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Westminster Cathedral Magazine



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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 one of the editorial team.

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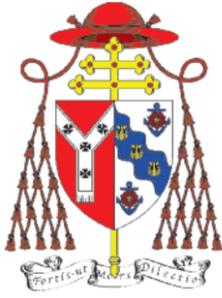
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Celebrating Easter

The fulfilment of God's Mercy



Two quite extraordinary things happening in the Cathedral have really caught my attention. First, the queues for the Confessional – especially during Lent – are longer than usual. Second, pilgrims are visiting in great numbers, walking through the Holy Door and along the Way of Mercy either as individuals, small groups, schools or parishes. The People of God are responding with great generosity and joy to the Holy Father's Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Although this Year of Mercy is the initiative of Pope Francis, it is also the fruit of the pontificates of Pope St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.

Pope St John Paul II had a powerful devotion to God's mercy. The Feast of Divine Mercy, to be kept on the Second Sunday of Easter, was instituted by him. When opening the shrine of Divine Mercy in Krakow-Łagiewniki in 2002, he said: 'Apart from the mercy of God there is no other source of hope for mankind.' It strikes me as most fitting that St John Paul II died following First Vespers of Divine Mercy Sunday.

Pope Benedict XVI reflected on his predecessor's devotion to Divine Mercy during the *Regina Coeli* address for the Second Sunday of Easter 2008. The Resurrection is the 'central nucleus' of the Gospel, he said. The entire work of salvation, Pope Benedict explained, is born of God's infinite compassion, made visible in the face of Christ, 'the supreme revelation of the Father's mercy'. During the same address he reminded us that mercy is 'the very name of God, the Face with which he revealed himself in the Old Covenant and fully in Jesus Christ'. The prayer of our Pope Emeritus surely remains that this merciful love 'shine on the face of the Church and show itself through the sacraments, in particular that of Reconciliation, and in works of charity, both communitarian and individual. May all that the Church says and does manifest the mercy God feels for man, and therefore for us.'

Pope Francis announced the Year of Mercy in the Bull *Misericordiae Vultus* (The Face of the Father's Mercy). He did so on the Eve of the Feast of Divine Mercy last year – the tenth anniversary of St John Paul II's death. In this Bull, the Holy Father teaches: 'God's justice is his mercy given to everyone as a grace that flows from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus the Cross of Christ is God's

judgement on all of us and on the whole world, because through it he offers us the certitude of love and new life.'

Through these three Popes, God invites us to consider His mercy more deeply. We are asked to understand the whole history of salvation, beginning with the Jewish people and up to our own day, ringing out with the same call to seek God's merciful face. 'Of you my heart has spoken: "Seek his face." It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; Hide not your face' (Ps 27: 8-9).

Sometimes, it is hard to glimpse that Divine Face, to believe in God's mercy, to accept that we are loved by Him. In the darkness of the tomb, Christ's face was hidden. We felt abandoned, frightened, aware of the awesome reality of death and sin. 'How long, O Lord, will you forget me? How long will you hide your face?' (Ps 13:2). But now the Lord is Risen! So we join the psalmist in singing: 'Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed. This poor man called, the Lord heard him and rescued him from all his distress' (Ps 34:6-7).

This Eastertide, aware of the Holy Year's immense graces, we turn to the Risen Lord with renewed confidence. We rejoice afresh in the splendour of his face radiant in the sacraments and in his people, the Church.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight.

(Lk 24:28-31)

May the Risen Lord in all his mercy bless you abundantly both this Eastertide and always. Alleluia!

+ Vincent Nichols

Cardinal Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster
Patron of Oremus

From the Chairman

This issue of *Oremus* comes to you as an Easter gift, coming out as it does on Holy Saturday, and with it comes warmest good wishes and greetings for a blessed and holy Easter season. Thankfully, after several weeks of cold, dull days, we are now seeing plenty of spring sunshine, which together with the abundance of spring flowers around us reinforces the spirit of new life that comes through the celebration of the Lord's Resurrection.

I would like to give special greetings to all those who have been part of this year's RCIA programme and to welcome those who were received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. One of the members of this year's RCIA group, Cameron Pyke, writes in this issue, describing the way the Lord called him into full communion with the Church. I hope that he and all the others on this year's RCIA programme will truly feel a part of the Cathedral family and that reading *Oremus* will encourage in them the sense of belonging.

While giving my greetings to our new arrivals, I would also like to extend my very warmest welcome to those of you who have accepted the invitation to become Companions of Oremus, and I hope that you will find this very beneficial. *Oremus* much appreciates your generosity.

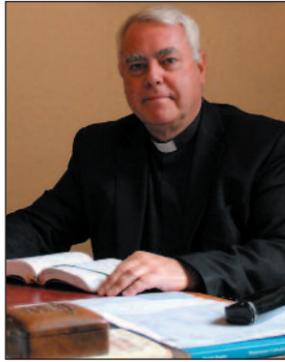
As already announced, Fr Alexander leaves us in a few days to take up his new post as Private Secretary to the

Cardinal and I would like to use this opportunity to thank him most sincerely for all that he has done for the Cathedral over the last six years and to wish him every blessing in his new assignment which will happily mean that we will continue to see him around the Cathedral. At this point we are waiting to hear who might succeed him, but I am confident that those responsible for these appointments will have our best interests at heart.

Louise Sage has written a very full account of the Guild of St John Southworth expedition to Lancashire but I would just like to say how much I enjoyed the two days and especially the privilege of celebrating Mass in the oldest Catholic chapel in the Diocese of Salford.

Again, with my warmest best wishes for Eastertide,

Canon Christopher Tuckwell



Join the Companions of Oremus

and help us to continue to publish our magazine free of charge

Recently launched, the Companions of Oremus was established to recognise those who give generously to support the production of *Oremus*.

Companions' names will be published in the magazine each month and Mass will be offered for their intentions. All members will be invited to a social event later in the year.

If you would like to join the Companions of Oremus please write to the Oremus office c/o Clergy House, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW or email companionsforemus@gmail.com – members are asked to give a minimum of £100 annually. Please mention in your email or letter how you would like your name to be listed and let us know if you can Gift Aid your donation, providing your name and address, including postcode.

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Noli Me Tangere

Painting the Paschal Candle

For the past five years, Westminster Cathedral's Paschal Candle has been decorated by Rachel Alem. It is a work that she looks forward to every year as it helps her in her own Lenten journey to prepare the way for the Risen Christ. Here, Rachel shares some of her thoughts for this year's design and what has inspired her.

When I was studying Fine Art many years ago, I was fortunate to hear the then Director of the National Gallery, Neil MacGregor, give a talk in which he spoke about a painting by Titian called *Noli Me Tangere*.

It was very moving to learn that during the Second World War, while London was besieged by bombs, the Gallery's trustees decided that one picture a month would hang 'as the only Old Master picture in the National Gallery.' This Titian, in which Mary Magdalene is admonished by Christ, after his Resurrection, not to touch him, was voted for by the public as the one it most wanted to see. But why did the people choose this painting?

Love that survives death

Neil Macgregor explained it by saying that we can only guess, but that he thought that what it meant to war-torn Londoners must have been close to the central poetic truth that Titian was originally trying to express – the reassurance of a love so strong that it can survive death.

This touched me very deeply and images of this episode have always caught my interest. So this year, I thought about the fire and candle as it enters the Cathedral and its symbolism: the entrance of Jesus Christ, our Light, into the darkness of our lives. In this Extraordinary Jubilee Year dedicated to Mercy I felt strongly that it would be fitting to show this remarkable meeting, as Jesus Christ meets Mary Magdalene; this first recorded appearance of the Risen Christ, known as the *Noli Me Tangere* (cf Jn 20:11).

Isn't it strange that the first person meeting the Risen Christ is not his mother, or St Peter, or any other credible witness? Jesus chooses a woman, a known sinner. St Luke speaks of Mary Magdalene as having been freed from seven demons, wickedness inhabiting her that she had no power over (Lk 8:2). Mary Magdalene is the first to meet the Risen Jesus, is the first to hear his voice and respond to him. This can give us great hope! Hope in the inexhaustible mercy of our God! The sinner is the first to meet Christ!



This year's candle as a work in progress.

A puzzle

Mary Magdalene is the first to hear his words: *Noli me tangere*. This is the Latin version, but it means *Do not touch me*. Isn't this puzzling?

If we look to the Way of Mercy, to the Sixth Station (Mercy Incarnate), we find an icon of the Resurrection. Jesus stands holding up his glorious cross and a woman, dressed in scarlet, reaches towards him. The woman is Eve, reaching towards her son as he comes to liberate her from Hell.

On the Paschal Candle we see the Risen Christ is holding up his cross, and a woman, Mary Magdalene, dressed in scarlet is reaching out to him.

Mary Magdalene in this moment has the same position as Eve in the Resurrection icon. The Magdalene symbolises the new Eve, the Church, the Bride of Christ. But not in the usual, human and physical, way of marriage. Marriage is the most beautiful sign foreshadowing the relationship that God desires to have with his people. But Christ's words 'Noli me tangere, Do not touch me', point us to our promised land, to Heaven. What we are called to is a relationship with Jesus Christ, one so intimate that its closest likeness on earth is marriage, but it doesn't consist of the uniting of bodies, it consists of the unity of spirit.

Jesus says to the Magdalene, 'Do not cling to (touch) me, because I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God' (Jn 20:17). He tells her, the least credible witness, to announce to the Apostles this strange phrase: 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'

That the effect of the Resurrection is that the Father that Jesus has spoken of throughout his earthly mission is now Our Father, his God is Our God. We are no longer shrouded in darkness, we have been brought into full communion with the Trinity itself. We have a Father who loves us with a love stronger than death.

We are no longer waiting in darkness, estranged from one another, unable to see or feel anything except ourselves. By the light of the Risen Christ, our candles are lit, the Cathedral becomes ablaze with a new light, we see each other, we can see ourselves, we are not alone, we have a means to move forward to enter into the new year with Christ lighting our way, with Christ alight in our hearts.

The Glorious Wounds

Donato Tallo

'By his holy and glorious wounds may Christ our Lord guard us and keep us'

The powerful phrase is said at the beginning of the Easter Vigil, the pinnacle of the Church's liturgical year. While reciting these words, the priest performs the second aspect of the consecration of the Paschal candle.

During his Passion, when Christ hung on the cross, five wounds were inflicted upon his body. His hands and feet were pierced by nails and his side was pierced by a lance. From these wounds the precious blood and sacred water was shed. The physical signs of suffering, the wounds of Christ, suggest pain, agony, torment and torture, but yet they are collectively described as glorious, not dirty or infected, not smelly or disgusting, not offensive or awful; but glorious.

The wounds of Christ really are glorious and they show us the sufferings Christ bore for our sins. They also demonstrate the pain and agony of the cross and the reason for the Incarnation. Christ became man and died for our

sins; and it can be argued that his wounds are our wounds and represent humankind. Christ died for the sins of all and he shows us through his Incarnation the way to the Father.

Like Jesus, all of us are wounded in different ways yet all of us are precious in the eyes of God. Our own wounds, be they physical, mental or emotional, can help us to unite ourselves to Christ – the wounded one. We live in an imperfect world and we should be sensitive to the wounds of others and continue to become more Christ-like in our thoughts, words and deeds, despite how difficult that can be.

May we all praise and bless the wounds of Christ, because it is by these holy and glorious wounds that we, as God's people, are redeemed and saved. Without the wounds of Christ, his Passion and Death would not have happened and therefore Christ's Resurrection would not have taken place. It is through his Passion and Resurrection that Christ has set us free and is the Saviour of the world.



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Farewell to the Cathedral But not going too far away!

Fr Alexander Master



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Fr Alexander waiting for the Door of Mercy to open, Advent 2015

When I arrived at Westminster Cathedral in September 2009 I had little idea that my appointment would last for nearly seven years. But it has – and now, more than 2,000 Masses later, and having worked with 18 Chaplains, and numerous other staff, volunteers, and parishioners, a new role is in prospect.

Such a number of years at the mother Church of Catholics in England and Wales inevitably brings with it many memories, and it is difficult to know which ones to highlight. Somewhat subjectively, I'd probably single out two occasions. The first was the visit of the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux, into which I stumbled within my first month, just as I was attempting to adjust from parish to Cathedral life. I think that just short of 100,000 people came through the doors of the Cathedral in the fewer than three days that the relics were here. All of us who were Chaplains at that time will have had their share of memorable experiences, not least when we were on duty hearing confessions in the small hours. I have to admit, too, to a certain gladness that I didn't know that a lunchtime Mass I was celebrating on one of those days was being broadcast to the crowds in the piazza, so soon in my Cathedral career.

The second occasion was a real one-off. A group of young New Zealanders approached the Cathedral in the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquake in February 2011. They felt very far from home in almost every way, and were seeking a church in which they could gather to reflect and pray. Fr Christopher and I worked with them to devise a service, and I happened to be on the sanctuary in the Cathedral when the doors opened. I've never seen anything like it, before or since – thousands of overwhelmingly young people flooding into the Cathedral, and then spilling out onto the piazza outside when there was no more room inside. The Maori choir and soloist Hayley Westenra, who sang on that occasion, couldn't fail to move even someone

like me with no personal connection at all to the events in New Zealand – and the congregation raised £30,000 in cash in a single collection to send to the Red Cross to help with relief work. This was, to me, an extraordinary example of how the Cathedral can reach out to those beyond its normal constituency, while maintaining the regular round of worship and sacramental provision for regular worshippers and visitors alike.

And that leads me to single out the most important thing about Westminster Cathedral. Thank God, it remains first and foremost a church, a house of prayer. It is a place where people can come freely and without charge: whether they are attracted by the striking architecture, liturgical celebrations, be they simple or solemn, or the stillness at quieter times of day. The ministry of the Confessional is characteristic and, to the surprise of some, growing. Long may that continue.

One of the great things about the Cathedral is that it manages to achieve what it does without a vast staff and with a budget that is, for an institution of its size and doing what it does, surprisingly modest. Much of the credit for that has to go to the army of volunteers, who give of their time generously and willingly. Some have important public roles – those who have the sometimes thankless task of ushering and keeping order at major events, those involved in the liturgy (readers, Eucharistic Ministers, servers), those who support the work of Clergy House Reception, and many others. Then there are those who are more behind the scenes but equally valued: catechists, volunteers in Clergy House, *Oremus*, and the sewing room, to name but a few. To my mind, one of the great challenges for the next generation of those who love the Cathedral will be to attract new volunteers in an age when, generally, it looks as if people will have to work longer and have less time to give to charitable endeavours than may have been the case in the past.

Though it is invidious to single out individuals, I am going to – just one, the only Chaplain who has been with me throughout my time here. Canon Christopher Tuckwell is a gifted leader of the Cathedral and its staff and a great ambassador for the institution. He has also been an understanding boss, a wise counsellor and a firm friend to me over the years. There is an inevitable sadness in leaving behind much that I have valued, and those I have come to like and respect in my time at Westminster Cathedral, but priests have to be prepared to move on when the call comes. And so I am doing – though I am rather glad it is not so very far away!

All at Oremus wish Fr Alexander every blessing in his new appointment.

'You did it to me!' (Mt 25:40)

A reflection on the Corporal Works of Mercy

Fr Martin Plunkett

In his document for the Year of Mercy, *Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis expresses the following hope: 'It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.' (MV 15) Pope Francis wants us to respond to Our Lord's command to love both God and our neighbour and so grow in our vocations as Christians. A great example of the Corporal works of mercy is found in the life of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who encouraged others to seek Christ within his 'distressing disguise in the poor'. To remind people that when we show love and mercy to others we really do help Jesus himself, Bl Mother Teresa would hold up her hand and count out on her five fingers: 'you – did – it – to – me!' The Corporal Works of Mercy are ways in which we can put this into practice. They are mainly found in the words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel: *to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead.* (Mt 25: 31-45) This month's *Oremus* looks at these Corporal works and next month at the Spiritual works of mercy.



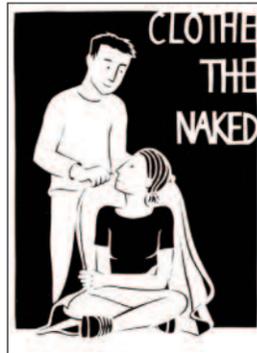
Feed the hungry

When the crowds had been following Jesus and were hungry and tired he responded practically and fed them with a miraculous feast of bread and fish. In this he showed his power and compassion, knowing that the physical needs of his followers needed caring for. In this work of mercy Jesus also pointed towards the spiritual food that he would give as 'the Bread of Life' (Jn 6:35). In the 'Padre Pio Homeless Shelter' in the Bronx in New York, the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal have a policy that their guests eat better than they do – this is to put into practice the teaching that it is Christ whom they welcome in the poor. The physical food that the friars give feeds bodies whilst the love which gives it feeds souls.



Give drink to the thirsty

At Jacob's well in Samaria, a thirsty Jesus asked a Samaritan woman for a drink and that practical request led her to the knowledge of the Messiah and to his offer of 'Living Water' (Jn 4:10). When we respond to the call of Christ in the practical needs of his people we enter into the mystery of our own salvation too. On the Cross Jesus said 'I thirst'; in saying this he expressed not only a physical need but his 'thirst' for souls to receive his love. When we give drink to the thirsty we quench the thirst within them practically and also open the way for Christ's love to quench their spiritual thirst.



Clothe the naked

One cold winter's day in third century northern France a Roman Tribune named Martin caught sight of a poor beggar in rags. To the amusement and ridicule of the crowd, Martin cut his sumptuous cloak in half for the poor man. Later that night, Martin dreamed that he saw Jesus wearing the same cloak and saying 'See! this is the mantle that Martin, yet a catechumen, gave me.' Later Bishop Martin of Tours became one of the most beloved saints of the early Church. Martin may well have reflected afterwards that on the Cross Christ was stripped of his clothes and when we help others in this practical way it is Jesus who welcomingly receives our charity.



Shelter the stranger / homeless

Last year the Diocese of Westminster opened 'Bakhita House'; an initiative inspired by the example of St Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese saint who died in 1947 and who had suffered many years of slavery. St Bakhita became a Canossian religious sister in Italy and was widely known for her extraordinary kindness and charity to all. Bakhita House seeks to 'welcome' women who have suffered in the hands of the modern slave trade of 'trafficking'. When we welcome a stranger or help those who have lost a sense of 'home' in their lives we are reminded of Christ himself, who when he came among us found 'no room at the inn' (Lk 2:7). By supporting works like Bakhita House or by our own acts of hospitality it is Christ whom we welcome in our midst.



Visit / heal the sick

Jesus helped and healed the sick and gave us an example to follow. In one passage we hear how he visited the house of Jairus, whose daughter was dying. When Jesus arrived he took her by the hand and said 'Talitha koumi', meaning 'little girl, arise' (Mk 5:41). The little girl, who had in fact died, came back to life and to full health. Whenever we visit the sick we bring the power of Christ's risen life to others as we restore their hope in his love. The power of this love may sometimes work a physical miracle but it will always bring new life and encouragement to them. Christ is close to the sick because 'He Himself took our infirmities, and bore our diseases.' (Mt 8:17)



Visit the imprisoned

Jesus himself 'was counted among criminals' and associated himself with all those who stand accused (Lk 22:37). On the night before his crucifixion Jesus was put in prison and on the Cross he forgave the penitent thief. In these features we see the mercy of God which extends to all. Of course, society must have its measures to legislate for crime but 'God sees the heart' (1 Sam 16:7). Christ also suffers in those who are condemned to prison. One person who understands this very well is the former criminal and gangster John Pridmore from London's East End. He now travels throughout the world and has spoken to thousands of people in prisons sharing the redeeming message of Christ's love in his life.



Bury the dead

Jesus himself entered into the reality of our own death and was buried in a tomb. We are told that the women followers lovingly brought anointing oils to honour him. However, by his own death, Christ also destroyed the power of death because he is 'the Resurrection and the life' (Jn 11:25). Part of our response to love one another is to care for those who die, in the faith that they will be raised by Christ to share his eternal life. It is still Jesus Christ whom we minister to when we show loving reverence to the departed.

All of us are called to exercise these works of mercy in some way. There may be initiatives in our parish, through work or volunteering that can provide ways for us to do this. Of course, in the work of parents, families and the caring professions many of these works are already plentiful. However, in this Year of Mercy we are all being encouraged to grow firstly in our own sense of the infinite, loving mercy that God shows to each of us. We can then ask God how to express the beauty of that mercy with others, especially those most in need.

Fr Martin Plunkett is a Chaplain at Westminster Cathedral. The images that illustrate this article are taken from the Cathedral's Way of Mercy and the original artwork may be viewed in the chapel of St Andrew. Next month, Fr Martin will reflect on the Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Poetry Corner: Choir School

The Sacrifice

For forty days before Easter we fast
To think about the suffering and strife
Our Lord went through for our sake to the last,
But where we give up food, he gave his life.
Starvation in the wild for forty days
And Satan came and tempted our dear Christ.
So fasting is a truly fitting way
To show that we value his sacrifice.
But it's one thing to think about yourself
And like our Lord to keep in check your greed,
But Lent shows us that all our worldly wealth
Is better used when helping those in need.
Together let us praise with one accord
The life and death of Christ, our risen Lord.

Peter McKenna (Year 8)

Lent Sonnet

Now ordinary time is at an end,
The colour purple on the priestly gown.
This is the season that we know as Lent,
The forty days before the cross and crown.
Out to the desert goes Lord Jesus Christ
To pray, to fast and then to give us alms.
No water, food, but speaks to God the High'st
And gives us love, then we greet him with palms.
"Christ, turn this rock into a loaf of bread
Or caught by angels off the temple peak!"
These words by fallen Lucifer are said,
But these temptations are by Christ made weak.
Lord Jesus Christ, teach me how it is spent,
The forty days that we all know as Lent.

Federico Sadie (Year 8)

Ash Wednesday

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands
The very stones themselves would shout and sing
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognise in Christ their Lord and king.
He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please,
And still to dust and ashes you return.
But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

Leonardo Russo (Year 7)

These sonnets were composed during Lent by Year 7 and 8 pupils at Westminster Cathedral Choir School. If you would like to submit a poem for inclusion in future editions, please contact the Editor – details on page 3.

Fulfilling a Christian Vocation

Full communion with the Catholic Church

At this year's Easter Vigil, the Cardinal welcomed many men and women as new members of the Church and also received into her full communion several others who had already been baptised. This is the story of one of them. We welcome all those who have discerned and responded to God's call to become members of the Catholic Church and keep them in our prayers as they continue their pilgrimage of faith.

Cameron Pyke



I was brought up in the Church of England (actually, initially, in the Church in Wales) and my experience at school as a chorister and of cathedral worship gave me a strong sense of church music and liturgy. My first real awareness of Catholicism was during the Pope's visit in 1982 when, aged 11, I included in my scrapbook the papal itinerary and a photograph of St John Paul II and Archbishop Robert Runcie praying together in Canterbury Cathedral.

At university and subsequently, I was drawn to Anglo-Catholicism, with its liturgical riches and unique atmosphere. But I don't think I lost a sense of the Roman Catholic Church – I visited Rome for Holy Week in 1997 and taught Church History and Catholic Social Teaching at my first school.

Several things drew me, gently (for the most part) but cumulatively to a decision to convert. Quite by chance (in 2009, I think) I saw the second volume of Pope Benedict XVI's *Jesus of Nazareth* in Little St Mary's, Cambridge, where I had worshipped as an undergraduate, and decided to read it. I became inspired by the clarity and poetic beauty of Pope Benedict's prose (particularly in his homilies and general audiences) and what they communicated about the beauty as well as the demands of a faith which is, above all, universal. And then came the Papal visit of 2010. As it proceeded it struck me as a very personal and humble act of pilgrimage, whilst also saying something very important about the value of religion in public life. Standing on the Mall alongside a German lady and her son that sunny Saturday afternoon, and seeing Pope Benedict, was very special indeed. Finally, and most personally, in May 2014 our unborn second child was diagnosed with Downs at 20 weeks' gestation. A very challenging year lay ahead, but we gained encouragement from the Catholic Church's unequivocal emphasis on the sanctity of human life, and our daughter is now 18 months old and a great blessing. The particular kindness I received in private from one retired Catholic priest at that time said a great deal to me about what the Church represents, and did much to confirm a vivid sense that my vocation as a Christian, and as a father and husband, lay within the Catholic Church.

I contacted the RCIA group in the summer of 2015 and was immediately struck by the pastoral sensitivity of Julie Hanssen, who administers the course and whose direction, both in the classes and beyond, has been wonderfully kind-hearted and intuitive. I didn't really know what to expect, and acronyms always confuse me, but I have found the course to be a wonderful and beautifully paced journey. The atmosphere is one of warmth, openness and inquiry.

We met on Wednesday afternoons and, following a cup of tea, we enjoyed a range of talks from priests at the Cathedral. These have been unfailingly thought-provoking and, on occasion, very moving. There's a great atmosphere within the group which, while respecting one's privacy, is mutually affirming; we come to Catholicism from backgrounds which are different yet highly complementary, and I have learned much from the course. As I approach being received into full communion at the Easter Vigil this year, I give thanks to Our Lord for the gentle way he has shaped this journey, and for the people and circumstances I have encountered along it.

Guild of St John Southworth

A pilgrimage to Lancashire's Catholic past

Louise Sage

It was decided at the end of 2015 that members of the Cathedral's Guild of St John Southworth would visit Lancashire where their patron was born and many English martyrs, both clergy and lay, were imprisoned and executed for their faith. On 8 March, a group accompanied by Canon Christopher Tuckwell travelled to Preston.

Following registration at our hotel we caught a train to Lancaster to visit Lancaster Castle, which has 1,000 years of royal heritage, historic justice, felony and incarceration. Our guide, Christopher, was a knowledgeable and enthusiastic young man who took great pleasure in giving us the minutiae of various torture implements and also showed us the actual noose used for hangings. A total of 213 people were executed in the castle between 1800 and 1865, there being 230 types of crimes for which one could be hanged ranging from murder to stealing goods to the value of over 12p – one person who stole a lace handkerchief valued at over the 12p was actually executed. The castle was a very forbidding reminder of what went on there during its history.

We were particularly interested in the imprisonment of St John Southworth in the castle in 1627, together with details of 15 other Catholics who were executed there between 1584 and 1646. One of these martyrs was St Edmund Arrowsmith, who was held in irons in a tiny cell known as the 'Smoothing Iron' in Hadrian's Tower. He was given absolution by St John Southworth through a window as he was taken on a hurdle to his execution in 1628.

One reads about the incarceration, torture and execution details of Catholic martyrs, but it is only when one is standing in the cells and experience the cold, damp and dark conditions that one can really have a clearer picture of their sufferings – we must never forget them.

On our return to Preston we attended early evening Mass at the Jesuit church of St Wilfred's of York off Fishergate, built in 1793, where we were given a warm welcome. This was followed by dinner and a convivial evening at the hotel.

Early the following morning we went by coach to the church of St Mary and St John Southworth in Salmesbury, an ancient 'barn church' built in 1818, access to which was by a rough dirt track. Canon Christopher celebrated Mass there and we were given a very warm welcome indeed by the parish priest, Fr Philip Nathaniel, three dogs and a good number of parishioners. Fr Nathaniel displayed a relic of St John Southworth which we venerated before leaving. This, for me, was one of the highlights of our trip and it was good to see that in such a small church, one of the doors, decorated with greenery, had been designated a Holy Door for the Year of Mercy.

We then travelled a short distance to Salmesbury Hall, home of the Southworth family from 1325 to 1678. We were able to walk around the various rooms which had many interesting artefacts, one of which particularly caught

my eye; a 'pedlar's trunk' which had been discovered in a priest-hole in the house in the 1800s, where it had lain for 200 years. This contained priestly vestments disguised as women's clothing with a pink silk bonnet placed on top. In 1892, it was sold by the Hall's then owner, Joseph Harrison, to a local man who passed it on to Stonyhurst College for safe keeping and which is now on loan to Salmesbury Hall. It is believed that the trunk had belonged to St John Southworth and also used by St Edmund Arrowsmith.

Following a light lunch we travelled to Towneley Hall, set in 400 acres of beautiful parkland, home of an ancient Catholic family, the Towneleys. Our excellent guide, Derek Hartley, took us around Lancashire's finest stately home with its period bedrooms, fine furniture and contemporary exhibitions. He also took us down the underground passage situated between the kitchens and the dining room, along which servants had to carry all the food, keeping it warm by means of hot water dishes. In the kitchens we saw many old utensils, with descriptions of their use, including the largest mortar and pestle I have ever seen.

Towneley Hall also boasts secret priest-holes, and we viewed one through a hole in the floor of the housekeeper's room near the Long Gallery. The house also has its own chapel, built around 1515 by Sir John Towneley with a sixteenth century altarpiece magnificently carved by Flemish craftsmen which was installed there during the late 1700s. Mass is still celebrated there once a year. Just outside the chapel, in a darkened room, are beautifully embroidered vestments preserved in glass cases and saved for the nation by Sir John Towneley following the closure of Whalley Abbey in 1537. We are most certainly in his debt.

We eventually left Towneley Hall and made our way to Preston station for the journey home, which was made in good time in spite of heavy rain and flooding in the Rugby area. We all agreed that it had been a very successful and enjoyable trip – one to be repeated!

Louise Sage is a Cathedral parishioner and volunteer.



Oremus at Twenty

Blandine Tugendhat and Dylan Parry

Although the Cathedral has had a monthly magazine since before the building itself existed, the current title, Oremus, is marking its 20th anniversary this year. In two sets of interviews, which started last month, Natasha Stanic speaks with current and past editors of the magazine. This month she interviews Blandine Tugendhat and Dylan Parry.

Blandine, tell us about your first visit to the Cathedral.

BT: My fiancé made me discover Westminster Cathedral. We would go there to Mass in late 1969 and early 1970. In the spring of 1970 we got married and were delighted that,

by chance, our new home was opposite the Cathedral, where we have lived ever since. In those days the Cathedral was hemmed in behind the tall, dark Victorian buildings along Victoria Street. You could park a car where the lovely steps and the ramp are now. You could stand there and crook up your neck, but you couldn't see much of its façade from standing so close. Inside the chandelier light bulbs were not long-life as they are now. They had a short lifespan, so that at all times each of the chandeliers had non-working light bulbs, some in a large number.

The result could be gloomy. But the fervour of the congregation made up for this!

Dylan, I wonder if your first encounter with the Cathedral has a romantic touch to it like Blandine's?

DP: Since becoming a Catholic as a 16-year-old in 1992, I always had a longing to visit Westminster Cathedral, but London seemed to be a million miles away from the wilds of Wales where I lived. I didn't actually visit the city until 1999, and even then wasn't able to visit Westminster Cathedral. It was around 2001 when I eventually entered the Cathedral. I remember the occasion very well. I was with a friend, who is now a dean of a cathedral in another diocese. Unfortunately, I had been out the night before and didn't feel very well. I had planned to meet my friend at 10.00am to attend the Solemn Mass at 10.30, but I'm afraid I couldn't make it on time. So I met him at 11.00am instead, and we attended the 12.00pm Mass – just catching the tail end of the Solemn Mass. It was amazing! For a poor boy from the sticks, it was like being baptised into a whole new realm of existence – the singing, the decoration, and the scale of the place. It was overwhelming. I don't know who celebrated the Mass that day, but I remember bowing my head during the bidding prayers, for one of the intentions was for those who drink too much!

Blandine, it surely wasn't just the proximity of your home that brought you more into the life of the Cathedral?

BT: You are right, but not entirely. Our two eldest sons became day boys at the Choir School soon after Cardinal Hume was installed and introduced day boys. A big fund-raising event took place at St James's Palace, thanks to the help and kindness of HRH the Duchess of Kent who, although not a Catholic then, was patron of the appeal. A lot of the parents were involved in this beautiful and memorable evening. Our sons became altar servers at the Cathedral during the week.

Dylan, how much time elapsed between your bowed head during the bidding prayers and your next visit?

DP: When I left that day, my assumption was that I probably wouldn't visit the Cathedral again for some time – years, probably. I never thought I'd end up working here. It never even crossed my mind. But, to cut a long story short, after a few years living in Norwich and a stint in a seminary in Spain, a friend invited me to move to London and within a week of this invitation I was living in the Cathedral parish. I moved to London in 2008 and within a few days had offered my services as a Cathedral volunteer, meeting Mary Maxwell for an interview. I worked on the Information Desk for about a year and also started reading at the Cathedral around the same time.

Both of you became indispensable members of the Oremus team. Blandine, how quickly did you become Managing Editor?

BT: In 2003, Mgr Mark Langham asked for volunteers to join the *Oremus* team. I was surprised to be the only one to answer. Soon after my arrival Joseph Bonner's new job took him away. Later, on my return from holidays, I learnt that I had been made the magazine's Managing Editor. It was very daunting. I was blessed with help and constant support from Fr Mark and Ivan Keightly in particular. At first I often had to disturb Joseph Bonner with queries. He was indispensable and always made himself available to answer my calls with great patience. Elizabeth Benjamin was a stalwart member of the team who courageously travelled for more than one hour each way (and is still working for *Oremus* from her home), while Margaret Hurst and Gemma Boase were dedicated proofreaders.

After Fr Tim Dean returned to Clergy House and was appointed Editor, his first and inspired decision was to ask Julian Game, whose superb work and talent he admired, to become the magazine's designer. They both arrived when the first edition of *Oremus* came out in full colour and at no extra cost. This had been made possible by changing printers to Splash, our excellent new printers in North London.

Dylan, what had been your responsibilities for the magazine before you became its Editor?

DP: In January 2009, I was invited to join the *Oremus* team, following an interview with Fr Tim and Blandine. And that's how it all began. It was the beginning of a passion for the magazine and Cathedral communications, which were then run by Fr Tim.

I started work on managing subscriptions. So, after many years of sending out renewal letters and dealing with telephone calls from subscribers, I got a real sense of our readership. After a while, I began to help with proofreading as well as the whole process of putting the magazine together. I had had some experience in magazine production and writing in the past, as well as social media and website management, and I think two degrees in Theology came in useful, too, but I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Fr Tim and Blandine who taught me so much. I am very grateful for the patience shown and skills taught me by both.

Blandine, you gave so much time to the magazine that you must have felt just as passionate for Oremus's success?

BT: I loved the job. I found it challenging and stimulating, even if often exhausting. I learnt a lot and met lovely, interesting people, of great faith: contributors, benefactors, or people in Clergy House. They were supportive, helpful and kind.

Although I tried to plan articles weeks ahead, at first I often worried that we didn't have enough material and the magazine would be rather bare at time of publication. Then I realised that the Holy Spirit was constantly working with us, guiding us and helping us, when I noticed that invariably by the time we went to press, there were many good articles that had come in unexpectedly. At that point we would change the font and picture sizes, cut some articles, postpone others, to accommodate everything. Later I stopped worrying and relied entirely on the Holy Spirit.

I believe that it was your idea, Blandine, to rename the Oremus office in Clergy House?

BT: It was an article you wrote, Natasha, that made us discover the saintly Padre Placido Cortese who was the director of *The Messenger of St Anthony*. Under him its circulation increased from 6,000 to 800,000 copies! During World War II, obeying his superiors, he helped underground resistance networks and escapees, and was betrayed, tortured and murdered by the Gestapo. The office was dedicated to him in a ceremony led by Canon Christopher Tuckwell. Fr Tim had a plaque engraved, recording this dedication, which is now on the office door. Padre Cortese protects *Oremus*. And he sent us Dylan. His deep knowledge of religious matters, his skill with everything to do with IT and publication, but most importantly his great faith, were a real Godsend. With him at the helm, *Oremus* has increased its circulation by thousands, is free, every edition is filled with articles of great quality and the magazine goes from strength to strength.

May God bless *Oremus* always in the work it does for His greater glory.

Dylan, I would like you, as the current editor, to conclude our talk. The quality of Oremus is of an incredibly high standard. Are you aiming at maintaining it as it is now or

are you having a vision of some new features which could even enhance its reputation?

DP: Firstly, I would like to thank Blandine for her extremely kind words – I do not deserve such high praise. I am merely an instrument, as Blandine put it, in a greater work of the Holy Spirit: 'Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory.' It really is the Holy Spirit and the intercession of Padre Cortese that give birth to each new edition of *Oremus* – that and the enormous work and dedication of all our many volunteers. There are so many volunteers and contributors, and all are so equally important, that I am afraid to start naming any, as I know I will probably forget to mention someone – so thank you to all our volunteers! They really do carry this publication. My constant worry is that I tend to be the magazine's greatest hindrance!



Secondly, I'd like to highlight something about the *Oremus* team which is often missed. Not only do we run the magazine, but the office also runs the Cathedral's external communications: the website (which will soon be updated, and which has over 100,000 visits a month) and the Cathedral's Facebook and Twitter pages. After only two years, our Facebook page has nearly 5,500 likes – making it one of the most popular Catholic pages in

the country. Because of its unique position in the life of the Church, Westminster Cathedral fulfils many functions – it is a parish, it is the seat of the Archbishop of Westminster, who gives so much support to *Oremus*, and it is the unofficial mother church for Catholics in England and Wales. It is also a tourist attraction and is globally renowned as a place to visit when in London. So we cover everything that happens here: parish and diocesan events, and national and international gatherings. We also reach out to all who visit, either in person or online, offering to them the message of our faith: friendship with Jesus and new hope and eternal life for the undeserving.

In last month's interview, Joseph Bonner spoke about the unforgiving nature of print, and I agree with him. Soon after the publication of an edition, the inevitable criticisms come my way – a missing word, or a misspelled name. I used to dread the second or third day after publication, but have now developed a thick skin. Nevertheless, constructive criticism is something to be grateful for as it means we try and do better next time. I have a list of particularly vulnerable pages or sections to keep an eye on and we have a marvellous team of proofreaders. But, being human, things will never be perfect. If the magazine was ever perfect, I think the role of a good editor would be to add one small mistake, just to show that it is a human creation, made for human readers. But we will keep on trying to improve and build up on the foundations that were first laid in 1896 (with the first ever Cathedral magazine, 120 years ago) and then again in 1996, with the dawning of our most recent title, *Oremus*.

To Be A Pilgrim...



A medieval pilgrim on the Camino in Spain. (Photo: Sheila Cutts).

Patrick Rogers

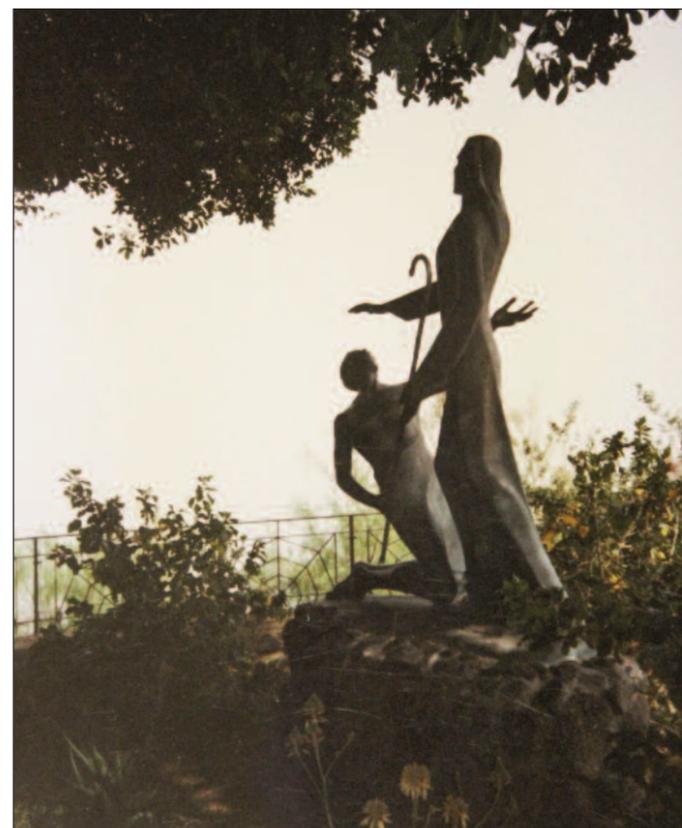
*Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote...
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimage*

Thus begins Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* about a group of medieval pilgrims preparing to leave London for the shrine of St Thomas Becket in Canterbury. April is again upon us 600 years later and some of us are planning to go off on pilgrimage.

So who is a pilgrim? In my experience, like Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims, they are a pretty mixed bunch. But what unites them is that they are looking for something, usually they are not quite sure what. I believe that a pilgrim is someone who in their own way is searching for God. Someone who accepts that he or she is not self-sufficient and for whom this world is not enough, that winning the lottery will not necessarily bring complete and lasting happiness. Someone who realises that in this world they will always be seeking, will never really find what they are looking for. Someone who, like the Israelites in Babylon, looks to a far country as their real home.

So what happens on pilgrimage? I can only say what has happened to me. My first pilgrimage was, appropriately enough, to the greatest of all shrines, to the Holy Land where Christ lived and worked, a place to which Christians have journeyed from all over the world since the time of Constantine the Great in the fourth century. I remember waking up on our first morning to the sound of birdsong by the Sea of Galilee, and then watching a bright blue kingfisher outside the little church of the Primacy beside the sea, while swallows flew in and out of the windows during our first Mass. Later, in Jerusalem at another Mass, I received Communion in the room where the dead Christ was laid, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. An overwhelming experience.

Then to Rome, the second of the great shrines, where the bones of St Peter and St Paul lie together with thousands of other Christian martyrs. I attended Mass in the catacombs where so many of those martyrs were laid. And after Rome to Santiago de Compostela, in north-west Spain, where the body of St James the Great is said to have been buried. The long-distance footpath to this, the third of the great medieval shrines, is known in France as *La Route* (or *Le Chemin*) de Saint-Jacques. In between Le Puy and Conques, in a village called Saint-Alban-sur-Limagnole, I was roughly seized by the parish priest after early morning Mass and ordered to repeat the words 'Sur le Chemin de Saint-Jacques soit ma lumière, Seigneur. Sur le chemin de



Christ with St Peter outside the church of the Primacy with a misty Sea of Galilee in the background.



A pilgrim way-mark near Estaing, on La Route de Saint Jacques, France (1997).

ma vie, soit ma lumière, Seigneur' (On the Way of St James be my light, Lord. On the way of my life be my light, Lord). He refused to let me go until I was word perfect.

Over the Pyrenees into Spain, where the Way of St James becomes simply *El Camino* (the Way), to Ponferrada and eventually to a *refugio* (hostel) at O Cebreiro, a place high in the mountains of Galicia where the clouds swirl around and the views can be breathtaking. But I felt ill at ease and depressed and the only one who really understood was the *refugio* manager's huge Alsatian dog who nuzzled up to give me a cuddle whenever we met. After our arrival all I really wanted was to get away from other people and have peace and quiet to think. You experience both joy and sorrow on pilgrimage. Things happen that you do not understand – but which you will remember and are meant to remember.



The 'Compostela' certificate.

Finally, to Santiago de Compostela itself on a day when we walked 37km in constant rain and arrived cold and soaked to the skin. But Olwen, one of my companions, told me that despite, or perhaps because of this, she entered the Cathedral, where St James is said to lie, with a great sense of joy. She had become a Christian somewhere along the *Camino*. But I had pulled a muscle in my ankle and the pain had gradually increased. Luckily Ken, one of my fellow pilgrims, was a retired doctor and he bound it up. But on his orders I was confined to the city and so attended the midday pilgrims' Mass the next day and saw that immense glowing, smoking censer of incense, called the

botafumeiro swung by eight men between the Cathedral transepts, so low and so close to you that each time you believed that it would take your head off.

In medieval times England was called 'Our Lady's Dowry' and had a great shrine in her honour at Walsingham. Like so many others, it was destroyed by Henry VIII's men but it lives on, in the peaceful Norfolk countryside, and is still an important place of pilgrimage. But other Marian shrines, notably Lourdes and Fatima, have become more popular internationally. On my first visit to Lourdes I saw a small boy, so ill and exhausted that his face was grey, gazing at me from over his father's shoulder, and I felt a great wave of compassion and love and suddenly understood what Lourdes is all about. The next day, I went with my sisters to the Grotto for the first time, and the sun shone down through the clouds in great shafts of light and the wind blew the leaves along the river Gave and around the Grotto in great swirling gusts. One flew into my hand – I still have it – and I felt an immense sense of peace.

And finally to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, which many pilgrims approach across the square on their knees. We stood waiting for five hours for Mass among tens of thousands of people, a large proportion from Eastern Europe. But most were Portuguese from the surrounding countryside and were very wet, for it had rained heavily during the night and was still raining and they often had only a blanket to protect them. And so the Mass started and at the sign of peace a young Portuguese girl suddenly seized me and kissed me hard on both cheeks. So, of course, I kissed all the old ladies around me and everyone broke into broad smiles. For we had one God and one faith and were one people, though from many different lands.



The scallop shell and staff – symbols of pilgrimage – in the chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury here in the Cathedral.

What do you need on pilgrimage? Not much. 'Fullness to such a burden is that go on pilgrimage' as John Bunyan put it in *Pilgrim's Progress*. You learn to observe and appreciate the simple things – a perfectly formed spider's web outlined in dew in the early morning, a draught of cold, fresh water after a long walk on a hot day, the myriad of stars surrounding and enfolding you on a pitch-black night in the mountains. The medieval pilgrim wore a long tunic, a cloak, a broad brimmed hat and a pair of sandals. He carried a leather pouch, a gourd of water and a staff against wolves and thieves. All you need besides is an open heart and an open mind. For going on pilgrimage is like reaching out to God. He will do the rest. *Ultréia!*



© Diocese of Westminster

Stations in Lent

Following the 5.30pm Mass on Fridays throughout Lent, the Stations of the Cross were led by a Cathedral chaplain. This photo was taken on Friday 26 February and shows Fr Michael Donaghy leading meditations and prayers of St Alphonus Liguori at the Second Station.

Year of Mercy Primary School Mass

On the afternoon of 2 March, Cardinal Vincent Nichols celebrated a Year of Mercy Mass here for 900 primary school pilgrims from across the Diocese.



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© Westminster Cathedral

Happy Birthday, Sr Angelina!

Saturday 5 March marked a significant birthday for Sr Angelina Arruda, the Superior of the Convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Victories, based in Clergy House. Sr Angelina and her Sisters look after the Cathedral chaplains and are much loved by all at the Cathedral. This photo was taken during a reception held for Sr Angelina on Friday 4 March.

Mothering Sunday

This photo was taken on 6 March – *Laetare* Sunday, also known as ‘Mothering Sunday’. The Cardinal celebrated the 9.00am Mass at the Cathedral on that day, and then gave flowers to the children present, inviting them to give them to their mothers as a gift. This photo was taken on after Mass.



© Westminster Cathedral



© Westminster Cathedral

St John Passion Concert

The Westminster Cathedral Choir and Baroque Orchestra, under the direction of Martin Baker, performed J S Bach's *St John Passion* on Wednesday 16 March. The concert was a great success, and the next one, *The Treasures of the Spanish Renaissance*, to be performed on 25 May, is eagerly anticipated. This photo was taken during the rehearsals for *St John Passion*.

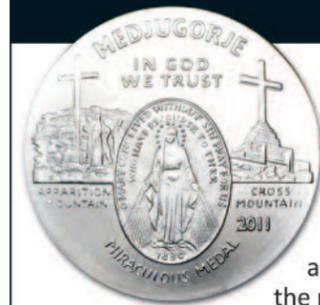


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Mill Hill Missionaries

A free exhibition celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Mill Hill Missionaries was hosted in the Cathedral's chapel of St Joseph from 10 March until the feast of St Joseph, Saturday 19 March – when, at time of printing, Cardinal Vincent Nichols was due to celebrate a Mass in thanksgiving for the Mill Hill Missionaries. The St Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill was founded by the future Cardinal Vaughan in 1866. He later founded Westminster Cathedral following his appointment as the third Archbishop of Westminster. A member of the Mill Hill Missionaries, Br Eddie Slawinski MHM, can be seen in this photo. Br Eddie set up the exhibition and was helped by the MHM's National Appeals Director, Lynne Powell.

The Miraculous Medal



It was on June 24th, 1881, the feast of St. John the Baptist, that Our Lady was reportedly first seen, on that now famous mountain, known as Podbrdo, overlooking the parish of Medjugorje.

Our Miraculous Medal Silver coin features images of the Virgin Mary on apparition mountain and cross mountain.

On the reverse of the coin it depicts the image of the Bedroom of Apparition and the field of Apparition.



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Aspects of Shakespeare

'Something Rich and Strange'

Sharon Jennings



George Romney – *The Tempest*

In May 1609, a fleet of nine ships carrying 500 souls, set sail from England to join the new colony in Virginia. In July, a violent storm beset the fleet, and separated its flagship, the *Sea Venture*, from the rest. Against all odds, eight ships managed to reach their destination, but of the ninth there had been no word, and they arrived in the sure and sad certainty that the *Sea Venture*, and all who sailed in her, had been lost.

Astoundingly, about a year later, they appeared alive and well in Florida. Even the ship had been saved. Various pamphlets of the time recounted the colourful details of the adventure: the terrifying storm, the merciful sighting of land, the skill of the mariners who drove the ship between reefs so that everyone – 150 crew and settlers and one dog – could get safely to shore, and their sojourn on a discovered but uninhabited island called Bermuda.

This much talked-of event seems to have excited Shakespeare's imagination profoundly. His mind worked upon its many aspects, finding in them a perfect shell (no pun intended!) through which to express the ideas and themes which preoccupied him in the later years of his writing life. The result was his last play, first performed in 1611, *The Tempest*.

Storms are not uncommon in Shakespeare's plays: they usually mirror social or psychological upheaval, as in the early scenes of *Macbeth*, the night before the assassination of Julius Caesar, or the disintegration of both King Lear's kingdom and his reason. They are natural events which signal the untuning of the proper order of things, a process we have been shown in earlier scenes. *The Tempest*, however, begins in the middle of a storm, and we hear about the 'foul play' afterwards. The storm is as dreadful as that in which the *Sea Venture* ran aground, and the language with which the sailors and aristocratic passengers shout at each other is of hanging, plague, howling, pox, blasphemy and death: all the evils of the world. Moreover, social division has been completely obliterated. 'What care these roarers for the name of king?' asks the Boatswain. And as the ship splits, the sailors cry: 'All lost! To prayers, to prayers! All lost!'

Such a paring down of human life to its bare and ugly bones, is reminiscent of *King Lear*, though less harrowing since we have not yet come to care about the characters. The following scene, however, is one of the utmost contrast: from the peace of his own desert island, we learn that Prospero, usurped Duke of Milan, (who in the absence of political powers has taken up magic ones) has in fact conjured up the storm in order to gather together the ship's passengers for his various purposes. Unlike them, he is in complete control, and remains so throughout the action of the play. In other words, Shakespeare is showing us life not only as we live it, but also from the perspective of the one who controls it – he is making us, as Lear says to Cordelia, 'God's spies.'

Dramatically, this removes any element of suspense. We know that there will be 'No harm!' as Prospero tells Miranda. Everything will be all right in the end. This of course we believe, both in life and in the play. But the process by which it comes out is what preoccupies us for most of the time – a process which involves sin, injustice, sorrow and loss. The stuff of the great tragedies.

One of Prospero's purposes is to hold those who sinned against him to account and thus find justice for himself. They are, of course, amongst the passengers: his brother Antonio, Alonso, the King of Naples, and his brother Sebastian. They it was who 12 years before usurped his kingdom and abandoned him, with his infant daughter Miranda, to the sea in a leaky boat. He leads them on to his island and tempts them with a wonderful banquet, which disappears the moment they plunge into it and is replaced by the spirit Ariel in the form of a harpy, the creature of retribution. Without more ado, they are denounced: 'You are three men of sin...' What they have done is spelt out to them, and they are given the stark alternatives of 'Ling'ring perdition, worse than any death' or 'heart's sorrow/ And a clear life ensuing.'

Ariel links Alonso's guilt with the loss of his son Ferdinand, who was also on board the ship, and his despair is so profound that suicide seems the only way forward. He can, after all, put nothing right. He believes Prospero and his daughter to have perished on the seas twelve years before; as far as he knows, his son has gone the same way. And it is all his fault.

When a little later he unbelievably meets with Prospero himself, he is able to beg for, and receive, forgiveness; and all three villains agree to return the dukedom to its rightful owner. So some of the consequences of his sin have been reversed. But he has still lost his son, and cannot bear it. 'Irreparable is the loss, and patience/ Says it is past her cure.' This could be Lear, or any of the tragic heroes, speaking.

Another of Prospero's purposes is match-making. In between the scenes of guilt and despair, we watch the

amazingly rapid growth of love between Ferdinand (who has not drowned at all) and Miranda: a love by which an ancient enmity can be healed. And when Prospero leads the still sorrowful Alonso into his cell, it is to find the two together – playing chess, as young lovers always do. That which was lost was found; that which was dead, alive again.

The storm of *The Tempest* brings recovery and resurrection; but there is more than that. After it, none of the characters is the same. This is not only in the pedestrian way of 'learning a lesson'. Their quality has been changed into something spiritual. This reaches us through the poetry and songs. 'Sounds and sweet airs that give delight,' as the monster Caliban says, expressing our longing for its beauty: '...in dreaming,/ The clouds methought would open and show riches/ Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked/ I cried to dream again.'

The regenerative effects of the storm are described by Ariel, who has been darting around the ship as it was tossed on the waves: 'Not a hair perished;/ On their sustaining garments not a blemish,/ But fresher than before. 'And this is endorsed by Gonzalo, the good councillor: 'Our garments being, as they were, drenched in the sea, hold not withstanding their freshness and gloss, being rather new-dyed than stained with salt water.' But most memorably, Ariel describes the utter transformation of a human being into a redeemed soul:

*Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his soul are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes,
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.*

This is the last in the series of articles marking the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

Catholic Women of the Year 2016

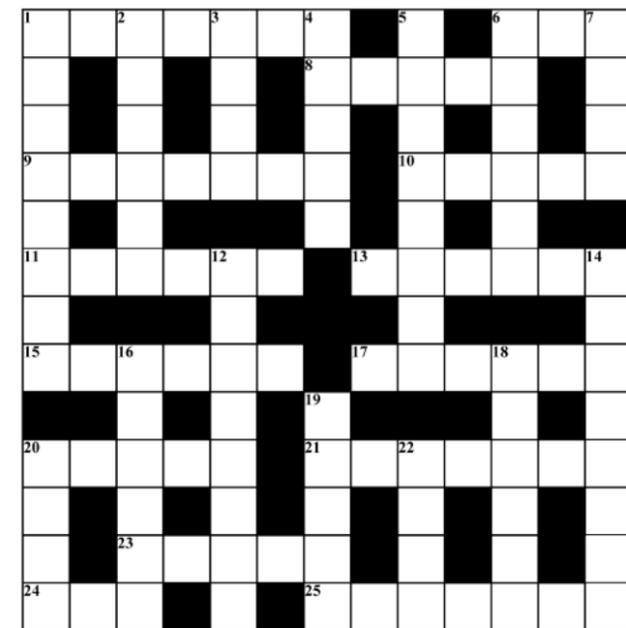
We invite nominations for the 2016 Catholic Women of the Year. Any Catholic woman can be nominated. We are looking for the 'unsung heroines': these may be women who are active in their local parish or community, in visiting the sick or imprisoned, in preparing children for First Communion or helping with projects for the aged or housebound. Nominators may think of women who, in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, particularly exemplify one of the corporal or spiritual works of mercy.

All that is required is a letter, setting out, ideally on one page, the reasons why the person concerned is worthy of nomination. There is no financial reward, but Catholic Women of the Year are special guests at the annual luncheon, which will be held in the autumn.

Nominations should be sent by 30 May to:
Catholic Women of the Year 2016
33 Ashburnham Tower
World's End Estate
London SW10 0EE

or by completing the form on our website: www.cwoy.org

Patti Fordyce, Chairman of the Catholic Women of the Year Committee



March 2016 Alan Frost

Clues Across

- 1 '----- et Melisande', opera by Debussy (7)
- 6 Conclude and terminate (3)
- 8 Actor Jeremy does his share of domestic chores? (5)
- 9 Cathedral and city associated with St Hugh (7)
- 10 Relatives who may be monozygotic or dizygotic (5)
- 11 From where homily is delivered during Mass (6)
- 13 See 12 Down
- 15 Not of sound mind (6)
- 17 'Porta manes, et ----- maris' (Star of the Sea), Alma Redemptoris Mater (6)
- 20 A Missa Brevis is a ----- Mass (5)
- 21 Quick reply in words or sword! (7)
- 23 'Bleak -----', Dickens' novel in which Westminster Bridge features (5)
- 24 --- Angeles, heavenly name for Californian city! (3)
- 25 First Book of the Bible (7)

Clues Down

- 1 City whose Christians received Letter from St. Paul (8)
- 2 ----- Bart, London-born composer of hit musical Oliver! (6)
- 3 Therefore monster turned round! (4)
- 4 St Catherine of -----, Patron of Dominican tertiaryaries, Feast Day 29 April (5)
- 5 St Louis-Marie de -----, author of True Devotion to Mary, Feast Day 28 April (8)
- 6 Dweller in the Arctic Circle (6)
- 7 'Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus ---- sabaoth' (4)
- 12 & 13 Acr: Saint founder of the Society of Jesus (8,6)
- 14 Name of two early Popes [acceded 535 and 946] (8)
- 16 Animals guilty of one of the Seven Deadly Sins? (6)
- 18 Orlande, composer of much religious music, his polyphony in class of Palestrina and Victoria (6)
- 19 Norwegian composer of Peer Gynt Suite (5)
- 20 '----, ----, why do you persecute Me?' [Acts 9] (4)
- 22 Suffering without which no gain? (4)

ANSWERS

Across: 1 Pelleas 6 End 8 Irons 9 Lincoln 10 Twins 11 Pulpit 13 Loyola
15 Inane 17 Stella 20 Short 21 Riposte 23 House 24 Los
25 Genesis
Down: 1 Phillip 2 Lionel 3 Ergo 4 Siena 5 Montfort 6 Eskimo 7 Deus
12 Ignatius 14 Agapeus 16 Sloths 18 Lassus 19 Greg 20 Saul
22 Pain

Exploding into the Priesthood

Vlad becomes Fr Vlad...

Mgr Vladimir Felzmann

My parents were born in Austro-Hungary. At that time, the clergy formed part of the civil service and people of my parents' generation had to give thanks to 'God and The Emperor' for the harvest each autumn. As a result, they were anti-clerical. In my family, priests were seen as self-indulgent, anti-intellectual and anti-democratic. Something I vowed never to be.

So I studied Maths and Science – as well as an A Level in Czech. And, having been the under 15s Wandsworth javelin champion and school captain with my football colours, I applied to and was accepted by Imperial College to study Civil Engineering.

I was going to help God make this world a better place by building roads, bridges, sewers and homes. And, of course, when we would inevitably be invaded (the pessimists thought by China, optimists by Russia), and the country needed to be rebuilt, the invaders might not wish to immediately liquidate us civil engineers.



The author and his mother at the Opus Dei headquarters, 1968

getting to know it and what it stood for. As I had bought a second hand BSA Bantam two-stroke motorbike for £30 (having worked for the Post Office before Christmas at 3/3d an hour) and was desperate to have a reason to ride it, I said I would visit Netherhall. And I did.

There I discovered it was run by Opus Dei. Ray was a numerary member and had been given my name by one of the Boy Scouts from Streatham 28. Opus Dei had just purchased a house – Grandpont House – in Oxford and it needed a lot of DIY to get it into shape. Having helped my father decorate and having learned a bit of electrics at Imperial, I was only too happy to ride there – on the old A40 – for many weekends over that Summer of '59.

Then, as the end of the summer term came into view, we – 'the Civils' – were given our vacation training jobs. I was told to go to Argyll and work with what then was called J L Eve Construction, building the pylon-line down to Cambletown. It was there that I learned to use gelignite – which, incidentally, smells of almonds.

But it was the scenery, the geology, the natural-ethos of that place which exploded my Eriskay experience into a far deeper, implacable pressure.

After a break in Paris with my sister, giving money to the poor did nothing to assuage the pain of wanting to do good for God. I had to give myself – surrender myself – to Him. The priesthood, it seemed, was the only way I could. So, as soon as I was back in London I contacted my Jesuit friend.

Many a time I had taken the 28th camping at Heythrop, Chipping Norton, and had got to know some 'Jays' rather well. My interview with their vocations director was arranged. I was to go to Manresa House in Roehampton. But first, I had to tell my dad.

So, Monday evening, having listened to the nine o'clock news together on the old Telefunken Radio to which – under pain of death if discovered – we had listened to the BBC as the war drew to its close, I said: 'Dad... I have to tell you something. I am going to join the Jesuits.'

The shock! The horror! The pain on my father's face made me blurt out: 'All right I won't. I will join Opus Dei instead.' With massive, palpable relief, my father said, 'Oh, that's fine.' It turned out – from what he had culled from my conversations over the past four months – that he thought Opus Dei was akin to the university clubs with which he was familiar in his own student days. Next day, Tuesday, off I went on my BSA to Netherhall.



On the day before ordination with his mother and friends, 1969

I asked to join as a numerary by writing my letter to 'The Father', as the founder of Opus Dei was called. On Friday I moved in. The following summer, the summer of '60, having been promoted to Secretary of Netherhall, I received a phone call. My father had suffered two heart-attacks while on holiday in Cornwall and was dead. Next day I was introduced to Jose Maria Escriva de Balaguer, the founder of Opus Dei – who used to spend his summers in Hampstead, writing his 'letters'. He took me under his wing. I became 'el mimado del padre': the Father's favourite. Every summer while I was still in the UK, I would spend time with him.

Having completed my studies at Imperial while also Director of Netherhall, he invited me to go to Rome to study Theology. There I just caught the tail-end of Vatican II. Having obtained a Doctorate in Dogmatic Theology at the Lateran University, Rome – *summa cum laude* – and having been taken for a farewell-to-Rome trip by The Father in his air-conditioned Merc, I was sent to Madrid to be ordained priest for Opus Dei on 31 September '69.

I was an Opus Dei priest until – as gradually it dawned on me I must (but that is another story!) – I left it and was incardinated by Cardinal Basil Hume into the Diocese of Westminster on 1 April 1982 – God has a sense of humour!

My mother was there for my ordination. After all, very proud to be the mother of a priest.

Mgr Vladimir Felzmann is the Diocesan Chaplain for Sport and is also the Chief Executive of the John Paul II Foundation for Sport (jp2f4s).



© Fr Gerard O'Brien

Chapel of Ease

Sacred Heart, Horseferry Road

Fr Gerard O'Brien

When Archbishop Francis Bourne was appointed to the See of Westminster in 1903, the Cathedral was responsible for a vast area, including Westminster and Pimlico – from Chelsea Bridge to Westminster Bridge with Westminster Cathedral at the centre. Bourne therefore created 'chapels of ease' or 'Mass centres' for the Cathedral. The last chapel that remains open is the church of the Sacred Heart on Horseferry Road, close to Vincent Square.

The original Victorian Gothic church was donated to Cardinal Bourne by a benefactor in 1927 and he invited the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration to take charge. It was destroyed in the war in 1944. On 23 June 1962, Cardinal Godfrey laid the foundation stone of the present church on the original site. Designed by H G Clacy of Reigate and built of red brick and Portland stone with a steeply pitched roof of red tiles, the focal point of the interior is the Throne of Exposition under a baldacchino. On either side are vertical stained-glass windows showing grape-bearing vines and ears of wheat. In an alcove on the left of the church are Stations of the Cross carved in perspex by Dr Arthur Fleischmann.

Mass is celebrated every Sunday at 11.00am and each Thursday at 12.30pm. Weddings, funerals, baptisms and the Sacrament of Confession take place and it makes for a more intimate setting than Westminster Cathedral.

The London Croatian Chaplaincy gather every Sunday at 4.00pm to celebrate Mass in Croatian. They are a lively and vibrant community with parishioners that are actively engaged in various chaplaincy activities – playing instruments and singing at Mass and providing activities and support to each other. Their shepherd is Fr Ljubomir Simunovic, a Franciscan friar, who will (at time of writing) celebrate the Easter Triduum with his community in the Sacred Heart church.

Fr Gerard O'Brien is a Cathedral Chaplain.



The 28th Streatham camping, summer 1956

As a part of my 'being good', I became an assistant Scout Master – 28th Streatham – and trained on lengthy over-night hikes to be able more likely to survive the inevitable forced marches the future was sure to bring. The slogan in the '50s 'Better dead than Red' encouraged me to dream, 'Better survive alive – under the Reds – to be able to help others.'

At Imperial, I took up rowing. My father had won many medals back in Czechoslovakia before the war and I had to be as good as him. I also joined the CathSoc. And it was in that group that I discovered the 'Student Cross'. So one Easter, having left Ely Place on Palm Sunday, there I was, walking on this pilgrimage to Walsingham – in those days with full sleeping kit and change of clothes in a rucksack.

I soon noticed that Ray – a medical student – somehow managed to always be walking, and even rolling out his sleeping bag on those church-hall floors, next to me. As we were being driven by coach back to London, Ray informed me he was living at Netherhall House and said I would enjoy

Introducing Chuckles the Corgi



Christina White

Every morning I walk our dog along a railway walk that meanders its way through our bit of north London. While he potters, sniffs and greets the day, I can contemplate the coming season. The daffodils have come and gone, and the wild garlic is just starting to peep through; a sure sign that spring is well and truly here. The spring season for the Friends has, similarly, also broken through the fug of winter. Our newsletter was posted to all members at the end of March with promises of longer days and cocktails for spring evenings.

It is nearly nine years since the appeal for the mosaics of St George's chapel was formally launched and now, the end is in sight. The new vault mosaics of the ceiling have been completed, leaving just the West wall remaining. St George's Day falls on a Saturday this year and we thought it would be appropriate to commemorate the saint with a cocktail party in Clergy House Library. There will be a 'Red Rose' and a 'Gorgeous George', ingredients for both a closely guarded secret. Weather permitting we may move to the pretty courtyard garden but no one wants to second guess an April in London: heat wave or showers? We are hoping, post Lenten promises, for a good turnout.

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare and we are delighted to welcome Professor Richard Wilson to the Cathedral on Thursday 28 April for his talk on the Bard. His latest book *Worldly Shakespeare*, touches on issues of religious violence, free speech and globalisation and he will also be harking back 'to the dramatist's own confessional background'. He is joining us fresh from a conference on Shakespeare in Rome so we might get some touches of the Tiber through his contemplations. There will be a book signing after the talk.

Our tour of the new European Galleries at the V&A was scheduled for March but we put the date back to meet the newsletter deadline and to make an evening outing just a little more enticing. Please do come and join us for a leisurely stroll, with a glass of wine to follow. The days are indeed getting longer and it makes the prospect of an evening at the V&A even more appealing. Paul Pickering will be our guide for the event.

Thank you to all who turned out for the St Patrick's Evening which was organised this year by Mary Maxwell and the parish social committee. Over 100 people turned out to dance the

night away and I have received numerous reports that the supper was delicious and the wine flowed. Mary will again be organising the April Quiz and fish and chip supper on 12 April. Tickets are now on sale from Clergy House.

A reminder that our special bespoke silver eagle pendants, priced £150, are on sale through the Cathedral Gift Shop. These are a replica of the Cathedral's own stone eagles which stand sentinel at the top of the campanile. A strictly limited edition, all proceeds will go to the Cathedral Tower Appeal. And finally, the handsome beast adorning the Friends' Page this month is Chuckles the corgi who came to visit at the end of March. Chuckles will be much in evidence in November and December; the new star of the Christmas Fair. More next month.

Forthcoming Events

Friday 8 April: Highlights of the New European Galleries 1600 – 1800 at the V&A with Paul Pickering. Our evening tour will begin at 6.00pm, please meet in the main foyer of the museum at 5.45pm. Glass of wine and nibbles to follow. Tickets £14.00.

Tuesday 12 April: Quiz and Fish and Chip Supper. Westminster Cathedral Hall, 6.45pm. Tickets £15.

Saturday 23 April: St George's Day Cocktail Party. Clergy House Library, 7.15pm. Tickets £20

Thursday 28 April: Professor Richard Wilson's Shakespeare Talk. Westminster Cathedral Hall, 7.00pm. Tickets £10

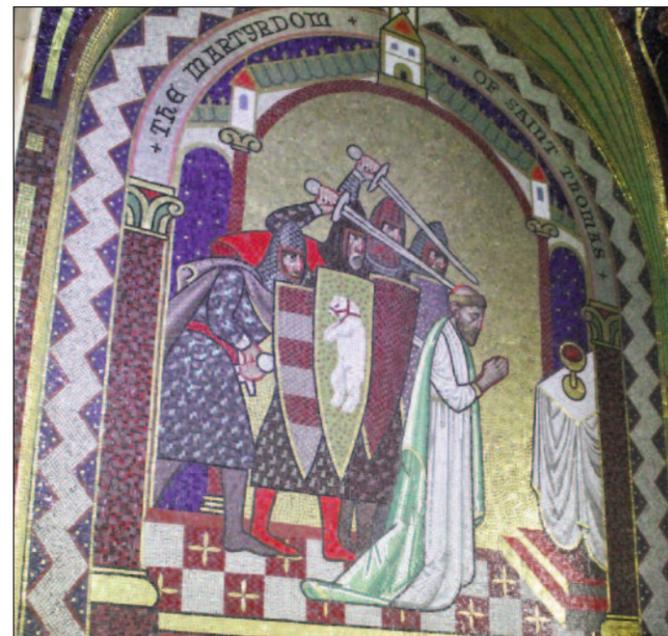
How to contact us

- Write to: Friends' Office, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW
- Call: 020 7798 9059
- Email: friends@westminstercathedral.org.uk

Registered Charity number 272899

Preparing to Welcome 'Our Saint' Hungarian Pilgrimage of the Relics of St Thomas Becket

Fr Nicholas Schofield



Next month, the relics of St Thomas Becket will be brought to London from Esztergom in Hungary, where they have been venerated for centuries. They will be present at the Cathedral on 23-24 May, before being taken to Westminster Abbey and other London locations, including the Houses of Parliament. A symposium on St Thomas will be held at Lambeth Palace. The relics will then be transferred to Rochester and finally Canterbury. This exciting initiative, which was written about in last month's *Oremus*, is being organised by the Hungarian Embassy, together with the Church of England and the Catholic Church, and it is expected that the President of Hungary and Cardinal Péter Erdő of Esztergom will be present for some of the celebrations.

No one knows how exactly the relics reached Hungary. Devotion to St Thomas was widespread across Europe after his canonisation in 1173 and relics may have been obtained by his friend, Cardinal Lukács Bánffy of Esztergom, by Margaret of France (Henry II's daughter-in-law who went on to marry Béla III of Hungary), or by one of the Hungarian prelates present at the translation of the saint's body in 1220. The chapel of St Thomas at Esztergom is first mentioned in 1191, situated on a hill named after the martyr. Interestingly, devotion to Becket took on a new lease of life in Hungary during the Communist regime, when St Thomas was seen as a champion of religious freedom, and since 1977 a candle-lighting ceremony has been held in Esztergom on his feast day.

Relics of St Thomas are not unique. Within the Diocese of Westminster there are small relics at the Cathedral and St Thomas' church at Fulham, and a mitre thought to have belonged to the saint is on loan from the Diocese to the Victoria and Albert Museum. Other relics can be found at St Thomas' church in Canterbury, Stonyhurst, and elsewhere.

Later this year, there are plans for the Saint's tunic to be brought to Canterbury from Rome's *Santa Maria Maggiore*.

Why is St Thomas so significant? Compared to some popular saints, like St Francis or Mother Teresa, he is not perhaps an immediately attractive figure. He seems so closely bound to his age and, as Lord Chancellor and then Archbishop of Canterbury, he was at times a rather difficult character – brash, arrogant and stubborn.

But look a bit deeper and a different picture emerges. Firstly, St Thomas is a very human figure and therefore surprisingly accessible. As Lord Chancellor, he enjoyed the wealth and power that his position gave him but that all changed when he became Archbishop in 1162. He seems to have experienced some sort of conversion. In his own words, he went from being 'a patron of play-actors and a follower of hounds, to being a shepherd of souls,' spending much time in prayer and fasting, conscientious in his duties and generous to the poor. Indeed, for this reason, the Church today honours St Thomas as 'Patron of the Pastoral Clergy of England'.

Moreover, St Thomas was careful to defend the Church from what he saw as 'tyranny'. From a twenty-first century angle, it is hard to feel the same passion as St Thomas over some of these emotive issues. For example, Becket strongly held that clerics had the right to be tried by a church rather than a secular court, the so-called 'Benefit of Clergy', though this did not necessarily mean leniency in punishment for those who were guilty. He saw compromise in these matters as the thin end of a dangerous wedge and stood up to the pretensions of a regime that tried to compromise the Church's freedoms.

We honour St Thomas, of course, as 'the holy blissful martyr' (to use Chaucer's phrase); a man who shed his blood for his beliefs and principles, who gave the ultimate witness to Christ. It was the nature of his death that shocked the world: an Archbishop struck down in his own Cathedral, while Vespers (or the evening service) was being sung, a few days after Christmas 1170. Although the monks at Canterbury tried to prevent a cult from developing, it grew spontaneously among the sick and the poor, who claimed the murdered Archbishop's miraculous intercession. After part of Canterbury Cathedral was destroyed by fire in 1173, it was rebuilt as a magnificent shrine: not only the resting place of a saint but the location of his martyrdom.

The Hungarian pilgrimage reminds us that St Thomas is very much a shared saint – across the denominations and in various countries. But he is also very much 'our saint,' born and bred in London, his chapel once standing on London Bridge and his name given to a famous hospital. May he continue to inspire as a model for pastoral life and a martyr for freedom and truth.

Fr Nicholas Schofield is the Archivist for the Diocese of Westminster and is the parish priest of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Michael's, Uxbridge.

St Kateri Tekakwitha

'Lily of the Mohawks'

Marthe Allain



St Kateri was born in Auriesville New York in 1656. Her mother was brought up near a French colony, so she was raised a Catholic and taken to the shores of the Mohawk River in northeastern New York. It was here that Kateri's father, Kenneronkwa (meaning Beloved), who was a Mohawk warrior, saved Kateri's mother from the torture and fire of a pagan ritual. Kenneronkwa was tall and dark, and a great

hunter. He took Kahenta for his wife and she gave birth to a son and a daughter; the girl was called Kateri Tekakwitha.

The little family lived in an Iroquois longhouse at Gandawague, a Mohawk village. Smallpox was a terrible epidemic at the time, and sadly Kateri's parents both died of the illness, as did her brother. Kateri too, had the smallpox, but managed to survive though it left her with the characteristic 'pox marks'. A Jesuit Fr Le Moyne, visited the Mohawks and found the little Kateri strapped to her mother's cradle-board. He took pity on the little girl and found her uncle who then took her into his home. Kateri had the well-known features of the Indian, with high cheek bones and soft, dark eyes; she wore the traditional dress of moccasins and animal skins, with beads around her neck.

Kateri was a shy but happy child and despite weakness tried to help others. As she grew into a woman, her adopted family were eager for her to marry but Kateri learnt about Jesus from Jesuit Missionaries visiting nearby. Kateri knew about baptism, and wanted with all her heart to ask a Jesuit to baptise her, but feared her uncle would be angry with her. But when she was nineteen, Kateri injured herself and it left an opportunity for Fr de Lamberville, a Jesuit, to realise her wish for conversion and she was baptised in April 1676.

Kateri's devotion became very strong and she would go to regular devotion and Mass, but because of her love of Jesus and her eagerness to take part in the Rosary and prayer as a Christian, many of her own kind, including her uncle, accused her of being a witch. Kateri was able, with the help of her local priest and other Christians in her village, to find safety in Canada with a Christian Colony of Indians.

From the time she came to Canada, Kateri gave herself to God; she was cheerful, kind, and spent much time in prayer. Early in the morning she would wait in the coldest weather

for her local chapel to open and then remain there long after Mass. Once she had made her first Holy Communion in 1677, at the St Francis Xavier mission, she devoted herself to Our Lord in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Carving a crucifix on a tree in a wood, she would kneel there and pray:

'I offer my soul to Christ the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and my body to Christ in the Lord, hanging on the Cross.' She cared for the sick, loved the lonely and spent her hours caring for others.

Kateri had started to wear a blanket of blue and the braids of an unmarried Iroquois maiden, in consecrating her life as a bride of Jesus. Probably because of the small pox when she was a child, Kateri's health became very frail, in Holy Week of 1680 she suffered terrible chest pain and headaches, but felt that this was to suffer like Jesus and accepted it. Kateri's last words were 'Jesus, Mary, I love you!' She was only 24. The Indians came to kiss her and all said 'we have lost our saint'. Some of Kateri's friends felt she would love to think of spending Holy Week in Heaven! Many who prayed to her were cured of sickness, and healed of illness.



On 22 June 1980, Pope St John Paul II declared Kateri blessed. She was the first North American saint to be canonised on 12 October 2012. St Kateri is special to me, because she put up with a lot of pain and she had to go through a lot of trials of life, and she found it easy to cope with. I think that we should all offer up our little pains, just like St Kateri did. I pray to the Lily of the Mohawks to inspire my life with virtue for Jesus.

Visiting Choirs

The Girls' Choir of Canterbury Cathedral



David Newsholme

The Girls' Choir of Canterbury Cathedral was privileged to sing its first service of 2016 at Westminster Cathedral on 16 January. We were warmly greeted and well looked after by Organ Scholar Alexander Pott, who also provided expert accompaniment to our performances of music by Cornelius, Fauré and MacMillan.

The experience of singing at a Catholic Mass was something quite different for this choir, which most usually performs Evensong in Canterbury. Perhaps even more immediately striking to us was the experience of singing at the head of this beautiful yet imposing neo-Byzantine space, tucked away behind the altar in a compact semi-circular formation next to the organ console. This was quite different to the arrangement at Canterbury, where the choir is split into two and sits on opposing sides of the quire in full view of the congregation, while the organist sits far away on the screen. We all thoroughly enjoyed our visit to Westminster and remain extremely grateful for the opportunity.

The Girls' Choir was founded as recently as 2014 and it performed for the first time at Evensong on the occasion of the feast of the Conversion of St Paul in January. This was a momentous event, attended by more than 600 people; the entrance of the girls into the quire was marked (perhaps aptly) by a huge crash of thunder. Since that occasion, the choir has performed at a number of special services in the Cathedral, including the service held to mark the 20th anniversary of the ordination of women priests in the Church of England and that for the consecration of the Anglican Bishop of Europe. More recently they sang at a service of dedication and unveiling of two royal statues, attended by HM the Queen and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, and the consecration service for the first female diocesan bishop in the Church of England.

Typically, the Girls' Choir performs at Evensong in the Cathedral twice every month, frequently with the Lay Clerks of the Cathedral Choir. There are currently 26 girls in the choir, all of whom are aged between 12 and 18. The majority attend local schools in Canterbury, though some come from further afield. The group rehearses in the Cathedral each Wednesday evening; for these regular meetings, the girls maintain a cake-making rota to ensure that they're well provided for!

The Lent term has been a busy one for the choir. Following our visit to Westminster Cathedral, we travelled to Clare College Cambridge in February. There we performed a short recital of seventeenth century music by English composers, accompanied by renowned theorbo player Matthew Wadsworth, before joining with the chapel choir to sing Evensong. As I write, the girls are currently preparing for a trip to Rochester Cathedral, where they will sing jointly with the Girls' Choir and Lay Clerks there. Finally, on 6 March, we released our debut CD recording, entitled *Henry Purcell: Sacred Music*, at a short ceremony immediately following the Eucharist.

This summer will mark the end of an era for the choir, as five of its 16 founder members leave the group. These five girls have contributed enormously towards shaping the identity of our fledgling ensemble; they will, of course, be greatly missed. Nonetheless, we are blessed with many able, enthusiastic and talented girls coming through the ranks and so the future for this pioneering choir continues to look very rosy indeed.

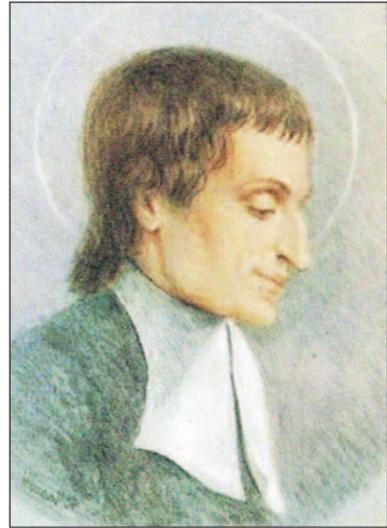
David Newsholme is the Director of the Girls' Choir and Assistant Organist at Canterbury Cathedral.

To Jesus Through Mary

The 300th Anniversary of St Louis de Montfort's Death

Alan Frost

Known popularly as St Louis-Marie de Montfort, he was actually born Grignon de la Bachellerie on 31 January 1673 in the village of Montfort-la-Cane, northwest France. He took the name 'Montfort' from the village of his birth and the name 'Marie' at his Confirmation. From an early age he showed a remarkable horror of sin and love of prayer.



He was quite a brilliant student at school, and among his close friends there two others were called to serve God. One, Claude Desplaces, founded the Holy Ghost Fathers (1703) and another, Jean-Baptiste Blain, became Canon of Rouens and Montfort's biographer. When Montfort left school, at 18, he wished to continue his studies in Paris with a view to entering the seminary of Saint-Sulpice.

His parents were quite well off but he refused the offer of a horse to take him to Paris, and walked the 230 miles! *En route* he gave his clothes and possessions to beggars, keeping only a rosary and a crucifix. This sounds very Franciscan, though he was educated in a Jesuit school, and felt the call of God in a Carmelite church; yet he would become a Dominican tertiary.

However, he was not accepted at Saint-Sulpice for two years, as a benefactor's promise to secure a place for him did not materialise. He served his time until admittance in a house for poor ecclesiastics, taking on various jobs to support himself – one was in a mortuary where a beautiful woman from the court of Louis XIV was placed after sudden death, and of whom he wrote how soon such beauty could horribly decay in 24 hours. He never lost his intense devotion to the Faith and was ordained a priest in June 1700.

His first appointment was in a poor part of Nantes, though he had offered to join volunteer priests going out to Montreal. He wished to work among the poor and was soon giving missions in and around the city. He came to the attention of the Bishop of Poitiers and became chaplain and teacher in its main hospital. Yet despite his good work in Poitiers, he was resented by some clergy for the 'tough' standards he set himself; eating only what the servants ate, for example.

He formed some devout female followers into a religious community, setting up the Order of the Daughters of Wisdom ('Sisters of La Sagesse') in 1703. Even so, he was suddenly dismissed, probably through the influence of those resenting

his saintliness, but he was readily invited to lead a community of brothers on the outskirts of Paris (Mont-Valerian). The following year he returned to Poitiers after a petition from hundreds of the poor had been presented to the Bishop. By 1706, admittedly with just one brother initially, he founded the Company of Mary (who would later become the Montfort Missionaries). In the same year he made a remarkable trip, on foot, to Rome to find from the Pope the Lord's true purpose for him. He met Clement XI who listened to his questions as to whether he should travel as a missionary, but the Pope told him 'you have a field wide enough in France for your zeal. Do not go elsewhere.' He then gave him the title of Missionary Apostolic.

Montfort helped with the setting-up of a Mission in Dinan in 1707. This was a town of great significance for it was here that the fifteenth century reviver of the saying of the Rosary, Blessed Alan de la Roche, used to say Mass in the Dominican church and where Fr de Montfort also celebrated Mass. He very much admired the Dominicans and was regularly confronted by the heresies of the Jansenists – Montfort perhaps likened his situation to that of St Dominic with the Albigensians.

Thereafter, he spent some time in solitude in St Lazare before inspiring the poor people of Pont-Chateau to erect a Calvary (which involved building an artificial hill on flat land!) in 1709-10. In 1711, he laboured in La Rochelle, sometimes reducing the garrisoned soldiers to tears with his preaching. And during all these years and up to his death, he was putting together those books that are unsurpassed in understanding the role of Mary in, as well as the purpose of, the Rosary. In a nutshell, it is 'ad Jesum per Mariam', to Jesus through Mary. This is the underlying theme and teaching of *The Secret of the Rosary*, *The Secret of Mary*, and *True Devotion to Mary*. The first paperback has been reprinted over 30 times, and sold around 6,000,000 copies. It has a commentary for every single 'rose' (150 in all) of the original three decades.

True Devotion, of which *The Secret of Mary* is a shortened version, is profound and needs to be read several times, as Pope St John Paul II observed. It is an important, reflective guide, which Montfort said would be lost for years. This proved to be true, for after being hidden from the destruction of the mobs of the French Revolution, it was found by chance in an old chest in 1842 by one of the Montfort Fathers in their community at St Laurent-sur-Sevre.

By 1716, his indefatigable labours, the deprivations he subjected his body to, and the strong possibility he had been poisoned, took their toll. Though only 43, he died on 28 April. But he knew his life's work was done, and prepared calmly for death. Tested by the Devil at the end, his last words were: 'In vain you attack me, I am between Jesus and Mary... it is over now.. I shall never sin again.'

Cathedral History

A Photographic Record

Passion Play at the Cathedral – Holy Week 1966

During the first three days of Holy Week 1966, a Passion Play was held in Westminster Cathedral. Prior to the event, some controversy had been generated about the play in the Letters' pages of the *Tablet*.

The composer Lennox Berkeley wrote, stating: 'However admirable dramatically the play may be, one cannot help feeling that the intrusion of the secular into a place so permeated by the spirit of recollection and of liturgical worship is likely to damage a unique atmosphere. No doubt the play is religious in intention;... but one can still feel that it is out of place in this building... This venture smacks of the gimmick...'

Replying in the 26 February edition of the *Tablet*, the Administrator, Mgr George Tomlinson, said: '[It] is difficult to understand by what criteria he claims that religious drama is secular. The Church has always made use of dramatic art as one of several means of communicating religious truth... It would seem to me that no art form can in itself be called either sacred or secular: the work of art falls into either category by reason of what it communicates. If an art form as such is to be classed as secular, what is to be thought of Mr Lennox Berkeley's own musical settings of the Ordinary of the Mass?'

According to the May 1966 issue of the *Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*, the Passion Play was a great success. One correspondent wrote in saying: 'I must confess that personally, as a Catholic with a great regard for Westminster Cathedral, my original impressions of the whole scheme tended to be influenced somewhat by the reactions of the Press, which were not too favourable... But having seen the play tonight in its setting, I am quite convinced that this could only effectively be done in Westminster Cathedral itself... inwardly and outwardly I was brought to my knees before the Cross.'

The photo shows those actresses who played the Blessed Virgin Mary and, it is assumed, Mary Magdalene. In the *Chronicle* the scene is captioned: 'And now he is risen!'



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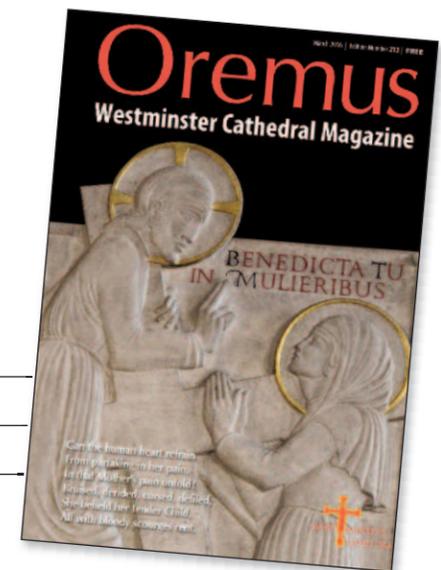
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The Imperial Vaults: The Kaisergruft in Vienna

Philip A Smyth



Our immediate associations with Vienna, and particularly when we think of its glory days as capital of the extensive Austro-Hungarian Empire, are with vitality, mirth and youthful exuberance. Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert wrote some of their most lively music for Viennese patrons, while some of the most forward-looking young intellectuals of pre-World War I Europe honed their literary or philosophical skills in the coffee house near Ringstrasse. Everything about Vienna under the Habsburgs, from its rococo architecture to the operettas of Franz Lehar or the waltzes of Johann Strauss II, suggests a lust for life and an urgency about living with which only Paris under Napoleon III, embellished at a breathtaking rate by the prodigious energy of the Baron Hausmann, could compare.

It is an odd thing, therefore, that perhaps the most persistently magnetic tourist attraction in both cities is the resting place of its most distinguished dead: the mausoleum of Napoleon Bonaparte at *Les Invalides* and the cemetery of *Pere Lachaise* in the case of Paris, and the imperial vault of the Habsburgs under the church of the Capuchin friary, known as the *Kaisergruft*, in the case of Vienna.

For five centuries, from the ascendancy of the emperor Charles V right up until the departure of Austrian Charles I, son of the emperor Franz Josef who died while World War I was still going on, the history of the Hapsburg imperial dynasty and this history of continental Europe were virtually indistinguishable. Even when Bonaparte, the *parvenu* emperor who had come to power on the back of a revolution which preached liberty, equality and fraternity, briefly clipped the imperial wings and brought down the Holy Roman Empire, the Habsburgs resolutely pursued the politics of dynastic marriage which was the lynchpin of their quite extraordinary power and the secret of their remarkable endurance. Most of the Hapsburgs, the bluest of Europe's blue blood, were laid to rest in the *Kapuzinerkirche* on the *Neuer Markt* at the heart of old Vienna. For the English-speaking visitor to Vienna the most informative guide to this unique honey comb of burial chambers would be the Oxford don A J P Taylor, the academic who succeeded in untangling the enormously complex history of the Habsburg Empire for succeeding generations of grateful undergraduates. But Taylor's works being voluminous tomes, the excellent tourist guides available at the entrance to the *Kaisergruft* are very comprehensive.

The Habsburgs were obsessed with their own imperial dignity and the purity of pedigree (the idea of the morganatic marriage originating with them) corseted by the court etiquette imported from Spain in the early sixteenth century, and relentless in pursuit of dynastic marriage which kept their power and incalculable wealth within the family. And yet theirs was a very Counter-Reformation Catholic faith, their spirituality, that of the Jesuit *Bona Mors* Confraternity. They may well have had and promoted a lust for life at their court and in the imperial capital, but they held death in some considerable respect long before the Mayerling tragedy cast its shadow over the latter days of the dynasty. Vienna was their home and just as their presence dominated it in life, so too they sought to be present in as much as possible of their capital city in death.

The Capuchin crypt contains the tombs of 145 people, all but one of them members of the imperial family and including 12 emperors and 17 empresses. Once dead, most of the Imperial family were embalmed, but only after dissection, with their intestines and eyes buried in the *Stefansdom* (the Cathedral of Vienna), their hearts in the Augustinian church and, finally, their bodies in the crypt of the church of the Capuchin Franciscan Friars.

Continued on page 35

What A Blast!

Miss Atomic Bomb

Directors: Bill Deamer and Adam Long

St James Theatre

★★★★

Beauty seduces, but not as much as beauty and power. Maybe this explains our fascination with the awesome wonder of atomic energy? Since the end of the Second World War, the detonation of atomic bombs has weirdly excited some – the brilliance of the blinding light perversely entwined with the sexual connotations of the phallic-like mushroom cloud have been discussed at length by social commentators. The men who detonate nuclear weapons destroy worlds, and yet an atomic blast can be as beautiful as the sunrise it imitates.

Presenting the story of a beauty pageant set against the backdrop of the atomic bomb tests in 1950s America, the truly wonderful comic musical *Miss Atomic Bomb* bravely explores the themes of the absurdity of power and the lust for physical attractiveness – what St Augustine might term the *libido dominandi*. Making use of an eccentric form of comedy to explore the madness of the Cold War this musical forces the audience either to laugh or cry, to see beauty or to call out ugliness. Some will 'get it', others won't. I don't know what it says about me, but I think I 'got' the meaning behind this production.

Miss Atomic Bomb stars the naturally hilarious Catherine Tate (*The Catherine Tate Show*, *'Nan'*) as the fashion designer Myrna Ranapapadophilou, the enchanting Florence Andrews (*Wicked*, *The Wizard of Oz*) as her friend Candy Johnson, the versatile Simon Limkin (*Doctor Who*, *Casualty*) as the hapless Lou Lubowitz and the very talented Dean John-Wilson (soon to star as the eponymous character in *Aladdin*) as the AWOL soldier, Joey – Lou's brother.

The production received its world premier in St James Theatre (Victoria), and combines music and comedy – but this is no *Mama Mia*. Although it appears not to take itself too seriously, *Miss Atomic Bomb* deals with an extremely serious subject – and there lies the power of the play. The fact that its humour is unrelenting – even during some dark scenes (when a hotel owner is shot by gangsters, for example) – highlights the perversity and absurdity of nuclear warfare. One does wonder, though, whether a stark pause amidst the brash glitz could have added to the profundity of the performance.

Perversity is a running theme throughout this musical – which is why its own perverse treatment of the subject of atomic warfare is an important element in the production; a fact sadly missed by some reviewers. The bright flash of an atom bomb being detonated is referred to as a 'second sunrise' and the words 'I saw the sun rise twice this morning' form part of the lyrics of one its most haunting numbers. The nuclear scientist Professor Alvin Schmul (Stephane Anelli) is a sexual creep: a lurid user of prostitutes and a voyeur about whom phallic jokes are aimed (excuse the pun). Then there



are the girls in the beauty contest; desperate, hungry for love, patriotic, odd, yet all – except one! – physically attractive. They are set against the idealised, plastic beauty of a family of mannequins, clothed in the latest fashion by Tate's Ranapapadophilou. These plastic people were used, along with soldiers, as guinea pigs in atomic tests – a reference to real events in the Nevada desert. The perversity of power is also exemplified by Mr Potts (Daniel Boys), another nerdy man, bullied as a child, who delights in a very Inspector Javert (*Les Misérables*) way in the power given him by the law.

Though not a fan of musicals, this hilarious yet profound piece of theatre won me over. Having read the not very glowing reviews – 'it failed to detonate' exclaimed one reviewer – I wasn't expecting much. But the humour, the razzmatazz (fans of the '50s will love it), its moral underpinning, and its witty and blatant cross-references to other shows had me gripped. I was literally crying with laughter. The script often reminded me of Neil Simon, and the ambitious nature of both music and dance brought to mind shows such as *Guys and Dolls*, *The Jersey Boys* and even *Les Mis*. The accents did not always hit the mark – Tate sounded more Australian than anything; but even that was part of the 'fun'.

St James Theatre opened a few years ago and is only a two-minute walk from the Cathedral. It is therefore amazing to note that this production, which I think will become a great hit, is just a short walk from here. The theatre is cosy, and the audience sit very close to the stage. Having said that, the seating isn't the best in the world, and more space for legroom would be appreciated. But, wonderfully, it has its own on-site and excellent restaurant – so a snack or meal before a performance is no problem.

Do man's experiments with nature perfect its beauty? Not according to this brilliant production. And if *Miss Atomic Bomb* hits the big time – remember folks, you heard about it here first! *DP*

Miss Atomic Bomb runs at St James Theatre until 9 April. To book tickets, please visit www.stjamestheatre.co.uk or phone 0844 264 2140. St James Theatre is a two-minute walk from the Cathedral – walk through Cardinal Place shopping centre (opposite the Piazza) and turn left after passing The Phoenix pub.



'The soul is in God and God in the soul, just as the fish is in the sea and the sea in the fish.'



St Catherine of Siena – Feast, 29 April

The Month of April

April is dedicated to the Eucharist and the Holy Spirit. This year it also begins with the joy and glory of Eastertide.

The Lord said that the grain of wheat has to die in order to produce its harvest, and he himself showed that he was that that grain. The harvest produced from his Death and Resurrection is plentiful – the whole Church has sprung from his side, pierced by the soldier's lance. As St John Chrysostom says: "There flowed from his side water and blood". Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolised Baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from Baptism, "the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit", and from the holy Eucharist. Since the symbols of Baptism and the Eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam... As God then took a rib from Adam's side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death.'

Holy Father's Intentions for March

Universal: That small farmers may receive a just reward for their precious labour.

Evangelisation: That Christians in Africa may give witness to love and faith in Jesus Christ amid political-religious conflicts.

Friday 1 April (No Friday Abstinence)

FRIDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

Confessions 11.00-1.00pm

10.30am Mass

12.30pm Mass

5.00pm Mass

Saturday 2 April

SATURDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

Normal schedule resumes

10.30am Visiting choir: Limburg Cathedral

12.30pm Mass for Vocations

Sunday 3 April

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

(or of DIVINE MERCY)

10.30am Solemn Mass (No choir)

3.30pm Solemn Vespers & Benediction

Monday 4 April

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Tuesday 5 April

St Vincent Ferrer, Priest (Ps week 2)

6.30pm Crypt: Lourdes Pilgrimage Mass

Thursday 7 April

St John Baptist de la Salle, Priest

Friday 8 April

Easter feria (Friday Abstinence)

Saturday 9 April

Easter feria

2.00pm UCM Mass

4.30pm Side chapel: LMS Low Mass

Sunday 10 April

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

(Ps week 3)

10.30am Solemn Mass (Men's Voices)

Missa Congratulamini mihi Lassus

Christ rising again Byrd

Christ is risen again Byrd

Organ: Alleluys Preston

3.30pm Solemn Vespers & Benediction

(Men's Voices)

Magnificat octavi toni Suriano

Dic nobis Maria Byrd

Organ: Te Deum Langlais

Monday 11 April

St Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr

Wednesday 13 April

Easter Feria or

St Martin I, Pope and Martyr

Friday 15 April

Easter Feria (Friday Abstinence)

Saturday 16 April

Easter Feria

6.00pm Visiting Choir: Worth Abbey

Consort

Sunday 17 April

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

(Ps week 4)

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Missa Papæ Marcelli Palestrina

Angelus Domini Casciolini

O sacrum convivium Guerrero

Organ: Improvisation sur le Te Deum

Tournemire

3.30pm Solemn Vespers & Benediction

(Full Choir)

Magnificat quarti toni Bevan

Victimæ paschali laudes Rheinberger

Organ: Joie et clarté des corps

glorieux Messiaen

Tuesday 19 April

St Alphege, Bishop and Martyr

Wednesday 20 April

7.30pm Grand Organ Festival Recital:

Jane Parker-Smith

Thursday 21 April

Easter Feria or

St Anselm, Bishop and Doctor

Friday 22 April

Easter Feria (Friday Abstinence)

Saturday 23 April

ST GEORGE, Martyr, Patron of England

8.00am and **9.00am** Masses in

St George's chapel (TBC)

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Mass for four voices Byrd

lustorum animæ Stanford

Ave verum corpus Byrd

Organ: Orb & Sceptre Walton arr.

Gower

2.00pm Deanery Confirmations: Cardinal

Sunday 24 April

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Ps week 1)

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Mass in G Poulenc

Surrexit a mortuis Widor

O sacrum convivium Messiaen

Organ: Final (Symphonie VI) Widor

3.30pm Solemn Vespers & Benediction

(Full Choir)

Magnificat sexti toni Andreas

Terra tremuit Rheinberger

Organ: Mors et resurrectio Langlais

Monday 25 April

ST MARK, Evangelist

Wednesday 27 April

5.30pm German Chaplains attend Mass

Thursday 28 April

Easter Feria or

St Peter Chanel, Priest and Martyr or

St Louis Grignon de Montfort, Priest (see

article on page 28)

Friday 29 April

(Friday Abstinence)

ST CATHERINE OF SIENA, Virgin and

Doctor, Patron of Europe

2.30pm Dominican Vespers to mark the

800th anniversary of the foundation of

the Order of Preachers

Saturday 30 April

Easter Feria or

St Pius V, Pope

6.00pm Visiting choir: Byron Consort,

Harrow School

From the Registers

Baptisms

Henry Spence

José Manguera

Daniel Aineomugisha

Grace Maxwell

Confirmations

Filipe Albero

Florian Breit

Andrew Goodall

Antonio Maradiaga Carrillo

Matteo Mozzetti

Filippo Pignatti Morano di Custozza

Jochen Schwenderling

Natalia Benitez Velarde

Adeline Berlioz

Elsa Boccia

Zaide Chan

Fabrizia Direttore

Maria Esposito

Susana Kayame

Susannah Mannings

Sarah O'Leary

Chiara Rubinacci

Agata Sivokhin

Emma Waters

Funerals

Wanda Dembinska

Dora Parsons

Happy Easter!
The Chairman, Editor
and all at Oremus
would like to wish our
readers a very happy
and holy Easter!

Westminster Cathedral – Social Media

Westminster Cathedral is on the social media sites Facebook and Twitter. To keep up to date with all the most recent news, photos, events and timetable changes, please follow us on **Twitter** (@westminstercath) or 'like' our page on **Facebook** (www.facebook.com/westminstercath).

Extraordinary Form: For the liturgical calendar of the Extraordinary Form (1962 Missal) of the Roman Rite, please visit the Latin Mass Society website: www.lms.org.uk/

Key to the Diary: Saints days and holy days written in CAPITAL LETTERS denote Feasts, those in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** denote Solemnities, those not in capitals and where there is a choice denote Optional Memoria, all others not in capital letters are Memoria.

What Happens and When

Public Services

The Cathedral opens shortly before the first Mass of the day; doors close at 7.00pm, Monday to Saturday, with occasional exceptions. On Sunday evenings, the Cathedral closes after the 7.00pm Mass.

On Public and Bank holidays the Cathedral closes at 5.30pm in the afternoon.

Monday to Friday

Masses: 7.00am; 8.00am; 10.30am (said in Latin); 12.30pm; 1.05pm and 5.30pm. Morning Prayer (Lady Chapel): 7.40am. Evening Prayer (Latin Vespers* sung by the Lay Clerks in Lady Chapel): 5.00pm (*except Tuesday when it is sung in English). Solemn Mass (sung by the Choir): 5.30pm. Rosary will be prayed after the 5.30pm Mass.

Saturday

Masses: 8.00am; 9.00am; 10.30am; and 12.30pm. Morning Prayer (Lady Chapel): 10.00am. Solemn Mass (sung by the Choir): 10.30am. First Evening Prayer of Sunday (Lady Chapel): 5.30pm. First Mass of Sunday: 6.00pm.

Sunday

Masses: 8.00am; 9.00am; 10.30am; 12.00 noon; 5.30pm; and 7.00pm. Morning Prayer (Lady Chapel) 10.00am. Solemn Mass (sung by the Choir) 10.30am. Solemn Vespers and Benediction 3.30pm. Organ Recital (when scheduled): 4.45pm.

Holidays of Obligation

As Monday-Friday, Vigil Mass (evening of the previous day) at 5.30pm.

Public Holidays

Masses: 10.30am, 12.30pm, 5.00pm.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

This takes place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel every Monday to Friday following the 1.05pm Mass until 4.45pm.

Confessions are heard at the following times: Saturday: 10.30am-6.30pm. Sunday: 11.00am-1.00pm; and 4.30-7.00pm. Monday-Friday: 11.30am-6.00pm. Public Holidays: 11.00am-1.00pm.

Funerals Enquiries about arranging a funeral at the Cathedral or Sacred Heart Church, Horseferry Road, should be made to a priest at Cathedral Clergy House in the first instance.

Throughout the Year

Mondays

11.30am: Prayer Group in the Hinsley Room. 6.00pm: Scripture Discussion Group in Clergy House. 6.00pm: Christian Meditation Group in the Hinsley Room. 6.30pm: Guild of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral

Tuesdays

6.30pm: The Guild of St Anthony in the Cathedral. 7.30pm: The Catholic Evidence Guild in Clergy House.

Wednesdays

12.00pm: First Wednesday Quiet Days on the first Wednesday of every month in the Hinsley Room.

Thursdays

6.30pm: The Legion of Mary in Clergy House. 6.45pm: Scripture Discussion Group in Clergy House.

Fridays

5.00pm: Charismatic Prayer Group in the Cathedral Hall – please check in advance for confirmation. 6.30pm: The Diocesan Vocations Group in the Hinsley Room on the last of each month.

Saturdays

10.00am: Centering Prayer Group in the Hinsley Room. 2.00pm: Justice and Peace Group in the Hinsley Room on the last of the month.

Westminster Cathedral

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Fr Michael Donaghy

Fr Gerard O'Brien

Fr Brian O'Mahony

Fr Martin Plunkett

Fr Michael Quaicoe

Sub-Administrator's Intern

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Peter Stevens, Assist Master of Music

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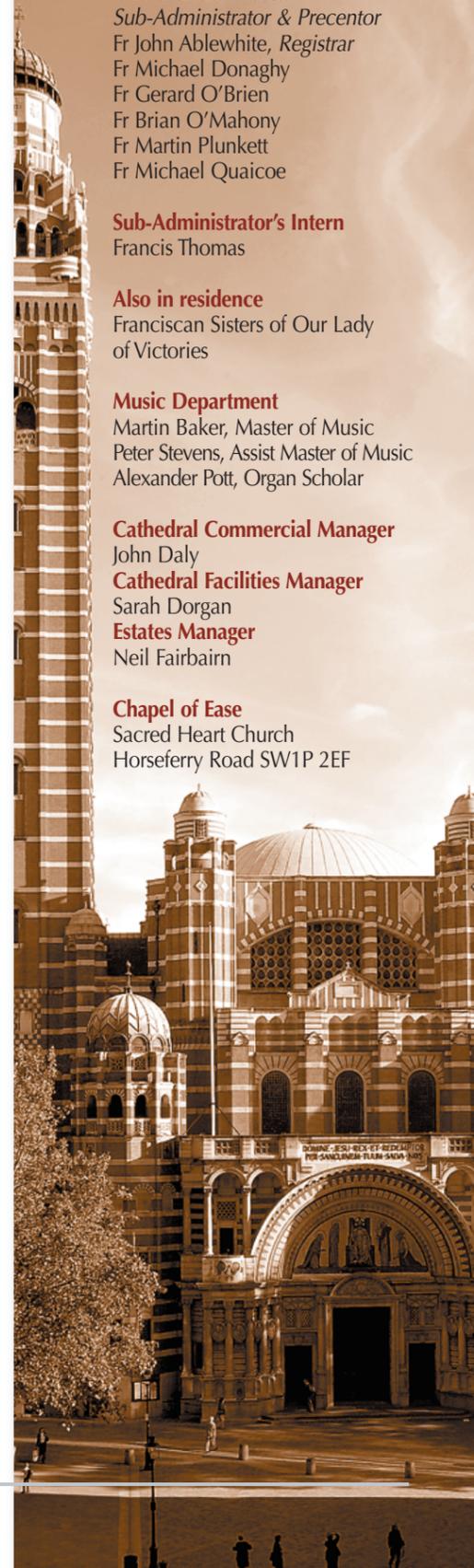
Estates Manager

Neil Fairbairn

Chapel of Ease

Sacred Heart Church

Horseferry Road SW1P 2EF



Get to know your history!

Joanna Bogle

It's springtime. The weather is getting warmer and the evenings getting longer... it's time to get your walking shoes on! The Catholic History Walks are not arduous and, because they always follow a route that is near various Tube stations, you can break away at any stage and simply travel home!

Here's the spring programme:

Tuesday 12 April 6.30pm meet on the steps of Westminster Cathedral, London SW1. (Nearest tube: Victoria). A Walk on a Parliamentary theme: we will be walking down to Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square.

Tuesday 26 April 6.30pm meet on the steps of Westminster Cathedral, London SW1. (Nearest tube: Victoria). A Walk on a Royal theme: we will walk across St James Park to Buckingham Palace.

Tuesday 10 May Afternoon Walk: Meet 3.00pm outside the church of the Most Precious Blood, O'Meara Street, London SE1 (nearest tube: London Bridge). We'll be walking along the river, seeing the Tower of London, St Paul's, etc, and finishing at Westminster Bridge. Evening Walk: Meet 6.30pm on the steps of Westminster Cathedral, London SW1. (Nearest Tube: Victoria). A longer walk: we will head for the river and walk along towards London Bridge.

The Walk organisers make a charge of £10 for each walk.

London is so rich in history – Roman London, Viking and Saxon battles on the Thames, Medieval abbeys and convents, Henry VIII and all that followed...

And it's not just Medieval and Tudor history that we explore. The nineteenth century has huge importance for London, when Britain was the centre of a worldwide empire. Find out about Caroline Chisholm, heroine of pioneer Australia, who lived in London for many years and was the first woman to give evidence to a Parliamentary committee, became a friend of Charles Dickens and a mentor to Florence Nightingale, and was a devout Catholic who is commemorated today in the Australian church in Rome and in Catholic schools and colleges in New South Wales, Canberra and Queensland.

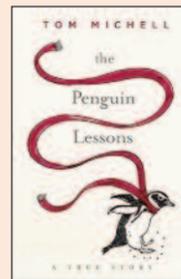
There is something sad about modern Londoners – including Catholics – who do not know their history, and therefore miss out on something of importance – a sense of unity with the past, of belonging to something that links to great events, of sharing in a rich heritage.

Don't be shy about joining one of the History Walks – just turn up!

Joanna Bogle DSG is a writer, journalist and broadcaster

Pick up a Penguin

The Penguin Lessons
Tom Michell
Penguin
£9.99



Fiona Hodges

If you think of penguins, ice comes to mind, covered with lots of large, statuesque birds with white fronts and black bodies, all standing about reasonably sociably waiting for the wind to die down a bit. Maybe we see the birds underwater, darting with surprising speed hither and yon – although the speed is not so surprising when we realise that usually another animal would quite like penguin for supper.

The penguin of our title turned out to be quite happy living by himself and only racing about in water when he got near a swimming pool. Yet this was no depressed captive bird, but the author's companion, and a very entertaining friend he proved to be. From unpromising beginnings – found near death in an oil slick that had killed hundreds of other penguins – he bounced back to become part of a school community (more than can be said of, say, a class stick-insect colony), and in a neat reversal of roles, to spend time watching the interesting, if strange, world of human beings.

His rescuer was a young Englishman teaching in an Argentine boarding school, who just happened to be on holiday on the Uruguayan coast. Juan Salvador Pinguino, as this bird was eventually named (after the Spanish edition of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, a novel popular at the time) turned out to be enormously sociable, even-tempered and very adaptable. In the general hubbub of life in 1970s Argentina, the author learned how to get his penguin through local bureaucracy, how to find it accommodation (it lived in his flat) and how to get it fed – penguins can eat startling quantities of sprats. Juan Salvador fitted in to school life almost immediately and more than one pupil seems to have found him comforting or helpful, simply by his being there.

As the author says, this is no fairy story and Juan Salvador's lifespan reached its close. Yet the book finds quite a happy ending as the author returns to Argentina in later life to find that now sea wildlife is better protected and cared for. The vast stretches of the Southern American coastline, and the creatures that live there, do not always come to mind when we think of environmental concerns, for they are nearly half a world away; and the land he describes, with its big ranches, the gauchos and in the 1970s its political and economic uncertainty, is not one which many Europeans saw. He travelled as much as possible in his spare time, and as well as the adventures of his penguin, there is much to read and enjoy about this fascinating continent, although it might appeal to a bird-watcher or to anyone interested in how humans and animals can relate to each other.

This is a book of a size which can accompany one's travels, and I cannot resist telling you that it is published by Penguin!

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Beutler's guide gives a particularly detailed account of the elaborate funeral ritual of the Habsburgs and for those with a particular interest in funeral etiquette this slim volume provides a wealth of information. Perhaps the most telling detail is the sobering dialogue between the Capuchin friar who waits behind the crypt door and the Imperial high chamberlain accompanying the mortal remains to the place of burial. The humble friar demands to know who requires burial and the chamberlain replies by providing a list of all the titles the dead Habsburg possessed during life, imperial, royal, grand-ducal, archducal and/or noble. The door remains closed and the friar replies: 'We do not know him/her'. Only when the chamberlain announces that it is 'Franz Josef/Maria-Teresa/Zita – a poor sinner' who seeks entry is the door opened and the coffin admitted to the crypt.

Among the more colourful of the Habsburgs buried here are the emperor Ferdinand II (1608-57), a talented musician, art collector and soldier who took over command of the Imperial army after the murder of General Wallenstein at the height of the Thirty Years' War; Napoleon's second wife Marie-Louise, imperial by birth as the eldest daughter of an emperor and imperial by a marriage which conferred a dubious legitimacy on the pretensions of Napoleon Bonaparte and eventually produced a sickly heir; the heir, in the Bonaparte family tree styled King of Rome and in the Austrian tree the Duke of Reichstadt, held under virtual house arrest at the insistence of Metternich until the death of his father on St Helena (the young duke was inconsolable at the death of the father he had never known) and went on to die of tuberculosis in the Schönbrunn Palace at the age of 21; and the legendary Empress Elizabeth (Sisi) who achieved fame in Ireland through her sprightly horse riding on the plains of County Kildare and the exquisite Mass vestments she presented to Maynooth College but who subsequently entered the annals of grand royal tragedy through the still unexplained death of her son Prince Rudolph at Mayerling and then her own assassination by an anarchist in Geneva in 1898.

The visitor to Vienna who uses any of the simple tourist guide books available on a tour of the Imperial Vaults in the Capuchin crypt will be made familiar with many details of the history of the vast Austro-Hungarian empire and the satellite powers drawn into the Habsburg web through the systematic politics of dynastic marriage. They will also be treated to nuggets of court gossip and, thanks to the short glossary which forms an appendix to the guide books, be equipped to enjoy the symbolism of the adornments, some macabre, some ethereal, of the sumptuous sarcophagi which present Habsburgs, poor sinners that they were, as overblown in death as they were when they ruled half of Europe from their splendid apartments in the Hofburg Palace.

Dr Philip A. Smyth is a Cathedral parishioner and is the Business Manager of J H Kenyon, the Funeral Directors.



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