supply. When I return home to India, I always carry many fond memories but also feel a sense of longing at leaving the Cathedral. However, this time, I feel inspired to share some of my experiences from my summer supply in the Cathedral with readers through *Oremus*.**

## Three Experiences.

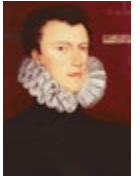
1. **Sacramental Christianity:** We are all familiar with the concept of 'Sacramental Christianity', which represents grace-filled living. The Holy Father speaks about this very often these days. It commences with the removal of sin through the Sacrament of Confession, which forms the foundation of Christian life. The Cathedral is renowned for hearing confessions, drawing penitents from all over. Hearing confessions elevates a priest's holiness. Although the priest is physically present, it is our Lord Jesus Christ who hears the penitent. Alongside the penitent, the priest also becomes sanctified. Unfortunately, the Sacrament of Confession is becoming neglected in our times. Therefore, I am grateful to the Cathedral for consistently providing priests for confessions. The Cathedral Chaplains now ensure that two or three priests are available, especially at weekends when there is an influx of penitents. The effects of the Holy Eucharist can only flow to us through proper confessions.
2. **Holiness in the Cathedral:** As the Cathedral day progresses I sense a profound holiness within its walls. Every nook and pillar seems to exude sanctity. This is a rich experience that I wish to share with you. I have confirmed this feeling with many others, who echo the same sentiment. I attribute this to the spiritual structure of the church, the archbishops' tombs, the daily liturgies and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. I greatly enjoy spending time inside the church.
3. **Friendly and Fraternal Relations:** I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the Cathedral Chaplains and all our Cathedral parishioners. Throughout all my visits, I have never felt like a foreigner or alone here. The moment I step into the Clergy House, I forget that I come from India and simply feel like one of the residents. This is all due to the friendship of the Cathedral community. Parishioners' warm greetings, invitations to coffee or dinner, and your generosity, concern for our ministry at home make us feel like part of the community. When I leave for India, I leave with a sense of longing and the hope of visiting you all again. I depart now with this same hope.



**Tales of the English Martyrs:**

The Queen refused his petition for a priest or for his wife and children to visit him, though this latter she had promised him, but she sent word that, if he would go to church once, all would be granted, his honour and estates restored, and the fulness of her favour. He refused her offer and after 11 years' imprisonment gave back his soul to God. He inscribed on his cell: 'The more of suffering for Christ in this life, the more of glory with Christ in the next.'

*St Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel*



## The Month of October

### The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

#### For a shared mission:

We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a Synodal lifestyle, as a sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious and lay people.

### Tuesday 1 October

St Thérèse of the Child Jesus

**9.30am** Red Mass to mark the start of the legal year (Full Choir)

*Mozart* – Missa brevis in F major

*Bruckner* – Os iusti

Organ: Choral varié sur le Veni Creator –

*Durufle*

**5.30pm** Chapter Mass

### Wednesday 2 October

Holy Guardian Angels

**1.15pm** Lunchtime Concert

### Thursday 3 October

Feria

### Friday 4 October

*Friday abstinence*

St Francis of Assisi

\* Harvest Fast Day

**5.30pm** St Francis Leprosy Guild attends Mass

### Saturday 5 October

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

**2.30pm** National Altar Servers' Mass

(Cardinal Nichols)

**4pm** Low Mass (Lady Chapel)

### Sunday 6 October

*Ps Week 3*

**27th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**Annual Mass Count – Week 3**

**12 noon** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

*Tye* – Missa Euge bone

*Durufle* – Ubi caritas et amor

Organ: Hallelujah! Gott zu loben – *Reger*

**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction

*Victoria* – Magnificat septimi toni

*Byrd* – O salutaris hostia

Organ: Joie et claret des corps glorieux –

*Messiaen*

**4.30pm** Mass for the Deaf Community

(Cathedral Hall)

### 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:** Mass 8am, Morning Prayer 10am, 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 10.30-12.30pm; Solemn Mass (Choir) 12noon \*, Solemn Vespers (Choir) and Benediction 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

### Monday 7 October

Our Lady of the Rosary

### Tuesday 8 October

Feria

### Wednesday 9 October

St JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, Priest

**1.15pm** Lunchtime Concert

### Thursday 10 October

Feria

(St Paulinus of York, Bishop; St Denis, Bishop, and Companions, Martyrs; St John Leonardi, Priest)

**5.30pm** Papal Orders attend Mass

(H.E The Papal Nuncio)

### Friday 11 October

*Friday abstinence*

Feria

(St John XXIII, Pope)

### Saturday 12 October

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

**9.30am – 4.30pm** A Day with Mary

**6pm** Vigil Mass of St Edward the Confessor;

Visiting Choir

### Sunday 13 October

*Ps Week 4*

**28th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**Annual Mass Count – Week 4**

**In the Cathedral:**

**ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR,**

**Patron of the Diocese and of the City of**

**Westminster**

\* Week of Prayer for Prisoners and their Families

**12 noon** Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

*Mawby* – Iustus ut palma

*Mawby* – Ave verum corpus

Organ: Allegro maestoso (Sonata in G) – *Elgar*

**4pm** Solemn Second Vespers and

Benediction

*Bevan* – Magnificat septimi toni

*Bruckner* – Os iusti

Organ: Rhapsody No 1 in D flat – *Howells*

### Monday 14 October

Feria

(St Callistus 1, Pope & Martyr)

### Tuesday 15 October

St Teresa of Jesus, Virgin & Doctor of the Church

**5pm** Joint Evensong at Westminster Abbey

(Cathedral: 5pm Said Vespers and

**5.30pm** Mass for PACT

(Bishop McAleenan)

### Wednesday 16 October

Feria

(St Hedwig, Religious; St Margaret Mary

Alacoque, Virgin

**1.15pm** Lunchtime Concert

### Thursday 17 October

St Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop & Martyr

**2.30pm** Memorial Service for Baroness

Gardner of Parkes

(Cardinal Nichols & Fr Matt Black O.Carm)



Mosaic of St Luke in St Peter's Basilica

**Friday 18 October** *Friday abstinence*  
St LUKE, Evangelist

**Saturday 19 October**  
Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday  
(Ss John de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues, Priests,  
and Companions, Martyrs; St Paul of the  
Cross, Priest)

**Sunday 20 October** *Ps Week 1*  
**29th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

\* World Mission Day  
**12 noon** Solemn Mass (Men's Voices)  
*de Monte* – Missa Benedicta es  
*Palestrina* – Meditabor in mandatis tuis  
Organ: Fantaisie in A major – *Franck*  
**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction  
*Victoria* – Magnificat octavi toni  
*Clemens non Papa* – Ego flos campi  
Organ: Improvisation No 7 – *Saint-Saëns*

**Monday 21 October**  
Feria

**Tuesday 22 October**  
(St Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop)

**Wednesday 23 October**  
Feria  
(St John Paul II, Pope)  
**1.15pm** Lunchtime Concert

**Thursday 24 October**  
Feria  
(St Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop)

**Friday 25 October** *Friday abstinence*  
Feria

**Saturday 26 October**  
Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday  
(Ss Chad and Cedd, Bishops)  
**2pm** Neocatechumenate Westminster 50th  
Anniversary  
**6pm** Marriage Course Participants Attend  
Mass



The Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Birmingham is dedicated to St Chad

**Sunday 27 October** *Ps Week 2*  
**30th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**12 noon** Solemn Mass (Men's Voices)  
*A. Gabrieli* – Missa Pater peccavi  
*Gabrieli* – Cantate Domino  
*Byrd* – Domine non sum dignus  
Organ: Fugue in G minor (Op. 7, No 3) –  
*Dupré*  
**4pm** Solemn Vespers and Benediction  
*Bevan* – Magnificat primi toni  
*Victoria* – Dixit Dominus  
Organ: Improvisation (Sonata No 2) –  
*Reger*

**Monday 28 October**  
Ss SIMON and JUDE, Apostles

**Tuesday 29 October**  
Blessed Martyrs of Douai

**Wednesday 30 October**  
Feria  
**7.35am** Morning Prayer, 8, 10.30am Masses  
in the Crypt,  
**12.30pm** Mass, **5pm** Vespers, **5.30pm** Mass  
in Cathedral Hall  
**7.30pm** Britten War Requiem  
(Bach Choir – ticketed)

**Thursday 31 October**  
**1.15pm** Lunchtime Concert  
**5.30pm** Vigil Mass of All Saints – fulfils  
Holyday Obligation

**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,  
Saturdays 11.15-12.00noon

### Walsingham Prayer Group

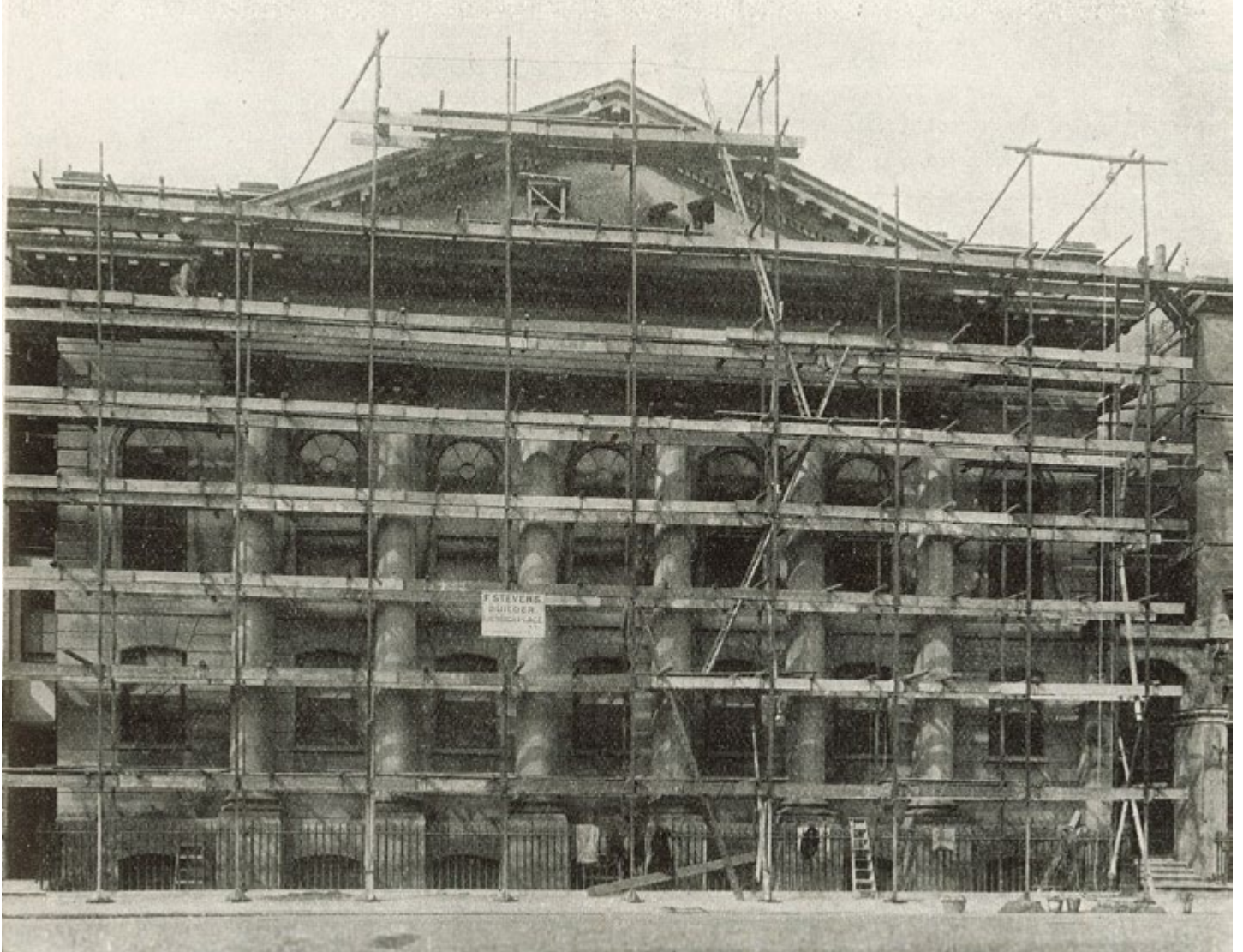
St George's Chapel,  
First Tuesdays 2.30-4pm

### Yoruba Association

Hinsley Room,  
Third Sundays 1.30-3pm



# In retrospect: from the *Cathedral Chronicle*



## \*Claverton Street Church in Splints

A serious operation had to be decided upon or a collapse was inevitable at any moment. Not that the whole structure would collapse, but if any piece of the heavy coping that threatened to fall *did* fall upon any passer-by another kind of operation might be involved as well as much besides. So Fr. England wisely acted on the principle of safety first, and decided that the operation on the façade of his church should be performed at once. Mere paint and patchwork would not do. So up shot the splint scaffolding, and the work of renewal and renovation is going on 'as well as can be expected'. But of course, it is a serious operation for a London frontage at the age of 60 years of wear and tear, and several years of unthought-of thumping, racing motor buses vibrating through

it. The fees are high, though Mr. Stevens, builder, of Denbigh Place, has done his best to keep them down, and Fr. England is endeavouring to get his parishioners and others to guess what the total is, and settle it for him. He is open to give a prize to the one who makes the biggest donation towards it. Will you guess and give? His address is: Rev. Henry O'Brien England, 25, Claverton Street, Pimlico, SW1.

\*Claverton Street Church in Pimlico was a former Methodist Chapel which had been converted into a Cathedral Chapel of Ease. It was destroyed in the Second World War.

*from the October 1924 Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*

# September is the month of Respect

Clive, Year 6

**As Catholic school children we are called to cherish, defend and protect those who are most valuable to us in church, at school and in our community. The Church teaches us that respect is a fundamental part of being human and is based on the idea that all people are created in the image of God.**

In the first term of school we are focusing on respect. Respect is a big part of our academic and spiritual life. In Year 6, we have to respect the whole school more, as we are the oldest in the school. We must act as role models to the classes younger than us. Jesus showed respect to the disciples by giving them the power to baptise the people of Israel. They showed respect to Jesus by following his commands and believing in God just as we do. We all can act like the Twelve and be like Jesus who showed respect by actively teaching and preaching to them.

*Respect in our community means appreciating each other, treating others with love, kindness and recognising their differences.*

What this means is that we should all try to avoid talking unfairly about others, listening to them instead, respecting other people's points of view. In this way we show our respect. We must show respect regardless of our differences or thoughts.

In St Vincent De Paul respect means treating others how we would like to be treated. We show respect to everyone, including friends, teachers and adults. This includes being kind, polite and not being rude to others. Jesus tells us 'love one another as I have loved you'. Respect at home is just like being at school. We have to listen to our parents just like we do to our teachers. The bible commands us to respect and honour our mother and father. So we must respectfully ask them permission and help when we need it.

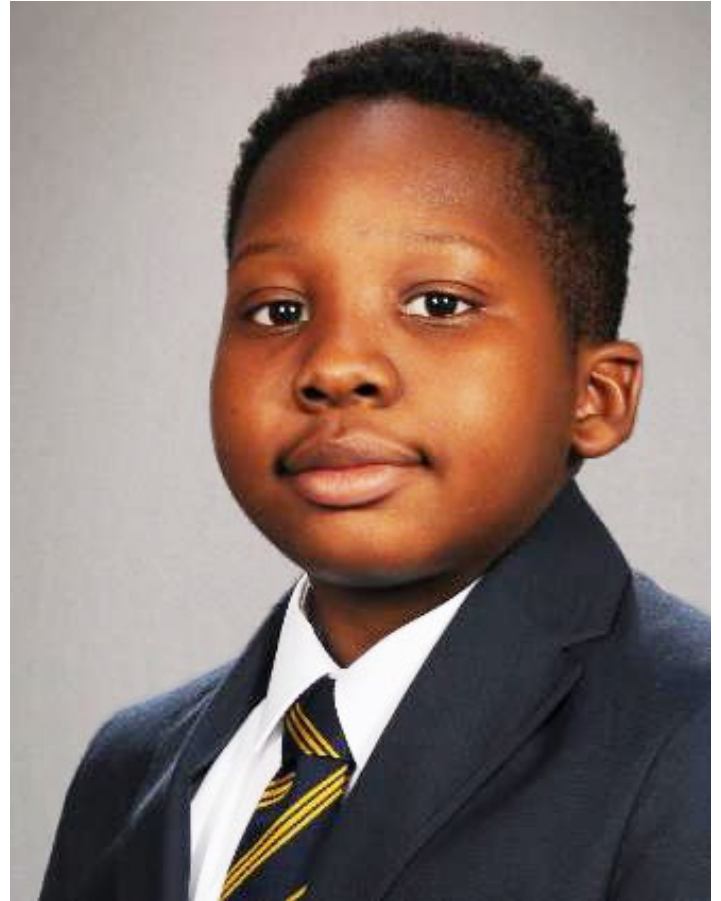
*A good example of how to respect other people is by encouraging them in the way we talk to them.*

We also show respect to the environment in our community by cleaning up all rubbish on the floor. We have to be good role models in our behaviour to others so that they can follow what we do. Respectfully we try to stop people from littering as it pollutes our surroundings.

We should show respect to God by obeying the Ten Commandments, thanking him for what he has done for us and showing reverence to God by being reverent in society through respectful behaviours. We can follow instructions and be courteous at all times.

In St Vincent De Paul the children respect the adults and the adults respect the children. Just like how Jesus showed respect to the Twelve Disciples and how they showed respect back to Jesus.

*We can all follow these principles and make the world a better place to live and grow.*



  
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