

# NEW•DIRECTIONS

*Forward in Faith supports The Society in renewing the Church in its historic faith*

February 2023

## Church News

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Bishop North to Blackburn  
LLF: Society Bishops speak

## Faith and Order

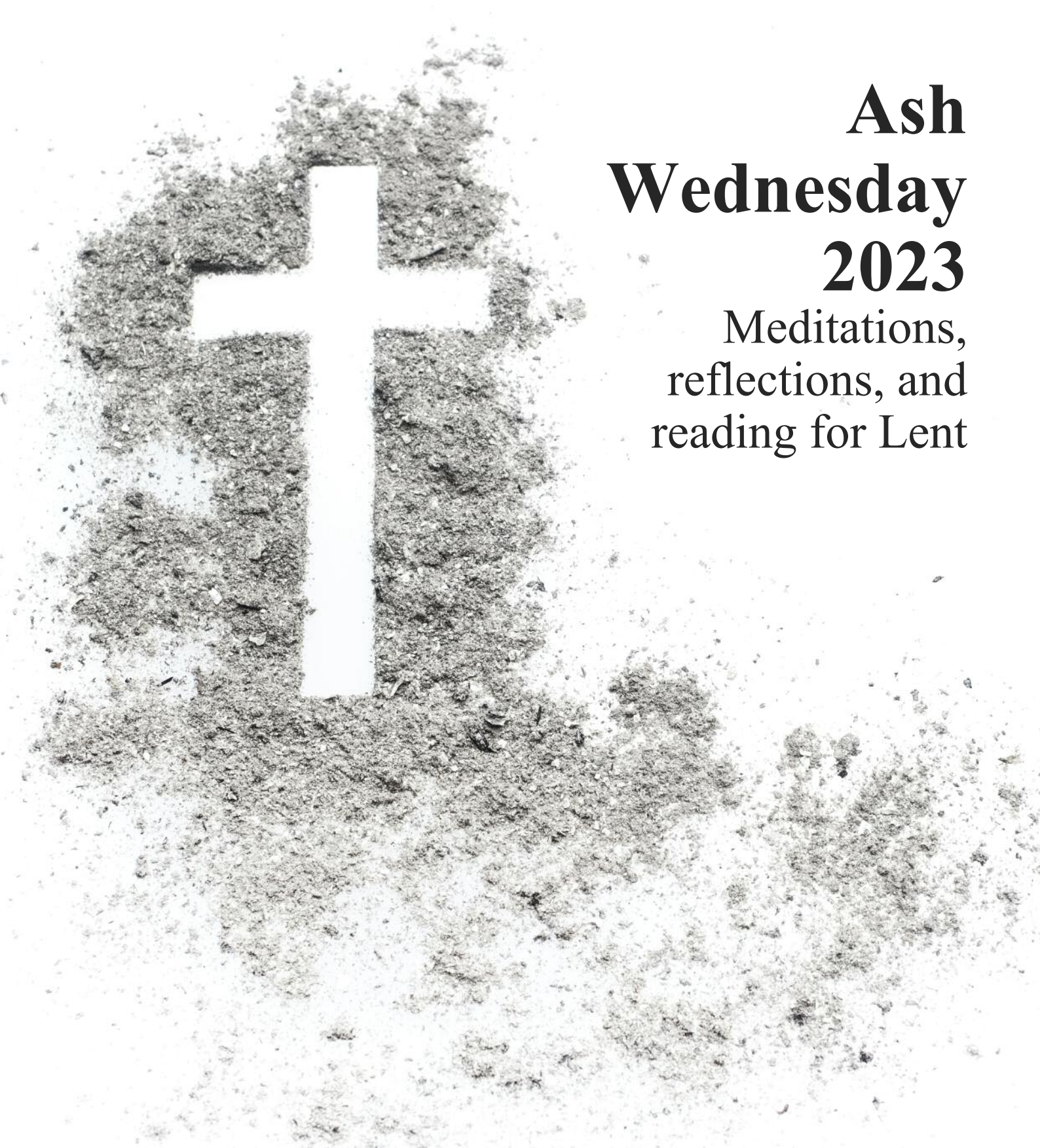
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# Ash Wednesday 2023

Meditations,  
reflections, and  
reading for Lent



# ◆ THE DIRECTOR'S CUT ◆

The moment has come. I can no longer put off writing about *Living in Love and Faith*. If you have had the good fortune to have lived in splendid isolation from such things over the last few years, then *Living in Love and Faith* is the name given by the Church of England to the process it has instituted to address issues of human sexuality and, most particularly, to examine the case for same-sex marriage in church.

My reluctance is not borne of any trepidation around discussing the issues involved, or indeed any shame in the position Catholic Christians are being asked to adopt, but a wariness of the atmosphere in which we are looking to make a contribution to this debate.

It does not require many on-line searches to reveal that anything short of unreserved support for same-sex marriage in church is viewed in the Zeitgeist as straightforward homophobia. We are told that any reticence is an attack on those in same-sex relationships; it undermines the ministry of clergy in same-sex relationships; and, most tellingly of all, it further removes us from secular society.

There is a lot here to digest and we need to match the theological integrity which we seek with generosity and understanding on a pastoral level. It will not come as a surprise that our starting point has to be sacramental; sacraments are, after all, the lifeblood of the Church and matrimony is one of those sacraments. And it will be even less of a surprise to hear the view being proffered that the Church of England should not act unilaterally on this or any other matter of doctrine so central to the worship and witness of the Church.

The parallel with the sacrament of holy orders is an instructive one. There, too, unilateral action was ill-advised. Critically, that is not just because the universal church is not in agreement at this particular moment in time. Some would argue that it will catch up with the Church of England and other denominations in due course. However, the key point is that the great churches of the East and West – the key components of the universal church – perceive there to be fundamental theological problems in altering the nature of holy orders. There is no need to rehearse them in detail right now but they are familiar from the debates of the last half a century: the

nature of the person of Christ, the continuation of apostolic ministry, and the scriptural basis for a sacrificial priesthood.

It is the same case with matrimony. The essence of marriage as being between a man and a woman has its origin in the biblical narrative of the Creation. Further, the Church's understanding of marriage has developed in such a way that it recognises the differences between the two sexes, not so that they are held in competition with one another but that they complement one another. This is a notion that most of contemporary western society struggles to comprehend.

Even more counter-culturally, we assert that all relationships are not the same, without in any way seeking to belittle or downgrade any of those relationships. We need to go further and challenge the cult which has grown up around gender self-identity in our society as that points to where this debate will next rest.

In our small corner of Christendom, we would do well to note that not only is the universal church not seeking to embark on these sorts of innovations and reforms but moreover the theological reasons for it not doing so. Without informed theological debate, we enter the abyss of emotive statement pitted against emotive statement with no sensible way to arbitrate which view holds sway.

Our movement has a long history of both remaining faithful to the teaching underlying the administration of the Church's sacraments and providing appropriate pastoral care to all those seeking it, mindful of individual circumstance and accommodating of it. This is something of which we should be proud and pledge to continue.

We have already witnessed the opening salvoes in the campaign for same-sex marriage in the Church of England. The backdrop is a trajectory of an increasingly fractured society for all of us and an increasingly self-absorbed existence for individuals within that society.

Our response needs to be bold in proclaiming what the Church has received by way of revealed truth from God. And we need to do that with a deep love and with an unerring faith. **ND**

## NEW◆DIRECTIONS

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# From Maidstone to Ebbsfleet

...and from Rod to Rob, *David Banting* introduces a new bishop

In December, Downing Street announced that the Successor to Bishop Rod Thomas at the See of Maidstone would be the Revd Dr Rob Munro at the See of Ebbsfleet. Whatever the CofE was finessing by transferring the role of the previous See of Ebbsfleet to Oswestry and of the previous See of Maidstone to Ebbsfleet, no one can be entirely sure. However, institutionally it means that the new Bishops of Oswestry (for traditional Catholics) and of Ebbsfleet (for conservative, that is complementarian, Evangelicals) will be ‘embedded’ in the dioceses of Lichfield and Chester respectively – Chester because, though Ebbsfleet is connected with Canterbury, it was always understood that the new complementarian Bishop would be accommodated more centrally in the country. Chester is the diocese where Rob Munro has served all his ministry, so he is already well known, respected and loved there.

The public announcement of Rob’s appointment was accompanied the same day by a small Press Conference at All Souls Langham Place in London, where he started out in 1985 as a part-time teaching assistant at the All Souls CofE Primary School, while he began his theological studies at All Souls College of Applied Theology. The Bishop of London chaired the Press Conference, in which she repeated her deep debt of gratitude to the retired Bishop of Maidstone for his partnership in the gospel before commending Rob to the Church as a whole and the complementarian constituency of churches and clergy across the country who he is called to represent and advocate among the bishops and dioceses of the CofE.

Rob Munro was born in Manchester and came to faith as an 18-year-old through the youth ministry of St Mary’s, Cheadle. He read Maths at Bristol and, after the two years at All Souls in London, trained as a teacher at Manchester University. He taught Maths and PE for two years before training at Oak Hill Theological College and ordination in 1993 to a curacy at St John the Baptist Hartford in Chester diocese. His first incumbency from 1997 was at St Wilfred’s in Davenham, to be followed in 2003 by becoming Rector of his old church, St Mary’s Cheadle with St Cuthbert’s. It was during this time that he completed his doctorate from Reformed Theological Seminary, USA.

Rob is married to Sarah and they have three children. Passionately committed to the local church at the heart of God’s mission, he served as Rural Dean of Cheadle from 2016. In the wider Church he has been a member of General Synod since 2005 and is currently on



the Dioceses Commission. He has been on Bishop’s Council in Chester since 2000 and has chaired the House of Clergy on Diocesan Synod since 2014. He is also on the CofE Evangelical Council (CEEC), is chair of the Fellowship of Word and Spirit (FWS), and is on the Councils of Church Society and Latimer Trust.

If his predecessor, Bishop Rod Thomas, had pioneered this distinctive episcopal role and helped to oversee a network of Resolution Parishes in three-quarters of the dioceses, Rob is well placed to build on this partnership and ex-

pression of mutual flourishing. His formal brief under the original House of Bishops Declaration of 2014 is to ‘provide extended episcopal oversight’, where needed, to parishes which, ‘on the grounds of complementarian evangelical theology are unable to receive the priestly of episcopal ministry of women’ – the issue for complementarian Evangelicals being ‘oversight assurance’ where being ‘unable to receive the ministry’ is sharply focused for such Evangelicals in the issue of headship. That is explicit in marriage, the sacrificial servant-hearted call to the husband, and, by extension from the human family to the household of God, in the call to men to give oversight as incumbents (in the local church) and bishops (in the wider Church). Complementarianism is the biblical conviction that mission and ministry flourish best when teams of women and men work together to complement each other as equal and different. The Settlement of 2014 recognised that this difference in the understanding of how the partnership of men and women in ministry is outworked needed to be episcopally recognised, respected and served. Bishop Rob, as he soon will be, is utterly committed to this mutual flourishing and has called all to be renewed in this responsibility in the Church.

Rob Munro’s consecration will also take place on Thursday, February 2, at 2pm in Canterbury Cathedral. Meanwhile, he seeks to set up a new home and office in Chester diocese. He has perhaps inadvertently prepared himself for episcopacy by addressing the Junior Anglican Evangelical Clergy (JAEC) conference last October on the subject of ‘The Household of God and the role of Bishops’. He has also shown himself well aware of the need to establish good leadership culture in the Church. He is speaking very soon after his consecration at the FWS conference in February on ‘Leadership reset – in an age of scandals, struggles and schism’. The Bible readings will be taken from 1 Timothy, always a good place to quarry wisdom for those who ‘aspire to the noble task of being an overseer’. **ND**

# OBITUARY: Benedict XVI

Joseph Alois Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI: born on 16 April, 1927, and died 31 December, 2022 (ordained 1951, consecrated 1977; cardinal 1977, pope 2005) by Michael Langrish

With the death of Benedict XVI the church has lost a world class theologian and a fine academic mind, one of the greats of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, in this writer's view, likely to still be read in the 22<sup>nd</sup>. He was also a theologian with an historian's perspective. As a German whose childhood and early adolescence was that of Hitler's Third Reich, and whose theological and pedagogical formation occurred against the background of Stalin's attempt to enforce an atheistic communist hegemony over the Eastern half of Europe, he was acutely aware of the power and complexity of the forces of history which the Church must take seriously in fidelity to its mission and ministry as the Body of the Incarnate Christ.

It is impossible to understand Joseph Ratzinger, theologian and Prefect of the CDF, or Benedict XVI, Supreme Pontiff, without understanding his passionate concern for the church and its centrality to his theological discourse. He had a strong sense of the depth and continuity of Christian civilisation particularly in Europe. Doctrine, Ethics and Liturgy all need to be true to their formation in the depths of two millennia, whilst yet speaking into the reality of their own time. His plans to have the Tridentine Mass more liberally offered were taken by some as evidence of an obscurantism alien to the spirit of Vatican II. Yet repeatedly he affirmed his own commitment to the *Novus Ordo* as the ordinary form of the Eucharistic liturgy with its use of the vernacular and stress on the active participation of all the faithful. 'But,' he wrote, 'I do regard it as unfortunate that we have been presented with the idea of a new book' (and so an excuse for illicit modifications and abuse) 'rather than with that of continuity within a single liturgical history . . . nothing other than a renewed form of the same Missal to which Pius X, Urban VIII, Pius V and their predecessors have contributed, right from the Church's earliest history.'

By contrast with the continuity of the deposit of faith as the Church has received it, he saw in much contemporary culture the reflection of a world view focused on the short term, the malleable and the superficial. In seeking to respond to and counter this the task of the church is to shelter truth as well as to proclaim it. Thus his taking his papal name from St Benedict of Nursia whom he once described as having constructed 'the ark on which the West survived'.

This sense of the weight and power of history with its concomitant contemporary challenges was very evi-



dent in Pope Benedict's fine address to both Houses of parliament in Westminster Hall during his Apostolic Journey to the UK in September 2010. Recalling the countless men and women who have played their part in the momentous events occurring in that place and shaping the lives of many generations of Britons, and others besides, he focussed particularly on Saint Thomas More. More, he said, is 'admired by believers and non-believers alike for the integrity with which he followed his conscience, even at the cost of displeasing the sovereign whose 'good servant' he was, because he chose to serve God first. The dilemma which faced More in those difficult times, the perennial question of the relationship between what is owed to Caesar and what is owed to God, gives opportunity to reflect . . . on the proper place of religious belief within the political process.'

That place is constantly to testify, in all issues, to a Catholic social teaching which stresses an overriding concern to safeguard the unique dignity of every human person, created in the image and likeness of God, and to emphasise the duty of civil authority to foster the common good. Recognising the inadequacy of pragmatic, short-term solutions to complex social and ethical questions, the Catholic tradition maintains that the objective norms governing right action are accessible to reason, informed by the content of revelation. When reason cuts itself away from God and religion it becomes blind, it recognises no moral foundations other than its own, which results in a situation where there are no longer any common 'objective' criteria for morality. Human beings are no longer seen as a gift of the Creator, with an inherent dignity, but are now merely a product of nature, the more easily manipulated by self or others. However, 'for believers, the world derives neither from blind chance nor from strict necessity, but from God's plan'. According to this understanding, said Benedict, the role of reli-





As Prefect of the CDF he earned the nickname ‘God’s rottweiler’. By contrast Cardinal Vincent Nichols has written of ‘his courtesy, his gentleness, the perceptiveness of his mind and the openness of his welcome to everybody that he met’. Such indeed was my own experience on each of the three occasions when I was privileged to meet him. He was undoubtedly a kind man, with a kindness that one suspects led to a tendency to always want to look for the best in others, even to his own cost, and when in terms of leadership or perception it may not have always been wise to do so. During his tenure, allegations of clerical sexual abuse and its cover-up began to surface. His critics said

he both failed to deal robustly with cases when Archbishop of Munich and also to grasp the gravity of the crimes and the scale of the crisis, which reached a peak several years after his becoming Pope in 2005. Yet Benedict was the first Pope to meet with victims; he apologized for the abuse that was allowed to fester under John Paul II, and in his papal visits constantly excoriated the ‘filth’ in the church and excommunicated some offending priests.

Kindness and generosity may also go some way to explaining his apparent eagerness to reconcile the schismatic followers of Archbishop Lefebvre, who rejected much of the second Vatican Council, lifting the excommunication on four illicitly consecrated bishops, one of whom, Richard Williams was a Holocaust denier. Hurt that he, so committed to reconciliation between Christians and Jews – indeed the three great monotheistic religions including Islam – might have caused damage to that cause himself, he issued an unprecedented letter of apology. Maybe another example of a rather flat-footed generosity could be seen in the publication of *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, setting up personal ordinariates embodying elements of Anglican patrimony. For Benedict undoubtedly this was intended to be both a generous and practical response to those seeking his help (in the spirit of *Ut Unum Sint*) and an outworking of his commitment

Benedict, born Joseph Alois Ratzinger on Holy Saturday, 1927, the son of a policeman, grew up in rural Bavaria. At 14 he was required to join the Hitler Youth, and served in the German army in World War II. Towards the end of the war, he deserted and was briefly held as a prisoner of war by US forces. Ordained priest in 1951, he saw his vocation principally as a theologian and teacher, ministries exercised with distinction in the universities of Bonn, Munster, Tübingen and Regensburg. It was this background that led him to becoming a became a major figure as an ‘expert’ at the Second Vatican Council and for 25 years within the Vatican hierarchy when, as Cardinal Ratzinger, he served as a right-hand man to his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, heading the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. So close was their working relationship that even now it is difficult to assess exactly how his own tenure of the See of Peter should be seen. ‘A footnote to JP2?’, ‘completing the work that John Paul II had begun?’, ‘a Pope with a burning desire to both implement the decisions of Vatican 2 as the Council Fathers had intended, and to reform the church tackling its abuses but in the end failing in both?’: each of these and more have been offered as verdicts but yet to be tested by time.



to a process of receptive ecumenism. Yet without prior consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury and others who had been engaged in dialogue it was something of a diplomatic blunder and arguably diminished the potential that the initiative might have had.

It was perhaps elements such as these that brought him to announce his retirement in 2013 after only eight years in a job understood to be for life, once elected. The burdens of the office weighed heavily and he had witnessed at first-hand the increasing incapacity of his predecessor as John Paul II's Parkinson's cruelly took hold. Having tried tendering his resignation before to the Holy Father, he was now able to exercise that full authority himself. A time of reading and study, cats and Mozart, awaited him. Though there were now two popes in the Vatican, where he lived in the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery for the almost ten years granted to him, he was a model of grace and courtesy, maintaining his immaculate sense of dress and simple white cassock. He remained a presence in the Holy City – attending liturgies, writing, receiving guests and new cardinals – but never failed to acknowledge his successor, Francis, as the Pope, even issuing from time to time small correctives when agitators in the Roman Catholic culture wars tried to involve him. In 2020 he returned to Germany a final time to see his older brother Georg, also a priest, who died in July that year, shortly before he marked becoming the longest-living pope in the September. In June 2021, he celebrated his Platinum Jubilee of priesthood, at the same time as the United Kingdom commemorated the 70-year reign of Elizabeth II.

How might history rank him among his predecessors? It would be rash to make comparison with any former pontiffs, but less so to suggest that his name will come to be added to the 37 who already bear the title 'Doctor of the Church. The body of work Benedict has left behind, spanning almost sixty years, is a treasure trove in which notable and lasting gems may be found. From his *Introduction to Christianity* (1968) to *The Jesus of Nazareth Trilogy* (2007, 2011, 2012), his insightful scholarship was brought to bear on Scripture and doctrine; and, in language that is simple, understandable, and deceptively straightforward, draws the reader back to the fundamentals of Christian faith as a journey not only of the mind but of the heart and the soul.

It has been said that he himself was formed by and held in tension the two halves of the 20th century: the first being cataclysmic wars, hardship and depression; the second being liberalism, increased secularisation, and accelerated technological change. Certainly within his teaching legacy one can find these latter addressed head on in, for example, *The God of Jesus Christ* (1976) and *Christianity and the Crisis of Cultures* (2005). In the first of which he engaged with the cultural pull to replace God with relative, temporary replacements: 'It is not God who is dead; what is dead (at least to a large extent) is the precondition



in man that makes it possible for God to live in the world.' Much of what is contained in the second would be echoed in his homily prior to the 2005 conclave, (which would subsequently elect him as Pope) in which the famous 'dictatorship of relativism' phrase was coined. It would also define some of his greatest addresses as pope, particularly his trilogy of cultural addresses: Paris 2008, Westminster 2010, Berlin 2011.

Then there was the wonderfully and prophetic *Faith and the Future*: 'From today's crisis will emerge a church that has lost a great deal. It will no longer have use of the structures it built in its years of prosperity. The reduction in the number of faithful will lead to it losing an important part of its social privileges. It will become small and will have to start pretty much all over again. It will be a more spiritual church, will not claim a political mandate flirting with the Right one minute and the Left the next. It will be poor and will become the Church of the destitute.'

Perhaps foremost in his legacy will be seen his achievement in arguing for and presiding over the process which produced *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Not only was his guidance, his spirit and his inspiration apparently decisive, but the whole project reflected his conviction that the key to addressing a crisis of the proclamation of the faith was the need for the catechesis of the Church to be renewed. Such were the riches that flowed into his three great encyclical letters on love (2005), hope (2007), and 'charity in truth' (2009).

One of Joseph Ratzinger's own theological heroes was St John Henry Newman, whose motto *Cor ad cor loquitur*. He took as the theme of his visit to Britain in 2010 'Heart speaks unto heart'. As used by Newman and Benedict, these words speak profoundly of the personal relationship between God and man achieved through prayer. I wonder, is it fanciful to hear in Benedict XVI's final spiritual testament an echo of that great Newman hymn *Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom*: 'Retrospectively, I see and understand that even the dark and tiresome traits of this journey were for my salvation and, right in those, He led me well.' **[ND]**

*The Rt Revd Michael Langrish was the Bishop of Exeter (2000-13) and is an Honorary Assistant in the Diocese in Europe*



# The Beauty of Holiness

David Hamid recalls with fondness his interactions with Pope Benedict and his legacy for Anglicans

Pope Benedict XVI, the 264<sup>th</sup> successor to St Peter, died on 31 December at the age of 95. He was born Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger in 1927, ordained priest in 1951, onetime professor of theology at Tübingen then Regensburg, Germany, made a cardinal in 1977, and Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the CDF) from 1981 until his election as Pope in 2005. He resigned the See of Rome on 28 February 2013.

There is a range of views, both in the Catholic Church itself, and among other Christians about his legacy. He is admired for his clear teaching, particularly in his three encyclical letters, *Deus Caritas Est*, *Spe Salvi*, and *Caritas in Veritate*. In these he explored the place of love in the life of the Church, how the virtue of hope can sustain us in a pessimistic world through prayer and even in suffering, and how human development can only be based on moral principles, themselves based on love and truth, challenging economic thinking both at the right and the left of the political spectrum.

In my own personal library I value his three-volume work *Jesus of Nazareth*. He insisted these were scholarly texts, not magisterial ones. They are undergirded by Benedict's high Christology and his own spirituality, as well as academic scholarship. While some biblical scholars would judge that he did not embrace the fullness of the historical-critical methodology, he was writing essentially as a teacher of the faith who believed that the theological/liturgical reading of scripture is a fundamental way to understand the Gospel. The other works of Pope Benedict to which I turn, particularly for my own spiritual reading, are the collections of his catecheses on great Christian figures, beginning with the Apostles and continuing with a range of great teachers of the Church, men and women, from the subapostolic age through the medieval period, which he delivered at the weekly public audiences.

The late Pope was also loved for his emphasis on the beauty of the liturgy, which he taught should be at the heart of the Church's life. Catholic Anglicans would appreciate his words from a homily he gave in Paris in 2008: 'Our earthly liturgies will never be more than a pale reflection of the liturgy celebrated in the Jerusalem on high, the goal of our pilgrimage on earth. May our own celebrations nonetheless resemble that liturgy as closely as possible and grant us a foretaste of it.'

At the same time, there are many contemporary critics, both within the Catholic Church and beyond. Many are less pleased with the inadequate way he dealt with clerical abuse, including many survivors of such abuse at the hands of clergy and religious of the Church.

Furthermore, during his time as head of the CDF, he upset many with his conservative line on human sexuality, and he was responsible for silencing many pro-

gressive theologians. This narrowing of theological thinking was in contrast to the earlier Ratzinger, who upheld wide-ranging academic freedom for theologians in the life of the Church. Many eminent theologians were cautious about him. A slightly amusing anecdote which spoke to this caution comes from the final stage of the drafting of the ARCIC document, *The Gift of Authority*. I was the co-secretary at the time and we were meeting on the very congenial patio of Palazzola, the Venerable English College's residence in the hills outside Rome. As we were looking closely at paragraphs which would summarise the Commission's agreement on papal authority, a rogue rooster appeared and strolled, clucking, across the patio. Fr Jean-Marie Tillard OP, the longest serving member of the Commission, sat up with a jolt and exclaimed, 'Voilà – a spy from Ratzinger!'

Yet Joseph Ratzinger was not always a theological conservative. In 1962 he became an official expert at the Second Vatican Council, as an assistant (*peritus*) to Cardinal Joseph Frings. Frings was one of a group of cardinals who challenged much of the draft material prepared by the Curia. Through Frings, the progressive influence of the young Dr Ratzinger on such important Council documents as *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum* (the dogmatic constitutions on the Church and on Divine Revelation, respectively) is a lasting legacy. In his diaries of the Council, Henri de Lubac SJ quoted Ratzinger: 'One thing is essential: let us make sure that *periti* of diverse tendencies are heard within the commission, with that there will be real and sincere work'.

Those who knew Joseph Ratzinger believe that his conversion to a more conservative position came in 1968. He was teaching at Tübingen, whose student body (and many of the faculty) had embraced the Europe-wide student unrest of that time. Apparently, one thing that troubled Ratzinger was chaos and disorder, both in the world and in the Church. The events of that year profoundly disturbed him. He left Tübingen for the more traditional faculty at Regensburg and he adopted a stance more intent on promoting theological cohesion in the teaching of the Church.

It could be argued that Pope Benedict's greatest legacy, even ecclesiologically, was his resignation. Most people, including most Roman Catholics, did not think that it was possible for a Pope to resign. (The last Pope to resign before him was Gregory XII in 1415.) During a conclave, speaking in Latin of course, to a room full of mildly bored-looking cardinals, he said: '*...declaro me ministerio Episcopi Romae, Successoris Sancti Petri, mihi per manus Cardinalium die 19 aprilis MMV commissio renuntiare ita ut a die 28 februarii MMXIII, hora 20, sedes Romae, sedes Sancti Petri vacet*'. For those whose Latin was a little rusty, as the simultaneous trans-



lation into Italian proceeded, the cardinals realised the momentous decision that had just been announced; the Pope would resign the See of Rome on 28 February 2013. The reasons he gave were his advanced age and declining health, but the huge lesson for the Church which the late Pope imparted by this decision was the importance of *humility* in the Church's leadership.

Benedict was also committed to the ecumenical dialogue between the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches, including the Churches of the Anglican Communion. In 2006 to a gathering of the heads of Christian World Communions, he spoke earnestly of our ecumenical responsibility. 'Those who profess that Jesus Christ is Lord are tragically divided and cannot always give a consistent common witness. Herein lies an enormous responsibility for us all. We may feel discouraged when progress is slow, but there is too much at stake to turn back.' When he visited Lambeth Palace in 2010 as part of his State Visit to the United Kingdom, he told a gathering of Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops, 'I wish to join you in giving thanks for the deep friendship that has grown between us and for the remarkable progress that has been made in so many areas of dialogue during the forty years that have elapsed since the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) began its work. Let us entrust the fruits of that work to the Lord of the harvest, confident that he will bless our friendship with further significant growth.' As the present Co-Chairman of IARCCUM (the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission), I was very encouraged that Pope Benedict and Archbishop Rowan Williams together acknowledged in a joint statement that 'our fellowship in the service of Christ, promoted by IARCCUM and experienced by many of our communities around the world, adds a further impetus to our relationship'.

Ratzinger the theologian thrived on opportunities to engage in conversation with other great theological thinkers. Among them was, of course, our former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. When I accompanied Archbishop Rowan Williams to his audience with Pope Benedict in 2006, I was aware that I was in the presence of perhaps two of the brightest theological minds of the modern era. It was moving to see a genuine warmth between the two scholars, clearly based not only on a shared experience of the challenges of Christian leader-



ship, but also a deep communion in theology. My own former diocesan bishop, the late Bishop Geoffrey Rowell, similarly enjoyed many discussions with Cardinal Ratzinger. When, in conversation with the then head of the CDF Bishop Geoffrey tested the mind of the Cardinal on *Apostolicae curae*, his answer delighted Bishop Geoffrey: 'Of course, [Anglican Orders] are not *nothing*; there is a reality there.'

Pope Benedict was personally warm to Anglicans he met. He clearly appreciated the beauty and richness of our own liturgical tradition. As controversial as the 2009 Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum coetibus* was for many Anglicans and Roman Catholics, one could argue that in it Pope Benedict was recognising dimensions of the Anglican tradition as 'a precious gift', a treasure to be shared. It is significant for Anglicans

that *we are the only other Christians* mentioned in the 'deed' or *rogito* (the official summary of the highlights of his pontificate) which was placed in his sealed coffin. There, beside his remains, is this statement (in Latin): 'He successfully promoted dialogue with the Anglicans, with the Jews and with the representatives of other religions'.

In conversation with him he was far from what the press called 'God's rottweiler'; he was warm-hearted, gentle of speech and manner, rather shy and introverted. He loved the many cats which inhabit the gardens of the Vatican, and they loved him. (We all know that cats are very discerning creatures!) He enjoyed his piano and was devoted to that most sensitive and ordered composer, Mozart. A very human trait was his love of the occasional cigarette, his favourite brand being Marlboro. I have to smile when I think of him as a 'Marlboro Man'.

In his homily at the Pope Emeritus's funeral, which I was privileged to attend, Pope Francis spoke of the traits of a pastor, a shepherd, with clear reference to his predecessor. A shepherd feeds the sheep, and 'feeding means loving, and loving also means being ready to suffer. Loving means giving the sheep what is truly good, the nourishment of God's truth, of God's word, the nourishment of his presence.'

*O Lord we pray that your servant Benedict who was a faithful steward of your mysteries on earth, may praise your mercy for ever in the glory of your saints.* ND

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# Is the year only lost to me?

As Lent begins, *Richard Harries* offers a reflection on 'The Collar' by George Herbert (1593-1633)

A collar is sometimes put round the neck of a dog or other animal to restrain them, as reflected in the saying 'To slip the collar'. There may also be a pun on the word 'choler', meaning anger. Although Herbert came to be regarded as saintly, according to his brother he was not exempt from 'choler'. In this poem that anger is given free reign as the poet raves against the constraints of being a clergyman. The title could not however refer to a clerical collar, colloquially known as a 'dog collar', because these were not worn until 1894.

There used to be a phrase in the army which summed up a rebellious soldier. 'He threw down his rifle and said "I'll soldier no more."'. This is what Herbert is doing here in banging his fist on the table and shouting that he had had enough and would go abroad. He wanted to get away from it all and start a new life in another country. The third line finds him almost imagining himself as a man of the road, just going out and wandering where he wants, thinking himself free to do just what he wanted when he wanted.

This is a poem in which form and content are perfectly matched. The lines, matching the state of rebellion, do not conform to any regular pattern. At the same time they vividly convey not just an idea but an emotion. Take the opening

I struck the board, and cried, "No more;  
I will abroad!  
What? shall I ever sigh and pine?  
My lines and life are free, free as the road,  
Loose as the wind, as large as store.  
Shall I be still in suit?

We can almost hear the bang on the table and the cry and feel the anger in both. 'struck' and 'cried' are like the cracking of a whip. Whilst 'board', 'more' and 'abroad' stretch forward as though already leaving. All combine internal rhyming and alliteration, as do 'sigh' and 'pine'. Then we are brought up short with 'Shall I be still in suit?', which vividly expresses and evokes a sense of constraint.

Then in line seven he focuses on one complaint in particular, his life was so unproductive, nothing was coming to fruition. It was a particular complaint of Gerard Manley Hopkins as well, when he was going through a bad patch. Here Herbert remembers a time when there was corn and wine, images in the psalms of flourishing. But now not only has the last year been wasted, there are no garlands of victory to reward his efforts at the end of it.

Whilst these verses express anger and a desire to be free, at the same time there is a hidden message coming through in the *double-entendres*. The board he bangs is not just the one in the dining room, but the communion

I struck the board, and cried, "No more;  
I will abroad!  
What? shall I ever sigh and pine?  
My lines and life are free, free as the road,  
Loose as the wind, as large as store.  
Shall I be still in suit?  
Have I no harvest but a thorn  
To let me blood, and not restore  
What I have lost with cordial fruit?  
Sure there was wine  
Before my sighs did dry it; there was corn  
Before my tears did drown it.  
Is the year only lost to me?  
Have I no bays to crown it,  
No flowers, no garlands gay? All blasted?  
All wasted?  
Not so, my heart; but there is fruit,  
And thou hast hands.  
Recover all thy sigh-blown age  
On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute  
Of what is fit and not. Forsake thy cage,  
Thy rope of sands,  
Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee  
Good cable, to enforce and draw,  
And be thy law,  
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.  
Away! take heed;  
I will abroad.  
Call in thy death's-head there; tie up thy fears;  
He that forbears  
To suit and serve his need  
Deserves his load."  
But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild  
At every word,  
Methought I heard one calling, *Child!*  
And I replied *My Lord*.

table. The thorn brings to mind the crown of thorns, the blood the blood of Christ's sacrifice, the wine that of Holy Communion, which is our cordial fruit, and the corn which is made into the true bread which is Christ himself.

Then from line 17 he plays devil's advocate and says he can make up for what he has lost with 'double pleasure'. Almost like an upright man having a male menopause and suddenly starting to live a life of dissipation. He can give up the whole idea of thinking some things right or fit and others not. He can burst out of his cage. He can realise that the ropes which bind him are made of sand formed by his petty thoughts. So again he urges himself to go abroad. A death's-head was a picture or model of a skull used to frighten people. The poet is urged to call its bluff and tie up his fears. If he simply



# Welling up to eternal life

Barbara Ross looks ahead to the Third Sunday of Lent and its Gospel Reading of the woman at the well

The symbolism of water is of major importance in the Gospel of John, as it is in the Hebrew Scriptures. In this account, water is life-giving and the means of transformation. The source of the water of life is Jesus. In bestowing the gift of this water, he gives of himself and declares his divinity.

Jesus is travelling; he is carrying out his purpose of dwelling among us to reveal his glory. He 'had to go through Samaria' (4.4). The words *had to* imply that he was doing God's will. Jesus is tired and sits by Jacob's well, dug by Jacob some two thousand years previously. A natural spring still flows and bubbles up at the depth of the shaft. This spring of water, released from the rock by Jacob, symbolizes the old order. For the identity of the people of Israel came through Jacob, to whom God gave the name Israel.

So Jesus is 'at the source of his own history', in the words of Stephen Verney ('Water into Wine', DLT, 1999). It was through Jacob that God's purpose was to be enacted. Israel was his chosen people, in covenant with God to make him known. But it is Jesus who carries out that mission and brings the salvation *from* the Jews, to which he will refer in the conversation with the woman.

The well has further significance. In the Hebrew Scriptures, it is a symbol of life. God is the fountain of living water (Jeremiah 2.13), and of life (Ps 36.8). And the Jerome Bible commentary on the passage gives traditional interpretations of water found in Qumran material and other ancient sources. For example, water can represent the truth. 'He [God] will sprinkle on him [the righteous] the Spirit of truth' (p 597). The Essenes associated water with the Law. They considered the Torah as a well from which they received their knowledge of the truth (ibid). In John's Gospel, Jesus himself is the truth (14.6).

Flowing water is a metaphor for the wisdom of the Law for Sirach (24.23-29). In the Jewish tradition, water purifies. But Jesus has supplanted previous interpretations. At the marriage at Cana, he changes the water into wine, demonstrating that through water comes transformation. A well was the place where Rebekah met the servant of Abraham, who was seeking a wife for Isaac. The presence of Jesus at the well can suggest that he is the

bridegroom, come to claim his bride, his followers, his church.

When Jesus sits at the well, it is the sixth hour, noon. The sun is at its highest; the light is at its strongest. So we can expect an outstanding enlightenment, and see a parallel later in the Gospel. It was the sixth hour, noon, when Pilate, indicating Jesus, says to the Jews 'Here is your King!' (19.14). He speaks mockingly, but declares the truth, a truth not accepted by his hearers. But in this account the sovereignty of Jesus is acknowledged. The discussion with the woman shows that Jesus himself is the well of living water, who gives eternal life. The woman goes up to the well, although there is a man sitting there, and no-one else in sight. She is not afraid to be venture-some. Her curiosity prompts her to flout convention.

Jesus initiates the conversation by asking the woman for a drink. Why? He perceives her potential for giving and sharing what she herself has obtained. As she will do with the gift she receives from Jesus.

She immediately focuses on the hostility between Jew and Samaritan. But Jesus overrides the cultural difference between them. He challenges her to know the gift of God, the living water of life. Jesus himself is this gift; he calls her to believe this. She fails to understand at first. Jesus explains that the water he gives is not to quench everyday thirst, but will 'become [in those who drink] a spring of water gushing up to eternal life' (4.14).

He tells her to call her husband. Speculation has been made as to the meaning of the five husbands. Verney suggests Jesus could be asking the woman to share the living water she receives. Flowing water must overflow; if it



*Christ and the Samaritan woman at the well' by Valentin le Fevre (1641-80)*

does not and remains still, it becomes stagnant. The gift of water gushing up to eternal life in the believer must also be given to others. And so it gives new life in the present; eternity breaks through into time and space.

The woman turns aside from talk about her marital status to acknowledge Jesus as a prophet, and raise the question of the place of worship; for her, Mount Gerizim, for Jews, Jerusalem. But details such as place are not important; Jesus tells her that true worship must be 'in spirit and truth' (4.23), both of which flow from him. This prompts her to declare her belief in the coming of the Messiah. Jesus replies 'ego eimi', which means 'I am' – translated into English as 'I am he' but the addition of a predicate masks the meaning of the two Greek words. The words 'ego eimi' recall God's reply to Moses at the burning bush. Moses wants to know God's name. God's reply is 'I AM WHO I AM' (Exodus 3.14). At the time the Gospel was written, the Hebrew Scriptures would also have been known in Greek; John's readers would have understood that Jesus is giving an explicit declaration of his divinity. In the 'I am' sayings later in the Gospel, Jesus will elaborate on what his divinity means for us.

The woman leaves her water-jar and returns to the city to tell, in wonder and excitement, of her encounter. Why did she leave the jar? Not just out of forgetfulness. All details in the Gospel of John are significant. The

abandoning of the jar can mean the woman's leaving behind preconceptions and assumptions, basing herself instead on her dawning faith in Jesus.

Her faith impels her to urge the citizens to come and see the man she has met. Many believe on account of her testimony, but on being with Jesus, they have heard Jesus for themselves and know that he is the Saviour, of the world. For the abundant water of life springing from Jesus is salvation.

The woman gives a pattern of discipleship. She begins by approaching Jesus in a state of curiosity. She asks questions, allows herself to digress from what is central, but comes to faith and spreads abroad the good news of Jesus among us.

The fulness of grace in John's Prologue (1.14) becomes concrete in the living water Jesus gives, which pours on us the Spirit and love of God.

There is more on which to reflect in this account, but I offer a focus on the significance and imagery of water. We may note, in conclusion, that the passage gathers together main themes of the Gospel of John. We are told of the carrying out of God's purpose in Jesus. His divinity is declared. He has foreknowledge of people. Above all, Jesus is the source of all life (as in 1.3, 4a), and of grace, wisdom, and truth. Jesus is the living water of eternal life, poured out to overflow in us and give us a foretaste of eternity. **ND**

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## Is the year only lost to me? *continued*

stayed there enduring his life as it was, he would deserve his load.

Then as his raving got fiercer and wilder he simply heard the word 'Child' and he replied 'My Lord'. When a child is sobbing with unhappiness they are sometimes comforted by a parent just taking them into their arms and holding them close. Nothing need be said.

Perhaps Herbert as a child had experienced such gentle reassurance from his much loved mother or one of her servants. Here he is not frightened of depicting himself a child in relation to God, one in a state of total dependence and trust. Indeed Jesus himself had said that we must become like little children. As Herbert put it in his poem 'H. Baptism' (2) 'Childhood is health'.

There are a number of poems expressing a sense of rebellion to God, of which this is the best. It is an experience that many Christians will have had one time or another, in mild or strong form. Sometimes this comes about because of a too limited, and therefore distorted, view of God. God is the eternal, underlying ground of all that exists, the primary cause of all secondary causes. He is not one cause amongst many. He is not a thing in the world of things, an item in a list of items. Because he is God, in this sense, his reality is not a threat. In the case of finite things it is often the case that the more there is of one, the less there is of others. This is not so with God, just the opposite. The more there is of

God, the freer we are to be fully and truly ourselves. So one reason we might feel a sense of rebellion against God is because we have a wrong picture in our mind, we are thinking of a reality like other realities which inhibits our freedom.

A true picture of God does not block our freedom. Furthermore if God is good, all good, our true and everlasting good, the more we are given over to God, the more we are on the way to realising our true good.

This having been said, there may be occasions when we are genuinely doing something we know to be wrong and the rebellion is indeed directed against the true God. Then, again, there is the call of Christ to follow him and that may indeed go against what we immediately want to do, so there is a genuine tussle. With Herbert there was indeed such a call, to be ordained, about which he had such mixed feelings, and which indeed seemed to him to be a constraint on his life.

Yet he came to discover, as so many have, that 'In thy service is perfect freedom'.

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# Learning to fail again

For Emma Ineson, Lent is a good time to think about the theology of failure

**T**he neglected liturgy in the Church of England, from the BCP, called, ‘A commination or denouncing of God’s anger and judgements against sinners’, involves ‘certain prayers to be used on the first day of Lent, and at other times, as the ordinary shall appoint’. I am not surprised that it is not often used, because it lays out in fairly bald terms all the ways in which human beings fail, sin, turn against God and generally hurt themselves and one another. It includes such wonders as confession by the person who ‘removeth his neighbour’s land-mark’ or ‘maketh the blind to go out of his way’ or ‘smiteth his neighbour secretly’, as well as the ‘unmerciful, fornicators, and adulterers, covetous persons, idolaters, slanderers, drunkards, and extortioners’. The liturgy begins with the words:

Now seeing that all they are accursed (as the prophet David beareth witness) who do err and go astray from the commandments of God; let us (remembering the dreadful judgement hanging over our heads, and always ready to fall upon us) return unto our Lord God with all contrition and meekness of heart; bewailing and lamenting our sinful life, acknowledging and confessing our offences, and seeking to bring forth worthy fruits of penance.

It is, perhaps, a little harsh and obtuse for most of our sensibilities these days, but it is helpful to remember the facts: we are sinful, fallen, failing people. We remember, too, the fact that God is a merciful God, and the service ends, thankfully, with the words, ‘For thou art a merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity.’

Lent is a great time to think about our failures, but let’s be careful how we approach this. During Lent, quite rightly, we bring our failures to mind and to the attention of a loving God who is always readier to forgive us than we are to repent. Sometimes, though it’s tempting to treat Lent itself as something that we should be hugely successful at. One writer says:

I . . . wonder if a certain sense of failure during Lent is actually a good thing. In part, it reminds us that Lent is not a home renovation show. The primary goal of the season is not self-improvement; we are not here to fix up our own personal backslash. We are trying to open ourselves to a deeper relationship with our friend and savior, Jesus.

Above all, Lent is a time when we are encouraged to turn to God and God’s word in the Bible and allow it to be reflected in our own lives to enable us to see ourselves as we really are. The problem is that the Bible is not the first place many people turn to today when looking for solutions to the problem of failure or even simply for comfort.

We say that we should embrace failure and learn

from it, but the story of God and his people is rarely one in which abject failure is turned into rip-roaring success. The Bible reframes what we think of as success and failure. The story we see most commonly is apparent success followed by failure and eventual redemption, but not in the ways originally expected. The success of creation – the pinnacle of which is humankind – is followed by the failure of the fall and banishment from the garden. The success of the flight from Egypt is followed by forty years of failure and wandering in the desert. The success of the Law being given to Moses on the mountaintop is followed by the failure of God’s people to make do with anything other than a golden calf to worship. The success of the promised land is followed by the failure of exile. The success of successful King David (giant slayer – yay!) is followed by his own moral failure. The success of Jesus’ ministry is followed by apparent failure on the cross. The success of God’s Holy Spirit being poured out on all people is followed by the story of the Church being persecuted and scattered. The success of Pentecost is followed by 2,000 years of the fallible Church dividing and splitting and sinning and failing, even as it grows and spreads.

Is failure really something you encounter on the road to success or is it more often the other way round? Rather than seeing failure as the path to success, maybe we ought to see it instead as part of the weft and weave of life, part of the texture of our existence. We can ask what we will learn from it, of course, but perhaps more than that, we ought to accept it, reflect on it, think carefully about it and aim to fail well. Rather than asking how we get through it, instead we could ask what God is doing in and through it.

The past few years have caused us to shift our views on what constitutes success and failure. We have reimaged success. Perhaps we’ve lowered our expectations a little and now feel more comfortable living in the mess. It’s acceptable for parents to collect their children from school in their pyjamas and I wear Crocs for most of my Zoom meetings. At one point during the pandemic, the people viewed as really successful, our heroes, were not bankers and stockbrokers, but key workers – bin collectors, delivery drivers, front-line health care workers. They were the people who kept us going and we applauded them on our doorsteps. Perhaps it’s time to rethink success and failure. **[ND]**

*The Rt Revd Dr Emma Ineson is Bishop to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York; she has recently been announced as the new Bishop of Kensington in the Diocese of London. Failure is the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Lent Book 2023 and is published by SPCK.*

# Mid-Lent Madness

*Peter Anthony meditates on the Transfiguration*

**H**ow mad do you have to be to want to be ordained? It's a serious question. Just how out of your mind have you got to appear if you want to become a priest?

I know sometimes, when one looks at the antics of the House of Bishops of the Church of England, it does indeed feel like the insane have taken over the asylum. But I mean something a bit different.

To give up a well-paid job in the secular world – or the prospect of having one – to offer yourself for a vocation in which you are called to spread the gospel of a theoretical being who might not even exist must look to the outside world like madness. But don't imagine there's anything new in that. For it is an idea we find both in the scriptures and in the Fathers, and often in connection with meditation on the Transfiguration.

The place where the gospel of the Transfiguration was most regularly heard in the ancient West each year was on the first Saturday in Lent. In the old rite, this was the only day in the year when, apart from the Feast Day itself, the Gospel of the Transfiguration was read. It was only when the new calendars and lectionaries of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century were constructed that a Transfiguration gospel was moved to mid-Lent or just before the beginning of Lent.

Nobody really knows why this Gospel reading got attached to this obscure Saturday in Lent, but it might have something to do with it being an ember day in Rome. On this day, ordinations frequently took place there. Indeed we have a Transfiguration homily preached by Leo the Great almost certainly on this day at an ordination in the mid fifth Century.

In that homily Leo comes back to an idea that recurs in patristic commentary on the Transfiguration – for the disciples to experience that great vision, they had to be slightly out of their minds. Leo says this: 'Peter the apostle was so inspired by these divine revelations of mysteries that he wished to spurn and despise wordly things and his mind was taken with a kind of elated distraction for eternal things.'

There's a hint here that in his 'elated distraction' Peter is kind of out of his mind. So wonderful is the vision before him that Matthew describes it in terms of Peter not knowing what to say. The important point Leo makes is this: to love Jesus you've got to be sort of crackers – you need to be madly in love. And if you want to serve him as a priest you've definitely got to be crackers and head over heels in love with the one you feel called to serve.

For the mountain-top vision stands as an image for what a vocation to priestly vocation is like. However a candidate for ordination felt God's prompting – be that a dramatic moment or a still small voice – somewhere, somehow, an encounter with the living God has so over-



*The Transfiguration by Raphael (1483-1520), his final painting*

whelmed that person, so changed them, so humbled them, that they simply want to be with him.

Someone with a vocation of any kind will want nothing more than to luxuriate in God's presence, and throw everything else to the wind. Just like a teenager in love for the first time, we are gripped by a kind of love madness – our priorities are suddenly transformed. We no longer value what the world values. We simply want to be with the beloved.

But Jesus calls us to take something of that encounter and go down the mountain and return to the world with that experience in our heart. For it will be the energy, the power, the inspiration behind all that we do in response to God's calling, as he pours his spirit into those whom he calls.

If we attempt at any point to respond to a new sense of calling or vocation from God, we shouldn't worry if at times we feel odd or strange, or mad or demented – or indeed surrounded by others who definitely are! It's supposed to be like that and we are living out a deeply scriptural and patristic idea. For as Paul teaches us, the wisdom of the Gospel is very different from the wisdom of the world: '...we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.' **ND**



# The Love That You Show Me

David Wilson makes an impassioned plea for the status quo on marriage and a rediscovery of the gay community's gifted presence

With tears pouring down my cheeks, I prayed... begged: *I cannot manage the lie any more. Help me, show me what to do!* I had tried so hard to be a good, straight, Christian. A few months later I was in church arranging flowers for Easter when Duncan walked in on the arm of the Vicar's daughter. He and I will be celebrating our 30th anniversary in a few weeks' time.

It might be assumed, then, that we are busy applauding the Bishop of Oxford and others in their push to legalise gay marriage in the Church of England. Alas, far from it. The entire enterprise of using gay marriage to undermine the Sacraments of the Church saddens my heart, whilst the campaign seems to me to confess the lesser sin to hide the greater. Whilst superficially gay-supportive, in fact, it is not. It talks the talk, whilst failing to acknowledge the full gay experience of the Church and its long history, as we have walked the walk. If this was better recognised it would be quite clear that the validity and encouragement of gay relationships within the Church does not necessitate gay marriage.

The agar into which the early Christian Church grew – dominated by the civilisations of Greece, Rome and the near East – was a gay-friendly world, yet there are no Greek or Latin words which translate as 'homosexual'. It is only the modern world which seeks to define gay experience as primarily sexual, or even pathological (*homosexual* being a term of medical psychology since 1886). In its classic understanding, gay experience embraces the riches of same-gender eroticism, passion, affection, love, romance and intense friendship. Sexual interest still varies greatly amongst those identifying as gay and may or may not be included at all. For the upper classes of Greece and Rome, sexual preference and fluidity seem to have been considered entirely ordinary. In love affairs, those between men were commonly held to be the most profound. The more effeminate men in these relationships were often referred to as natural or born eunuchs, Greek street slang translating roughly to the modern terms of poof, fairy, queen etc.



Eunuchs often served as personal palace officials (literally, Eunouchos, bed-holder), but as Clement of Alexandria warned: '*the true eunuch is not unable, but unwilling to have sex*' with women (*Paedagogus*, III 4.25). The solution were so-called man-made Eunuchs, or the castrati, surgically altered males, usually as boys, to make them similar to natural born eunuchs. These also often served as prostitutes. Noted for their quality of voice, castrati also dominated Church music from its inception, until the 19th century. Eunuchs of both kinds were deeply embedded in the cultures and creation myths of the near-East, from ancient Sumaria and Egypt through to the Indian sub-continent and beyond.

It is almost impossible to summarise the rich complexity of the gay experience of the Ancient World in a few paragraphs. The point is that it was all considered quite everyday, and that it was into the height of classic gay culture occurring during the first two centuries AD that the early Church was starting to grow and the Gospels were written.

With the decline of those great empires and their slow disintegration, and the increasing influence of barbarian kingdoms, the landscape in which the Church grew started to change. Dissenting voices on some same-gender sexual practices had always been present but now they started to become more vocal and widespread. Even within the Church, however, they remained a vocal minority for some centuries. These dissenting voices bear witness, through their complaint, of the flourishing gay culture widespread in monasteries, Churches and throughout the Christian community. The High Middle Ages of the late 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries are often held up as the height of Christian gay cultural accomplishment and tolerance, if only for the sheer breadth and depth of the literature produced.

Yet within a period of about 150 years, for no easily discernible reason, at least not one that scholars agree upon, the position entirely changed. Europe transformed from being broadly gay-tolerant to making homosexual practice punishable by death. 1300 years of rich and varied gay Christian experience was replaced by a further 700 years of oppression and denial, as the Church joined secular forces to promote a normalising conformity. This consolidation of power also disadvantaged many other minority social groups. More importantly, perhaps, it saw a major change in the intellectual life of the Church, as Church Fathers who promoted anti-gay viewpoints became the established norms of the Church, whilst Church Fathers who embraced gay culture were censored. The systematic eradication of the gay-tolerant history of the Church through this period should perhaps be regarded as the



establishment of an anti-gay heresy, as it has no proper biblical basis. It became the great forgetting, which forms the collective amnesia of the modern Church. As the printing press arrived and the Bible became questionably translated into the vernacular, this heresy gained increasing prominence, the main challenge being an intellectual one. Classical gay texts were essentially unprintable in most of Europe without censorship from the late Middle Ages, well into the 1980s. This has created a great wall to our gay-friendly past through which it is hard to think, as the nuances of the Classical world, particularly Greek translations, were often lost, censored or deliberately misrepresented. This included passages in the Bible which became used to persecute gay people, by utilising the absurdly reductive basic premise that gay relationships can be reduced to one physical act. This took two forms:

Firstly, active bullying through the use of what are often called the Clobber Passages: Genesis 19; Deuteronomy 23.17-18; Leviticus 18 & 20; Jude 7; 1 Corinthians 6.9-10; Romans 1, 21-28; and 1 Timothy 1.10. Yet all suffer from mis-representation either of context or in translation. Most concern sexual violence and none can be taken to be definitively anti-gay. In some cases (in St. Paul) we have no idea as to the correct Greek translation of certain key words. As soon as you see the word 'sodomy/sodomite' or 'homosexual', as commonly found in vernacular translations of these passages, it is a mistranslation, as there is no original lexical equivalent. The 'clobber' passages have themselves become embarrassing to the modern Church.

Secondly, the gay-affirming passages of Scripture are denied their gayness. Any biblical gay relationship is presented as 'obviously Platonic' and therefore, not gay. Alternatively, it is frequently argued that translations of such passages are too ambiguous, the relationships set in too distant a cultural world, so as to be easily understood

as being the equivalent of contemporary same-sex relationships.

I disagree. Many biblical relationships are perfectly comparable to contemporary same-sex relationships. Why should gay relationships be different? Indeed, the sexual fluidity across much of the ancient world is, once again, re-establishing itself in Western culture making such Biblical relationships more easily understood than for the past seven centuries. The only definition of gayness that is defied is that which absurdly reduces the gay experience to a single sex-act.

In fact, the Old Testament contains two of the finest gay love stories in classic literature. The story of David and Jonathan (Samuel 1-2) is searingly homoerotic. Whether or not they had sex is a moot point, although if it were a man and woman in the text such a presumption would be made. Saul clearly thought that they did, delivering the sort of speech that every gay person fears from their parent and all too many receive (1 Samuel 20.30). The story of Ruth and Naomi is equally searingly homoerotic, as Ruth is described as 'clinging' (dabaq) to Naomi in the same way as Adam declares that a man should leave his parents when he grows up and cling (dabaq) to his wife (Genesis 2.24). Her declaration of love to Naomi (Ruth 1.16-17) has often been read at Christian weddings as perfectly capturing the essence of love. Whether or not they had sex is also a moot point but were it a man and a woman in the text, nobody would be in any doubt at all.

The New Testament also contains some inspiring gay-friendly moments, as the early Church encountered the non-Jewish world. The encounter between Philip and the nameless Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8) makes for rich Bible study. Second is the story of the healing of the Centurion's servant (Matthew 8.5-13 and Luke 7.1-10), almost certainly his sex slave. Donald Mader (*The Entimos Pais of Matthew and Luke*, 1998) gives a detailed study of the nuances of the Greek text and how its cultural signals would have been understood by the audience to which its polished Semitic Greek was directed. The story was undoubtedly shocking to a Greek-Jewish audience, as it transgressed cultural boundaries, as indeed did many of the other actions of Jesus Christ in his ministry. There is no condemnation of the relationship by Christ himself, rather, the Centurion is commended by Jesus to the assembled crowd around him for his extraordinary faith.

Finally, comes the teaching of Jesus Christ himself on the nature of marriage in Matthew 19. Many deny that Jesus had anything to say on the subject of gay marriage. Yet, with regard to gay marriage, the lines here are as clear as those on divorce:

*The disciples said to him, 'If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.' Jesus replied, 'Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others – and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who*

*can accept this should accept it.* ' (Matthew 19.10-12)

It is the most bittersweet moment. Jesus Christ himself, casually mentions poofs, queers, fairies (however you wish to translate 'effeminate gay people') as part of the creation order, even in the same breath as monks and nuns but as part of a list of those excluded from marriage. Also included in the list are those who have been neutered in the process of surgically altering them (today this includes trans-surgeries) to be like effeminate gay men, that is, eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others. No doubt it can be theologised and historicised away, as is often the way, but the instruction remains.

To be clear about the meaning of one of the most frequently mis-translated passages in Scripture ('born eunuch' often being deliberately mis-translated as somebody born with physical inability) it is best to contextualise it within the Jewish Law of The Talmud, with which Jesus would have been quite familiar. It is one of the few ancient religious texts that specifically mentions same-sex marriage.

In the Sifra (composed c.350-250 BC), legal comment is found on the Book of Leviticus: '*Like the deeds of the land of Egypt where you dwelt, you shall not do*' (Leviticus 18.3) – *What would they do? A man would marry a man, a woman would marry a woman...* Whilst in the Babylonian Talmud, the later written form of the ancient oral Tradition known to Christ, Rabbi Eliezer refers to eunuchs by nature, asserting that they can be cured by marriage to a good woman (that old chestnut... but hardly diseased or defective then!). Jesus did not accept this view, making it clear that any form of eunuch should not marry.

If Jesus had intended to change the Jewish tradition on gay marriage, as he changed so much other Pharisaic teaching at this time, this would have been the easiest moment in human history to have done so. Roman Law differentiated between natural born and man-made eunuchs. Unlike man-made eunuchs, natural eunuchs were freemen, who were eligible for marriage. Gay marriage was widely practised in Rome just as today, we have State gay civil partnerships. How easy it would have been for Christ to allow his gay disciples to marry. Jesus did not do this. He upholds Jewish Law and teaching, against that of the world around him. The Church finds itself in a similar place today. *The one who can accept this should accept it.* Are you a Christian, following the teachings of Christ, our Saviour, or not?

Against this background, the demand for gay marriage is a trivially recent one. For 1300 years gay people both flourished in our churches and perfectly happily followed the teaching of Christ on marriage. Why has this changed? Why this demand and why now?

The last 700 years of the Church's persecution gives a sad history to gay marriage, being one of gay men marrying women and gay women marrying men, to protect themselves from persecution by conforming to a norm. That the failure to follow the teaching of Christ was the effect of social persecution is a great unhappiness. It seems to me almost perverse, to now demand that the gay

community be normalised and conformed, once again, by failing to follow the teaching of Christ through adopting those same marriage practices. It is based on a mistaken secular belief that equality equals sameness, instead of taking Christian pride in our equality in difference, as commended by St. Paul (1 Corinthians 12.12-27). It seems to me to be shocking that The Church of England is once again taking its guidance from civil society and government, rather than from the depths of Church tradition. The Church should be following the example of Christ in upholding Church Law and Sacrament against the secular forces demanding otherwise. It would have been the easiest thing in the world for Christ to do. He did not. *The one who can accept this should accept it.*

Gay couples do not need such normalisation. The goods of marriage are open to us in other ways. Secular legal protection is given by Civil Partnerships, whilst Duncan and I bonded ourselves to each other and to God by walking the Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. I highly commend it. If you have not killed each other in the first three weeks, you will probably make it as faithful, partnered people for several decades more, without feeling a need to ape the arrangements provided by God for heterosexual couples. 30 years later, we still walk faithfully together, with Christ as our guide. Nobody should be seeking to trash this and the wider sacramental life of the Church to pander to the emotional incontinence of those egos making egregious demands. Rather, we should seek to return to the accepting embrace that the early Church had for all those in pain, leading them on the pathway to Christ by following his teaching, restoring the gay poetry to our bible texts in the process.

The gay Christian community has always been here, it was once long respected and integrated. Do not pretend that messing with established order and tradition will bring about acceptance. Instead, I say to fellow gay Christians put yourselves into God's hands. Go on pilgrimage. Pray. Fast. Seek ye the way of the Lord through his teaching. And let the gay community once again become godparents to our church communities in all their forms as churchwardens, PCC members, artists, flower arrangers, musicians, cooks, even clergy. Let our Churches embrace gay flourish! The Anglo-Catholic communion is generally very good at this. Let it stand firm, once again, and as always lead by example. **[ND]**

*Dr David M. Wilson is Lay Chair of the Forward in Faith (Canterbury) branch.*

#### **Further reading**

- Living in Love and Faith (Latimer Trust, 2021)
- Faris Malik: Born Eunuchs – Homosexual Identity in the Ancient World (published online)
- Richard von Krafft-Ebing: Psychopathia Sexualis (1886)
- Boswell: Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality (University of Chicago, 1980)
- Tyler & Connoley: The Children are Free (LifeJourney Press, 2011)
- Barbara Pym: A Glass of Blessings (Jonathan Cape, 1958)





# LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

## STATEMENT FROM THE SOCIETY BISHOPS

**L**iving in Love and Faith has been a major exercise in learning and listening undertaken by the Church of England, not only about the question of same-sex relationships but on many issues touching on our understanding of the human person, made in God's image, in relation to marriage, sexuality, gender and relationships. We are grateful for all who have led and contributed to this work, which we believe has a value not just within the life of the Church of England, but as a contribution to the deep reflection on these matters which is taking place within every part of the universal Church. We are of the view that continuing theological work in this field will enrich our understanding of the many complex issues arising.

The Church of England has issued a statement (available at [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org)) on the proposals which will be brought by the House of Bishops for consideration at General Synod in February, following a period of reflection by the national College of Bishops on the *Living in Love and Faith* resources.

We welcome and reinforce the clear commitment to maintain the doctrine of marriage as the Church of England has received it, and which is shared with the great churches of East and West. We are glad that no changes to the Canons or authorised liturgies of the Church of England as they touch on Holy Matrimony are proposed.

Prayers and other guidance have been published in draft form, for consideration at General Synod. If commended in due course by the House of Bishops, these prayers would enable clergy, at their discretion, to offer services of thanksgiving and dedication for committed, faithful same-sex couples, and to ask God's blessings on them.

The use of these prayers will be entirely discretionary, and they would be commended by the House of Bishops in accordance with Canon B5 which requires that such forms of service are commensurate with the doctrine and teaching of the Church of England. We will study this material carefully when it is published and, in due course, we anticipate issuing pastoral guidance to the clergy who look to us for oversight as to how best these prayers might be used locally.

We note the commitment by the House of Bishops to rescind *Issues in Human Sexuality* and to replace it with new pastoral guidance. A number of legal as well as pastoral questions are raised here, which will require significant further work. **ND**

+ TONY WAKEFIELD

The Rt Revd Tony Robinson, Bishop of Wakefield,  
Chairman of The Society's Council of Bishops

+STEPHEN BEVERLEY

The Rt Revd Stephen Race, Bishop of Beverley

+ PHILIP BURNLEY

The Rt Revd Philip North, Bishop of Burnley

+ MARTIN CICESTR

The Rt Revd Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester

+ JONATHAN FULHAM

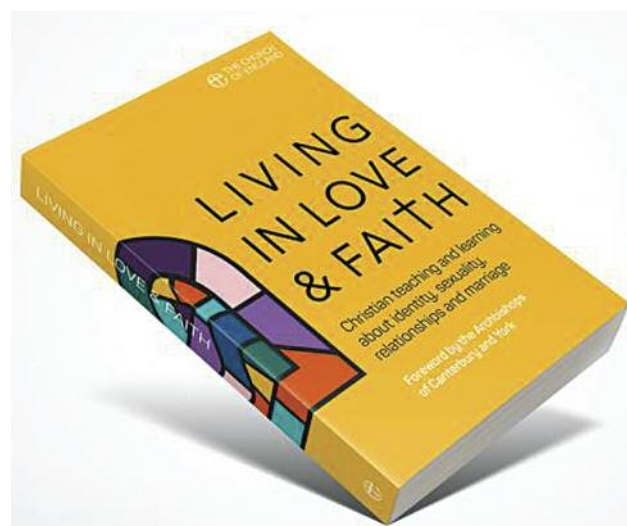
The Rt Revd Jonathan Baker, Bishop of Fulham

+ WILLIAM LEWES

The Rt Revd Will Hazlewood, Bishop of Lewes

+ NORMAN RICHBOROUGH

The Rt Revd Norman Banks, Bishop of Richborough



# Church Crawling

Simon Cotton celebrates Somerset towers



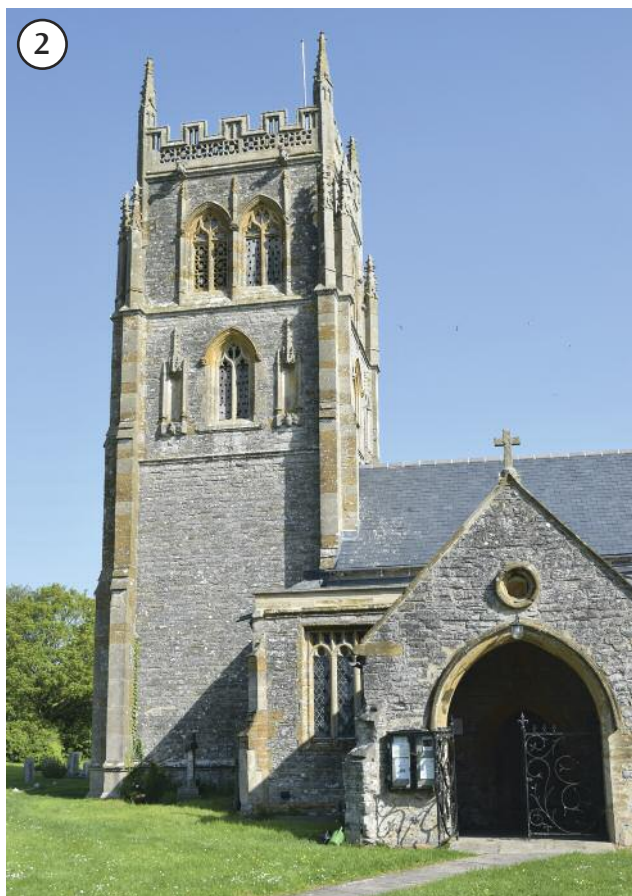
The magnificent tower of **Bishop's Lydiard church (1)** would be a highlight if found in many other English counties; here in Somerset it is one of many, with similarities to others like Ile Abbots (ND Feb 2018), Kingston Saint Mary and Staple Fitzpaine. It is built of red sandstone, with Ham Hill dressings, probably around 1480. Don't miss the Comper interior to which it is attached.

Another building stone widely used in Somerset is of blue lias, employed in the tower of **Middlezoy (2)**, which was probably built much the same time at Bishop's Lydiard. It has similarities to the richer one at Weston Zoyland (ND Dec 2020).

The tower at **Curry Rivel (3)** uses Ham stone dressings to offset the blue lias. It is one of a number of towers of slightly later construction from around 1500 into the early 16<sup>th</sup> c. which share the feature of elongated two light bell openings, such as Hinton St George, Norton-sub-Hamdon (both ND Dec 2019) and Shepton Beauchamp (ND April 2019). [ND](#)

## Further reading:

- A. K. Wickham, *Churches of Somerset*, Phoenix House, 1952;
- John H. Harvey, 'Somerset Perpendicular – The Church Towers and the Dating Evidence', *Trans. Ancient Monuments Society (New Series)*, 1982, Vol. 26, pp. 157–183;
- J. Orbach and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Somerset: North and Bristol and Somerset: South and West*, Yale, 2011 and 2014 respectively





# Bishop North to be the tenth Bishop of Blackburn

*Second Society bishop becomes a diocesan*

**C**ongratulations to the Rt Revd Philip North who was announced on 10 January as the next Bishop of Blackburn. Currently serving as the Bishop of Burnley in the same diocese, he succeeds the Rt Revd Julian Henderson who retired earlier this year, and will now lead the whole diocese, serving people and communities across Lancashire. He will be the second traditionalist diocesan bishop in the Church of England now, alongside the Rt Revd Martin Warner in Chichester.

‘I believe with all my heart that God has called me to carry Jesus across Lancashire, to bear witness to his love and peace here in this county,’ Bishop Philip said, as his new role was made known at St Christopher’s CofE High School in Accrington. ‘I have done that for the past eight years as Bishop of Burnley, and I will go on doing that as Bishop of Blackburn. I am delighted to be staying in a county that I love very deeply indeed, delighted also that we will be able to carry on the work here in Blackburn Diocese.’

‘There are three things for which I will be labouring tirelessly in the years to come. Firstly, I am committed to continuing the growth of the church in Lancashire, helping to build joyful Christian communities. Secondly, I would love to see the Church of England in Lancashire being an ever-stronger voice for justice, especially for the poorest.

‘And thirdly, I believe children and young people need to be at the very heart of all that we do. The current generation of young people is such an impressive one, with a real desire to build a better world. Yet at the same time I know that life is not always easy for them. There are such exciting opportunities for young people in Lancashire – we need to see more.

‘There is so much going for the Diocese of Blackburn – inspirational schools, great parishes, vibrant chaplaincies, committed clergy, a wonderful leadership team. I know that, with God’s help, we can do something amazing here. I look forward to working together with people across the county to celebrate Christ in Lancashire, so that everyone can know his love and his peace and his justice.’

Accompanying him, his episcopal colleague, the Rt Revd Dr Jill Duff, Bishop of Lancaster, who chaired the local consultation process that led to this nomination, added: ‘Philip North is a prophetic leader and a tender-hearted pastor who loves Jesus and loves the people of Lancashire.’

‘I have found much joy in serving alongside Philip as a fellow suffragan bishop for the last five years. He has inspired me, encouraged and greatly supported me. And I believe that Philip is called for such a time as this to lead the Diocese of Blackburn, cherishing the diversity of



*Bishop Philip  
(credit - Sara Cuff for Blackburn Diocese)*

opinion, theology and background that our county has always welcomed. He loves to see others flourish and find their voice – especially young people and those on the margins. I am delighted and relieved that he will succeed Bishop Julian as the tenth Bishop of Blackburn. May he serve our county with great joy.’

The Most Revd and Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, said: ‘Bishop Philip comes to this new role already knowing and loving the Diocese of Blackburn. He respects and understands the diversity of the diocese and is committed to growing a church where all can flourish both ordained and lay alike. As an evangelist, he will also strive to share the Christian faith with others. As a friend of the poor, he will be a voice for the most hard pressed and excluded in our society. I am hugely excited about his appointment and ensure him and the diocese of Blackburn of my support and prayer.’

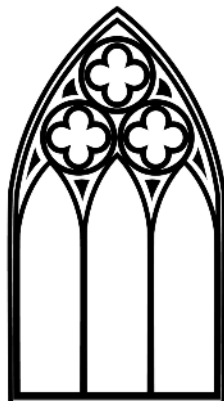
Bishop North was educated at the University of York and trained for ministry at St Stephen’s House, Oxford. He served his title at St Mary the Virgin in the Diocese of Durham and was ordained priest in 1993. In 1996, he took up the role of Vicar at Holy Trinity and St Mark’s Hartlepool and was also appointed Area Dean of Hartlepool in 2000. In 2002 he became Priest Administrator of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, in Norfolk, and from where many in the Catholic wing will know him, before being appointed Team Rector of the Parish of Old St Pancras, in the Diocese of London, in 2008. From there he was consecrated to the See of Burnley in 2015 and was the first traditionalist bishop after the Consecration and Ordination of Women Measure (2014) with its initial appointment of the Rt Revd Libby Lane to the See of Stockport.

It is anticipated Bishop Philip will formally take up his new role in May or June 2023. We send him our hearty congratulations. **ND**



# ◆ WANDERING BISHOP ◆

Stephen Race



I didn't look at my watch, but I reckon I became a bishop around about midday on St Andrew's Day 2022 in York Minster. It was wonderful being surrounded by so many people in such a beautiful building, surrounded by heavenly music and enveloped in prayer. I'm still very much a baby-bishop, tiptoeing my way through all the 'firsts' that have to be done while discovering everything I wasn't told about – or hadn't heard, which is more likely – before taking up the Shepherd's Crook.

Fortunately, the Good Shepherd is permanently on hand to guide and strengthen each one of us. I have found that as the 'weight of this calling' has begun to bed in that my morning and evening prayer times have taken on a new urgency. I do miss saying the Daily Office and celebrating mass in the parish and the constancy of friendship with colleagues and parishioners, but I'm also enjoying discovering new contexts and new people in which and through whom the good news of Jesus is proclaimed.

Proclaiming the Gospel has never been easy – the Gospel challenges and unsettles but when heard and received is life-giving. In days gone by it was spread by people walking from place to place, or travelling on horseback, wagon or ship. Today the internet and social media platforms are integrated into almost every aspect of life in most parts of the world. Proclaiming and living the Gospel faithfully, with genuine love, compassion and forgiveness in cyber-space is as important as doing so in our traditional community spaces. The Church got a lot better at this during the pandemic and I am trying to do my bit through Facebook too. I don't like Twitter, but I

may have to get on board with it and I've downloaded Instagram but as yet haven't done anything with it. If I'm honest, I'm not sure how to use it effectively.

I've discovered that being a bishop means that people from all over the place want to be my Facebook friends. I've not yet reached the dizzy numbers of friends or followers that will make me an Influencer with multi-million-pound sponsorship deals! I am pleased about that because it is clear that some folk who claim to be friends are up to no good and our relationships have been short-lived. There have also been people from across the globe who have begun asking for help because of the dire straits they claim to be in. As a parish priest, I could meet people, see them, talk to them and discern if requests were genuine or not and offer help appropriately if needed. That's not possible on social media and some people have been blocked. But how do I know that in blocking I'm not being like the priest who crossed over the road and walked by, leaving an injured person to suffer?

That's a new emotion I'm learning to live with. I hope it will make me more acutely aware of need and suffering in the places I travel through and to and therefore make me a more effective pastor. I pray too that all local churches, wherever they

are, will be places of welcome, care and respite: the 'field hospitals' that Pope Francis talks about.

The Pope looked frail during the funeral of his predecessor and before that during the Christmas Day Mass broadcast from the Vatican. Pope Emeritus Benedict and Pope Francis were very different people. I have found them both to be hugely influential. Together with Pope St John Paul II and our late Queen they provide an example of life-long Christian service and commitment. For most of us however, they have always been somewhat distant, even though we may have felt close to them. Fortunately, there are similar people to be found in all our parish churches and communities. I'm meeting more and more as I travel across the north of England – faithful, life-long followers of Jesus whose voice is so often ignored, but when heard is full of wisdom and experience. I'm reminded that this Candlemas, when we hear once more of Simeon and Anna, I must give thanks to God for our modern-day equivalents. Not least because so many live out a vocation of intercessory prayer for us all. If you are one of our Simeons and Annas reading this, thank you!

I was delighted when the person who administered the medical prior to my consecration told me that my metabolic age was thirty-eight! There are times, however, when I feel older than I am and a little more frayed than I should be. My ten-month-old Cockapoo is full of cheeky bounce: she found my new zucchetto recently and chewed its top off. If I ever look more worn out than usual, it's most likely going to be because of her boundless energy than the pressures of episcopal ministry. **[ND]**

# ◆ FEBRUARY DIARY ◆

## Thurifer

An autumnal visit, amid the brown falling leaves, speckling the grass, to a parish church, set in an extensive graveyard, proved a revelation. The present building includes evidence of a church in the 12th century but there is written evidence of a Saxon church on this site. An imposing lychgate offered the prospect of more treasures within. The interior, homely yet grand, did not disappoint. As you enter through the south porch you are met by an enormous 15th century wall painting of St Christopher; crudely executed but formidable and compelling. There are also remnants of medieval wall painting revealed in patches amid the protestant white-wash. There is an altar tomb of Sir Walter Grene (d. 1456) with a brass effigy on its cover. Grene was a Member of Parliament for some thirty years. He sat on several Royal Commissions and was for a time Steward of the Bishop of Ely's estates. He had lucrative sidelines as Customs Collector of Ipswich, and Comptroller of Tunnage and Poundage of the port of London. (MP with outside interests: who would have thought?) On the north wall was a marble memorial tablet to the Honorable Juliana Curzon (d. 1833). An ancestor of that Curzon? *My name is George Nathaniel Curzon, / I am a most superior person. / My cheek is pink, my hair is sleek, / I dine at Blenheim once a week.* She was buried at her request in the vaults of St Mary-le-Bone 'with her late friend Miss M. A. Meredith'. The most ornate tomb is that of Sir Edmund Fenner, (d. 1611) a judge in the reign of Elizabeth I. There is a long list of Vicars. The one who arouses most curiosity and about whom it would be good to know more was Zanobius Mulyaken (1458-1461).

◆  
For such a relatively small country church, there is much to admire. The churchyard is enormous and, as with

similar ancient sites, not all the stones have survived or remained upright. But it lends an authentic feel. The inscriptions are mainly homespun but the odd feature stands out. One headstone marks the death of a husband and, after a widowhood of 49 years, his wife. It triggered a memory. A great aunt and her husband married in their twenties but he died within a few months of the wedding. She was a widow for over 60 years. The churchyard has some eight Commonwealth War Graves: a large number for a parish church. The simple elegance of the Lutyens design makes them at once distinctive and always moving. There is also a well-maintained public park next to the church. It is only the thrum of traffic, not far distant, that is a reminder that, although in Middlesex, St Mary's, Hayes is not in the countryside but, only a few paces away, is part of a varied ethnic and cultural mix in outer London

◆  
A small mercy that the investigation into allegations against Dominic Raab has not been dubbed Raabgate. Watergate, attached to the scandal that brought down Richard Nixon, has a great deal to answer for and has an enduring fame as now all scandals are lazily and predictably tagged with the suffix 'gate'. Thus 'Partygate'. Small beer compared with the original but if you make the laws you should keep them. Raabgate does not have much of a ring to it. Gardengate for a scandal associated with horticulturalists might have traction. Gatesgate, if businessman and philanthropist Bill or songster Gareth ever erred and strayed.

◆  
My attention was drawn to *The Independent* which is not my first portal of call for news and views and happily so if they can refer to the late Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI when he was ailing as 'Mr Ratzinger' – not even 'Mein Herr'.

◆  
Reading a book of essays about our Prime Ministers (edited by Iain Dale), it was striking how several of the more recent of them favoured their second Christian name rather than their first. Would governments have been any different led by Alexander Johnson, James Brown, Leonard Callaghan, James Wilson, Maurice Macmillan, Robert Eden, Arthur Chamberlain, James MacDonald? Only four Prime Ministers sported three Christian names: Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil (Marquess of Salisbury), Edward Richard George Heath, Anthony Charles Lynton Blair, David William Donald Cameron.

◆  
The long-drawn-out, dreary soap opera that is the Duke and Duchess of Sussex Whingefest is the prime current illustration of the 'Our truth ... My truth ... my lived experience' trope that is so ubiquitous and which is impossible to break through such an impregnable and solipsistic way of thinking. Given that they withdrew from public life and royal duty to defend their privacy, it seems there is scarcely a moment of their lives not recorded and broadcast to the world. It is remarkable, miraculous, how many private, intimate moments, when they have been aggrieved, or slighted have been caught on camera. As the late Queen Elizabeth II commented when the tawdry saga began to unfold 'some recollections may vary'. Their truth is clearly not the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It is seen through their distorted and self-serving vision. How can his wish for reconciliation be satisfied when he piles unpleasant accusation upon aggrievances and alleged slights? Some have commented on the similarities with the lives of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor but history never quite repeats itself. If it does it as farce rather than tragedy. **[ND]**



# ◆ THE WAY WE LIVE NOW ◆

Christopher Smith

It was a strange moment when my then curate looked over his computer at me on a February day ten years ago and said, ‘The Pope’s resigned’. We had one of those daft exchanges—‘What do you mean, the Pope’s resigned?’—‘Well, he’s resigned. The Pope’s resigned.’ And it was true. Pope Benedict had indeed resigned, and the Roman Catholic Church lost its Chief Pastor, and the whole of God’s Church was deprived of one of its finest contemporary theologians. And now he has gone to his rest in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

I wish he’d carried on writing, but I suppose every time he’d said anything, the commentariat would have been looking for controversy, for disagreement between him and his successor. There are nearly seventy books in his bibliography, and a number of them will be familiar to parish clergy as wonderful springboards for sermon-writing. He will be remembered as a traditionalist theologian, which ‘modern’ churchmen will find dull, but the truths of the Christian Faith are never dull. Orthodoxy is always much richer and more exciting than heresy. As Eric Mascall once put it, what is needed of a theologian is ‘an intense conviction of the truth and vitality of the Christian religion, a confidence in the relevance of theology to matters outside the academic sphere, and a combination of humility with intellectual integrity’. I think that would have made sense to Pope Benedict.

In 1997, the then Cardinal Ratzinger published a volume of which I am particularly fond called *Images of Hope*. It’s a small collection of meditations on the great feast-days in the Church’s year, and I am often drawn back to the two chapters on Christmas. Perhaps it was all part of the divine plan that he

should go to his Maker during Christmas week, and as we were beginning our celebration of Mary, Mother of God.

The Christmas Pope takes us to the Christmas Church, and the sense of stillness he finds when he enters the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, leaving the restless streets of Rome outside. He is reminded that, however busy the basilica may be with tourists and pilgrims, ‘an invitation to be silent, to recollect, and to look emanates from the mysterious glow of the church that of itself lets the noise of the everyday seem insignificant. It is as if the centuries of

*the truths of the  
Christian Faith are never  
dull: Orthodoxy is  
always much richer and  
more exciting than  
heresy*

prayer had remained present in order to accompany us on our way’. Here is our fellow-pilgrim: the building ‘beckons us to stay awhile in order to awaken the powers of the heart to listen and see’.

Santa Maria Maggiore was built in celebration of the Council of Ephesus, and it is sometimes known as the ‘Christmas church’ because the relics over which it was built are not those of a saint but those of the crib in which, tradition has it, the newborn Jesus was laid. Many of the mosaics are original, from the fifth century, which I find spine-tingling. They date from just 400 years after the death and resurrection of Christ.

The nave mosaics depict Old Testament stories of patriarchs and prophets, beginning with Abraham, but taken mainly from the stories of Moses and Joshua, and the mosaics around the arch are mainly of the details of Jesus’ infancy. So the nave mosaics bring you in procession to

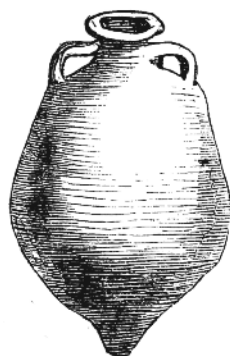
the Incarnation: they present, as Pope Benedict put it, ‘the procession of mankind to the Redeemer’. But, he goes on, ‘In the middle, where we would expect the birth of Christ to be represented, we find instead only an empty throne’, on which can just be seen a cross, a crown, and the mantle of a king, and underneath ‘the bundle of history’ bound with red ribbon, as legal documents are to this day, but these documents are the story of our salvation.

And that empty throne is the Christmas image of the basilica because, as Pope Benedict puts it, ‘here, the procession of history, all the splendour of the mosaics, is abruptly pulled down into the cave, into the stable. The images fall down into reality. The throne is empty, for the Lord has come down into the stable. The central mosaic, to which everything leads, is likewise only the hand that is extended to us so that we might discover the leap from the images to reality.’ And the reality of the cave is made for us in the mass of Christmas night. ‘Only when we let ourselves be led there from the message of the room do the words hold true anew: Today a Saviour is born to you. Yes, really today.’

Pope Benedict used to infuriate the secularists and the theological liberals, as we might remember only too well from his visit to these shores in 2010. Those who can’t win the argument often resort to abuse, and he was not only brighter than his critics, but a better defender of reason. They hated his critique of the ‘dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate standard consists solely of one’s own ego and desires.’ There *is* such a thing as truth, and ‘The truth comes to rule, not through violence, but rather through its own power’. May the God of Truth welcome him into his eternal home. **ND**

# ◆ TREASURE IN CLAY JARS ◆

## Festus



Martin Sargeant, who defrauded the Diocese of London of £5.2m whilst drawing a not insignificant £86,000 salary and taking extensive time off for ‘cancer treatment’, was sentenced at Southwark Crown Court on 19 December to five years in prison. Particularly disappointing was that he had a history of stealing from former employers in the 1990s and was handed a previous sentence in 1995 for 21 months. The court heard of his ‘lavish spending’ on clothes, hotels, and foreign travel (158 BA flights over eleven years). He also built up a million-pound property portfolio in Scotland, including six riverside log cabins which he rented out. In sentencing, Judge Michael Grieve KC spoke of ‘a massive loss to the churches of the City of London, which they could ill afford’. Senior diocesan members who attended Sargent’s civil partnership celebration complete with drag queen must be wondering who paid for it all.

Many will have ‘enjoyed’ the Archbishop Cranmer blog, a pungent online source of gossip, news, and opinion run by the ‘conservative academic, theologian, author and educationalist’ Adrian Hilton. But a visit to the site in November found just a holding page, with everything taken down. ‘Bishop of the Blogosphere, 2006-2022,’ it said. ‘His Grace’s ashes are once more scattered to the winds. “And forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, therefore my hand shall first be punished.”’ The blog was a staunch supporter of the millionaire Martyn Percy and got itself into more than a little hot water with Christ Church. More, it would seem, than the former Dean is now prepared to help it with; not to mention the possibility that some of it was simply libellous, defamatory, or insane. ‘The CofE’s mediating role is between scepticism and faith, between belief and doubt, pomp and satire, a longing for the sacred com-

bined with a sense that we create the sacred for ourselves,’ said Hilton in a Conservative Philosophy Group lecture delivered in December.

From January’s *Private Eye* (1589): ‘It’s not only the pandemic where those given voice and prominence by GB News veer towards the unhinged. Host Calvin Robinson, who dresses in an old-fashioned clergy uniform despite the Church of England having declined to ordain him, shared the unfounded theory that the Ukraine war is a money-laundering operation for US aid to be donated by the Democratic party via the use of cryptocurrency. And during recent immigration debates, Robinson, who is black, repeatedly praised the views of Enoch “Rivers of Blood” Powell, tweeting that “Powell provided an important contribution to the conversation” and changing his background image to a picture of the politician.’

That 1968 speech came four years after the rancorous election campaign in Smethwick. The Klu Klux Klan set up there; Malcolm X visited the town in 1965 and was assassinated less than a fortnight later back in the US. A closer look might help Robinson see a different aspect of racial division.

FiF members are understandably concerned about gender at the altar. Some clergy have undergone gender reassignment over the years, but we are now in a different world. The Rev Bingo Allison, 36, is understood to be the Church of England’s first openly non-binary priest, defining as ‘gender queer’ and using the

pronouns ‘they/them’. Based in Liverpool, Bingo had a ‘strongly religious’ upbringing in Yorkshire with being gay described as ‘a sinful thing’ but now rejoices in long hair, cosmetics, and fluidity.

A number of deaneries are up for grabs. The Dean of Chichester and the Dean of Chelmsford are both returning to parish ministry (the former over the border to Salisbury, the latter to Chichester diocese). The Dean of Wells has retired. The Dean of Windsor has announced his departure for July, after the Coronation and His Majesty’s first Garter Service; Bishop David Connor was born the year before the King and will be 76 when he steps down this summer. The deanery of Christ Church has been vacant since April last year.

One of the more dramatic revelations of Prince Harry’s memoir *Spare* is that he is no fan of the New English Bible. At Ludgrove, ‘one particular teacher... whenever he caught me, would give me a tremendous clout, always with a copy of the *New English Bible*. Getting hit with it made me feel bad about myself, bad about the teacher, and bad about the Bible.’ Elsewhere, without irony, he reflects on playing Conrade in *Much Ado* who has the line ‘Can you make no use of your discontent?’.

Fr David Houlding has announced his retirement. Loved by many and known by even more, his stints as Master of SSC and Chairman of the Catholic Group on Synod are just two examples of his service to our movement. A consummate showman, his Christmas decorations at All Hallows, Gospel Oak, were legendary and would see the church decorated with at least a dozen trees. They were present and correct on Epiphany Sunday when the Proclamation of Easter and Major Feasts was made, with a local addition this year to publish news of the vicar’s retirement, after 38 years in the parish. Two women burst into tears. He will be missed. **ND**



## GRACE AND INCARNATION

### The Oxford Movement's Shaping of the Character of Modern Anglicanism

Bruce D. Griffith with Jason R. Radcliff

James Clarke & Co, 2022

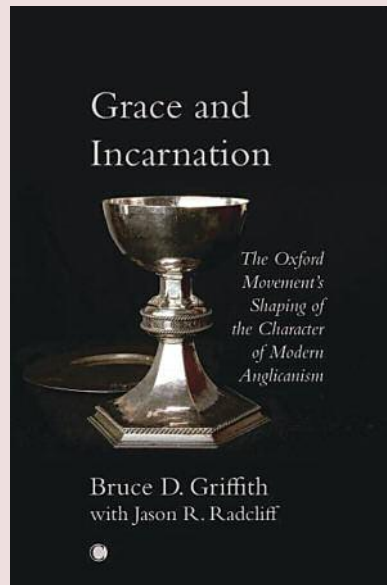
ISBN 9780227177884

If the Anglo-Catholic Movement is seen today as one of bells, smells, and dressing-up that is not how it began. Its genesis is found in the studies, lecture rooms, and pulpits of the University of Oxford among a group of, mainly young, Dons, professors, Fellows, chaplains, and authors. It was a movement of the intellect and scholarship, grounded in the study of patristic texts, writings of medieval Scholastics, and the works of 17th century Anglican Divines. That study in such a setting, learned, academic, remote, captured a band of disciples and engendered great passion and explosive reaction, seems miraculous.

The appeal of the Oxford Movement between 1833, John Keble's sermon on the National Apostasy, and 1845, John Henry Newman's conversion to Rome, can be illustrated in two images. One, a painting of Dr Pusey in his study, shelves overflowing, open books scattered over the desk, papers cascading onto the floor, and the habitually shabby Pusey contentedly beaver-ing away, the scholar among his sources. The other is of Newman gliding through the Church of St Mary the Virgin, ascending to the pulpit and, as Matthew Arnold records, in the most entrancing of voices, in the most limpid prose articulating a revolutionary ecclesial vision

A chirpy introduction sets the tone of the book, the thrust of which is that the Oxford Movement did not spring fully-formed from a vacuum. It had roots in the partic-

ularities of the Reformation, as articulated in the *via media* of the Elizabethan Settlement, reinforced by Laudian divines and Non-Jurors. The English church had not forgotten that it was in linear descent from the Patristic era and elements of the medieval church. Although the 39 Articles were decidedly protestant, the BCP was more catholic. It was neither novel nor revolutionary but included ele-



ments of several strains of Christian theology which created a bran tub of doctrines. If anything, it was more distinctively, counter-revolutionary.

The first chapter sets the stage for the Tractarians and features Alexander Knox whose writings prefigured the Oxford Movement. The Calvinist controversy over the doctrine of grace is outlined and forms the spine of the dispute between the adherents of the Oxford Movement and the Evangelicals. The means of grace and regeneration effectual in Baptism, or, as Evangelicals would have it, afterwards through faith alone, was the battleground that resulted in the Gorham Judgement that caused the exodus of several Tractarians, including Cardinal Manning, to Rome.

Pusey did not have the mercurial attraction of Newman but he

brought stability and steadiness to the cause. The early Tracts were unsigned, provocative and polemical. Pusey's first contribution, Tract 18, was signed with his initials which signaled a seriousness of purpose, more persuasive and scholarly which tempered the more iconoclastic tendencies of Newman and Froude. He had less to say about grace and justification than did Newman but he was clear that faith and repentance are the conditions, but fulfilling the conditions does not cause the gift to be given, rather, the gift of regeneration is free and independent. 'Regeneration is an incomprehensible gift. It flows from the greater gift of the Incarnation.' Tractarian piety was rooted in an incarnational mysticism 'shaped in the belief that in baptism Christ comes to dwell in the believer.'

One of the criticisms of the Oxford Movement is that it is rooted in the Incarnation at the expense of other mysteries. But while Pusey recognises that the supreme gift is Christ in the Incarnation he does not underplay the salvific power of the Passion and Resurrection in the fullness of the Christian life. In the Eucharist we receive Christ Himself and by receiving Him we have all the benefits of His life.

In his sermon on the *Holy Eucharist as a Comfort to the Penitent*, Pusey held that through grace the Eucharist gives strength to the life of the Church; that the Eucharist contains within itself the power of forgiveness by the means of grace; that comfort for the penitent is found in the life of sacramental grace; and that through grace forgiveness is an objective reality, not a feeling nor an emotional spasm. For such preaching he was banned from the pulpits of the University for two years.

The key text of Newman's which is examined here is the *Lectures on the Doctrine of Justification*. These lectures 'belong to the golden age of the Oxford Movement ... a singular

accomplishment in Anglican theology, dealing ... with the theology of grace in a new light.' Newman sought a system of doctrine that was grounded in scripture, confirmed by the Early Church Fathers, and was consistent with doctrinal and liturgical formulae of 16th century and, for good measure, supported by English 17th century Divines.

For Newman, Christ's atoning sacrifice was 'the heart of religion', its vital, indispensable principle. Without the atonement there would be no justification. Justification was an act of God, declaring or making a sinner righteous before Him. At Baptism God pours His grace into our souls. Protestantism held that human beings were imbued by grace through faith in the cross. Grace, for Newman, was the unconditional love of God that was generous, free, and undeserved. Justification for the protestant reformers was by faith alone. The Tractarian doctrine of grace was that justification comes through the sacraments, is received by faith, and consists in God's inward presence, and lives in obedience. A helpful chart is provided, contrasting the views of S. Augustine with those of Luther as a guide through the theological undergrowth.

The authors adopt the late David Newsome's elegant summary of Newman's argument that in his formulation of the *via media* Newman rejects the conflicting formulae of inherent righteousness and imputed righteousness to assert his formulation of implied righteousness. The communication of the merits of Christ to sinful man, initially through the regenerating sacrament of Baptism and subsequently through the sacrament of the Eucharist which sustains the Christian in holiness and infuses his soul with the presence of Christ, provided, Newman contended, a sound foundation on which a Tractarian theological system could be built.

The third theologian considered is Robert Wilberforce. He was born into an Evangelical family, the elder brother of Soapy Sam, Bishop of

Oxford. He was an able theologian, lauded as the 'greatest philosophical theologian of the Tractarians' and admired by the historian S. L. Ol-lard and by Eric Mascall. He spent most of his Anglican ministry as a parish priest, converting to Rome following the Gorham Judgement. His major contribution to the cause was *The Doctrine of the Eucharist* published in 1848 in which he was 'accommodating ... to transubstantiation.' His writing is in the Scholastic tradition and was noted for its dispassionate scholarship. Although notably less polemical than many Tractarians, he did not hold back in his book *Doctrine of Holy Baptism*. His inclusion here is a welcome rehabilitation.

Wilberforce argued that Grace is restorative and springs from God's love. He emphasises that God is a loving Father, accentuated by a sense of love rather than justice or retribution. It changes us. The Incarnation is the means of grace to which all is related. Christ's glorification in the resurrection is the glorification of his humanity, the product of his Incarnation which is central because it is the great event of re-creation. The whole of humanity is summed up in Christ and is made new in the Incarnation. Justification, he argued, was not required in the original state of creation but it is the peculiar office of the Atonement that reconciles God to man. For Wilberforce the Incarnation is the great salvific event, the centre of Christian doctrine - but he does not demean the value of Christ's Atonement as priest and victim. The Resurrection completes the Atonement. The second crucial element to his theology is Christ as Mediator for all people as distinct from Moses in the Old Testament who was mediator for his own, albeit the chosen, people.

The authors deal with knotty theological issues with a fair degree of clarity, alert to nuance and complexity. Critics of the Tractarians are considered, pre-eminently F. D. Maurice, the founder of Christian Socialism. Maurice's analysis, it is argued, is based in 'his own brand of Lutheranism.' He is a 'masterful

apologist, a good Christian, but not a very constructive thinker.' There are generous quotations that interperse the narrative but, occasionally, threaten to overwhelm it. Where the writing is as good as Newman's that is not a problem. Although they did not write as poetically as Newman, the extracts chosen from Pusey and Wilberforce stand up well in comparison. Wilberforce is always lucid and, at his best, Pusey writes with a cumulative passion.

William Davage

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## ENGLISH VICTORIAN CHURCHES

### Architecture, Faith & Revival

James Stevens Curl

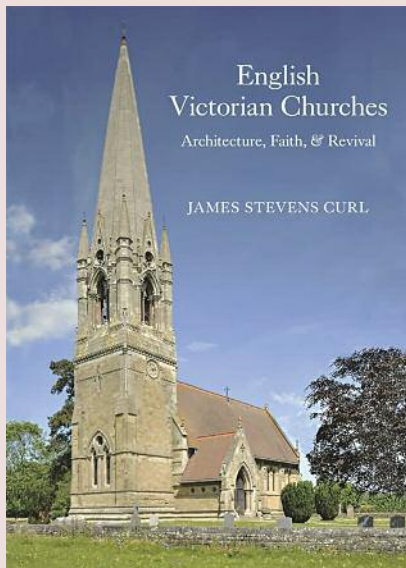
John Hudson Publishing, 2022

ISBN 9781739822934

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If you are reading this, there's a good chance that the church in which you worship dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century –perhaps All Saints, Margaret Street, St Augustine, Kilburn, St Agnes, Sefton Park, St Augustine, Pendlebury: all built to proclaim the Catholic faith within the Church of England. The movement that inspired the architects of these churches and many more – the Gothic Revival, as it came to be known – had its origin in the work of writers, notably Thomas Rickman, who published the first scholarly work on medieval Gothic architecture in 1817. The ground was laid by the phenomenal success of Walter Scott's novels, creating a romantic taste for medievalism.

The majority of the many 'Commissioner's Churches' built under an 1818 Act of Parliament were Gothic in style – a few were designed by Rickman, himself a Quaker. Most displayed, however, little understanding of medieval architecture and were pilloried by A.W.N. Pugin, a Roman Catholic convert whose *Contrasts* (1836) launched a new phase in the 'revival,' in which Gothic architecture was promoted as the only truly Catholic style. Pugin, struggling against Ultramontane prejudice in



favour of Classical and Baroque – reflected most vividly in the design of the London Oratory – was the architect of several masterly churches, notably St Augustine, Ramsgate, adjacent to his seaside retreat, and St Giles, Cheadle. Later in the century another great Roman Catholic architect, J.F. Bentley, designed one of the finest Gothic Revival churches in this country – Holy Rood, Watford – but was forced to turn to the Byzantine style for his masterpiece, Westminster Cathedral.

For George Gilbert Scott, a phenomenally successful architect whose secular works included the Albert Memorial, the Foreign Office and the Midland Hotel at St Pancras, discovering the writings of Pugin amounted to a conversion experience – he wrote that he was awakened from slumber. Scott went on to restore many English cathedrals and to build or restore hundreds of churches across Britain. Many of his ecclesiastical clients were anything but ‘high’ churchmen. Indeed, Scott proudly catered for the ‘promiscuous herd’ which fervently opposed ‘ritualism.’ In his posthumously published autobiography, *Personal and Professional Recollections* (1879), Scott lashed out at the ‘wild absurdity’ of much recent church architecture. In four pages of the book, Curl provides a masterly analysis of the ‘glowing, noble and assured’ All Saints, Margaret Street, the model church of the Ecclesiological Society and the beginning of a new, extraordinarily

inventive phase of the Gothic Revival – but not a building to Scott’s taste. Addressing the negative comments of Kenneth Clark, John Summerson, Nikolaus Pevsner and others, he writes of it as ‘the perfect setting for a scented Eucharist’ – ‘one of the finest works of architecture anywhere in England, of any period.’

The 1850s and 60s saw Scott still a dominant presence, with the completion of costly churches such as All Souls, Haley Hill, Halifax, and St George, Doncaster, but a new spirit was emerging in the ‘muscular’ work of Butterfield, G.E. Street and J.L. Pearson which sought inspiration beyond English models. Ruskin’s writings were an important influence, extolling the use of colour (‘structural polychromy’) in medieval Italian architecture. Even as this influence waned in the 1870s William Burges created, with the aid of landed patrons, two magnificent churches at Skelton and Studley Royal in Yorkshire which made lavish use of colour and rich materials, regardless of cost.

A new direction in church architecture was evident in St Augustine, Pendlebury, a masterpiece of the 1870s by G.F. Bodley and Thomas Garner, late Gothic in style and with a single cell interior inspired, Curl argues, by the Dominican church in Ghent. While some critics have found in late Victorian church design an ebbing away of creativity, Curl sees the final triumph of the Gothic Revival in the work of J.T. Micklethwaite, W.D. Caroe, J.D. Sedding, Norman Shaw, W.R. Lethaby, Temple Moore and Ninian Comper, the last the subject of a detailed study by Fr. Anthony Symondson and Stephen Bucknall. Giles Scott, the grandson of Sir Gilbert, carried Gothic design into the 20<sup>th</sup> century with his design for Liverpool Cathedral. And after Comper and Scott came Stephen Dykes Bower (1903-94), vigorously defended here in the face of criticism from ‘offensively doctrinaire modernists in Cambridge.’

Curl is a pugnacious critic. A book that clearly sets church architecture in its theological and litur-

gical context ends on a melancholy note, lamenting ‘widespread indifference to the terminal decline of all that once was held to be of value, the finest architecture that England ever produced.’ Curl has produced the best study to date of Victorian church architecture and has been well served by his publisher: the book is a model of clear and elegant design, well served by a high standard of production.

Kenneth Powell

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## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: A Theological Commentary David F. Ford

Baker Academic, 2021  
ISBN 9781540964083

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**My first** serious acquaintance with New Testament studies as an undergraduate was an arid experience. Scholars were engrossed in Form Criticism and Redaction Criticism and finding source material, and seemed almost desperate to rubbish the historical reliability of the Gospels. Many treated belief in the Resurrection and the empty tomb with pitying condescension. The idea that they were reading their own modernist presuppositions into the NT material appeared not to enter their heads. I was puzzled by their lack of historical sensitivity, but I thought that such clever people must know things which I didn’t. Only later did I read C. S. Lewis’s essay *Fern Seed and Elephants*, which turned the weapons of a professional literary scholar on these NT critics.

My first intimation that things were shifting came with Ian Boxall’s excellent commentary on Revelation (2006), where I read that whereas scholars had tended to treat the visions in the Apocalypse as literary fiction, recent scholarship ‘has been more willing to con-

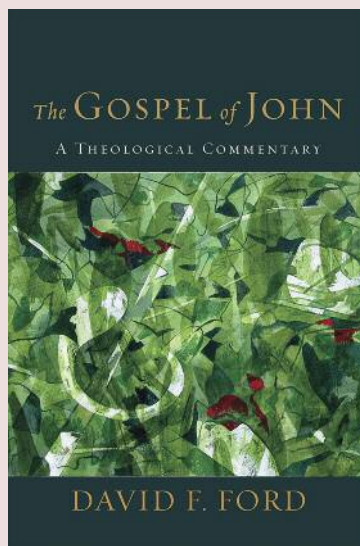


sider actual visionary experience' as the basis of such writings. Now we have a new commentary on the Fourth Gospel, and reading it feels like leaving a stuffy academic cell and stepping into fresh air.

We have not been short of English language commentaries on John's Gospel. The names of Hoskyns and Davey, C. K. Barrett and Raymond Brown come immediately to mind. Their scholarship is impressive, but one feels too often that the Gospel is vanishing beneath a mass of learned references. David Ford's study is a *theological* commentary, concerned with the Evangelist's message and how it speaks to us today.

Professor Ford has been working on John for twenty years, and he is familiar with the critical debates about authorship, purpose and background. However, while he touches on these matters when necessary, his focus is on what John intended to say. Even more striking is his desire to set the Gospel in dialogue with creative artists of different times and places. When, if ever before, did you read a Gospel commentary which calls upon testimony from the like of the Anglican mystic, Thomas Traherne, the contemporary poets Denise Levertov and Micheal O'Siadhail, from Julian of Norwich and the music of J. S. Bach? These and other witnesses are called upon as the author pursues the fundamental questions of the Gospel, 'Who is Jesus?' and 'What is essential for those who follow him?'

What is so refreshing about this commentary is that it re-establishes the link between biblical scholarship, faith and prayer. (In this context, it is particularly good to see reference to Alan Ecclestone's book, *The Scaffolding of Spirit*, a meditation on John's Gospel whose value is out of all proportion to its modest size, and which has rarely been given the respect which is its due.) This is not simply a commentary for the student, or for the priest hunting sermon material. Its value is that it can assist us in the meditative and prayerful reading of scripture. The commentary is to be



read slowly, sometimes taking only a few lines at a time before we pause and wait upon the Spirit to aid our understanding and guide us into the personal and practical implications of the Gospel message. (One suggestion: read perhaps the commentary on John 1, and then turn to the introduction dealing with issues of authorship and background.)

If I do not write more about this fine work, it is because my reading of it is very much a work in progress, and my aim is to draw the commentary to the attention of others. The fact that it speaks to one who is not a biblical scholar may commend it to a wider readership. I regret that the book is so costly, but this is not a volume to look at and then allow to gather dust. Pro-

fessor Ford reminds us that the Fourth Gospel is a book to read, reread and then keep returning to throughout a lifetime, so that we find ever deeper riches in it. His commentary is a book which lovers of St John's work will want to keep by them whenever they turn to the Gospel. The price is a small one to pay for such a companion in the way of Christian faith.

Barry A. Orford

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# ART

## HALLYU! THE KOREAN WAVE

*Victoria and Albert Museum, London until June 25th, 2023*

Over 100 million people across the globe have watched 'Squid Game', though I haven't met any of them. 'Squid Game' is a fictional tv survival series which started in 2021. It combines children's games with a commentary on Korean society and the chance to win US \$35 million or 'die' in the attempt. Costumes from 'Squid Game' are part of the hallyu (wave) of South Korean culture which is currently celebrated at the Victoria and Albert Museum with the sponsorship of the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Readers may be more familiar with the artist known as PSY and his Gangnam Style dancing (in 2012 PSY performed at the Oxford Union). By March 2022 his signature dance had attracted over 4 billion hits on YouTube placing him above performances by Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga and Katy Perry (Pope Francis' top audience for a YouTube film is about 10 million, though he does appear very frequently). In other words, K-pop is a major force in global entertainment.

Why that came about isn't quite answered by this show which traces how over the last century South Korea changed from being a poor Japanese colony to one of the richest countries in the world, via civil war and break up from what is now North Korea. Hard work by the whole of society, a willingness to cross cultural boundaries, and an early recognition of the importance of micro-technology in a country which only began to industrialise after 1945 are all given as reasons for success. Plus, a fluid

but strong attachment to the people's cultural roots, shown by the way the *Hanbok* style of traditional dress has been reinvented in recent years. Part of the fun of the show is the way old fashion has been translated into colourful and outrageous modern design. But there are also hints of how from the 1990s Korean film directors have stood up for old traditions against American cultural dominance which had begun with the presence of the post-civil war US military.

Alongside tech, the two main themes of the show are cinema and



*PSY performs Gangnam Style, on TODAY, 2012, New York, USA. Courtesy of Jason Decrow, Invision, AP, Shutterstock*

pop/fashion. Cinema is represented through posters and excerpts from major films. There is a clip showing the stylised violence of 'Old Boy', the mega-hit which derived from Dumas' 'Count of Monte Cristo' via Japanese manga. And there is a room from the 2019 film 'Parasite' which not only won the Cannes Palme d'Or but also four Oscars, the first non-English language film to win the Best Film category.

'Parasite' is interesting because it shows some of the grungy underbelly of Korean life and provides a necessary balance to the upbeat, fantasy world of K-pop. Indeed, the show itself is positive about all things Korean. It doesn't refer either to the history of demo-

cratic authoritarianism in post-war Korean politics or of political and business corruption (South Korea has been placed just above Qatar in studies of global corruption). Some balance is restored by reference to the seamier side of the Korean film industry and the sexual harassment allegations against leading film director Kim Ki-Duk (he died of covid-related illness before the allegations could be resolved by legal process). But there's nothing about the relatively high rate of suicide in the K-pop world either.

K-pop is the noisy, colourful and highly enjoyable heart of the show. The entrance features a bank of screens – something pioneered in Korea – featuring PSY's Gangnam Style song and dance, both in its original format and in variations and lampoons thereon (Gangnam is a prosperous and hip district of Seoul). In the final third of the exhibition there is an opportunity for karaoke and dance copying your favourite K-pop stars (on a wet Monday afternoon in central London no one was taking up the offer). And then there follows a room with large-screen videos of Boy and Girl and A.I. bands, followed by rooms which show a range of cosmetics created and sold for that flawless complexion and a selection of fashionable wear for clubbing.

The K-pop emphasis on perfection is both democratic – anyone can buy the products – but also harsh. The creation of K-pop bands is a cross between the Royal Marine Commando training and Britain's Got Talent. K-pop stars are required to maintain a cute, hyper-clean image and take on some of the character of cute, hyper-clean animals. It's no surprise that part of the commercial strength of A.I. artists – good but not nearly as good as the real thing – is that they have little PR downside and are unlikely to have a breakdown.

Still, on their own terms K-pop and this show are great fun.

*Owen Higgs*



# LENT BOOKS 2023

Simon Walsh reviews a selection of new titles for group study and personal reading

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2023 is by Emma Ineson, Bishop to the Archbishops at Lambeth Palace, and soon to become the next Bishop of Kensington in the Diocese of London. *Failure: what Jesus said about sin, mistakes and messing stuff up* (SPCK) is a stimulating and thought-provoking addition to the genre.

She writes with candour about her own examples of failure, including 'when I was involved with organizing a...very big conference, involving thousands of people from around the world [when] a change was made in the presentation of some of the documents associated with the event... that ultimately, had a damaging impact and led to an understandable outcry'. Might this have been the Lambeth Conference last summer, and the Lambeth 1:10 Resolution documents? She doesn't say, but does offer a mea culpa and 'Let me say it clearly now: I'm sorry'. All very noble, but don't we need to know what and why someone offers apologies? Isn't that part of the paradigm now? It is, of course, a rule of the confessional that this sort of thing is between the penitent and God. That's a strength and weakness of her writing style. It's chatty and revealing, interrogative in places, and with a certain breeziness that not all will find helpful. Yet it's also disarming in its honesty and confidence. She does give a definition of the word failure in Chapter 1 before discussing its shortcomings and moving quickly into the existential and experiential; a good tack to take.

Two small stones in the shoe. The first is a contemporary refer-

ence which must have seemed harmlessly jocularly but damn-ingly dates the manuscript. 'The new Prime Minister in the UK, Liz Truss (or perhaps someone else by the time you are reading this)' looks like a sentence even too prophetic to pause the print process. The second is a reference to 'Easter Saturday' as interchangeable with Holy Satur-

day. This is unfortunate as it happens in a long and meaningful passage on the place and purpose of Holy Saturday as a locus of uncertainty and what failure means in this context. She quotes *Between Cross & Resurrection* by Alan E. Lewis (1944-94; published posthumously by Eerdmans in 2001). Though subtitled 'A Theology of Holy Saturday' he consistently makes the Holy Saturday/Easter Saturday confusion so perhaps this is an infelicitous Americanism which strikes a false note.

But then, this is a book about failure, about getting things wrong, and the opening up of space for forgiveness which first of all we need to recognise. An original and rewarding read, it ranges widely across various sources and each of the six chapters ends with a few guiding questions which would help any group along.

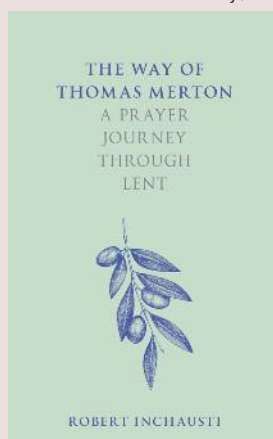
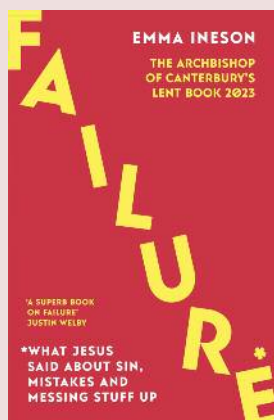
Thomas Merton in *No Man is an Island* said 'A man who fails well is greater than one who succeeds badly' and Robert Inchausti's *The Way of Thomas Merton: A Prayer Journey Through Lent* (SPCK) is a magnificent, slim volume with treasures on every page. In the main this is down to In-

chausti's careful, attentive reading of the Trappist monk whose accidental death in 1968 in Thailand cut short a talent in its prime, and when he was possibly considering conversion to Buddhism. Ordained in 1949, from 1941 he was a member of the religious community at Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky. Flavian Burns, Merton's last abbot, is quoted as saying: 'While I'm very happy that I did know him, I always felt the deeper part of Merton he revealed only in his books', with the author adding 'the soul-work of reading, as it turns out, is quite similar to the soul-work of writing'.

Inchausti is Emeritus Professor of English Literature at California State Polytechnic University so brings a professional eye with his feeling heart to the work of Merton. He appreciates and esteems the beauty of Merton's work, yet is also concerned for the man behind the myth. It will be a surprise to some to learn that Merton fathered a child whilst a student for a year at Clare College, Cambridge – the mother being paid off by Merton's uncle and godfather. Back in New York, Columbia College ironed him out, orienting him towards the glories of literature and religion, and through them a deep faith.

The book doesn't 'focus on Merton's literary style... nor pore over the finer points of his theology [but] instead, the focus will be on his "centre of living truth" as an aid in helping us to find our own'. And as Inchausti rightly reminds us: 'Pope Francis has described [Merton] as one of the four greatest prophetic figures in American history, equal in stature to Abra-

ham Lincoln, Martin Luther King and Dorothy Day'. He advocates a form of 'contemplative reading' and models it beautifully. He cites Rowan Williams – 'Being interested in Merton is not being interested in an original, or 'shaping mind', but being interested in God and





human possibilities. Merton will not let us look at him for long: he will, finally, persuade us to look in the direction he is looking' – which, says Inchausti, 'is looking in the direction of God... as a result, the subject of any book by, on, or about Thomas Merton is really a book about who we are in relationship to God'.

This is an elegant and concise introduction to the life and work of Thomas Merton for anyone coming to him for the first time. For those returning, there is fresh insight in a structured, sympathetic guide to spiritual longing and the tilling of the soul which Lent asks of us all.

A book with a film is a popular concept for many, so *A Place For Us: A Lent course based on West Side Story* (DLT) by Lavinia Byrne and Jane McBride (with poetry by Phil Lane) will fit the bill. Five comprehensive chapters dovetail neatly with the weeks of Lent, with a 'Coda' at the end to help the reader into Holy Week. *West Side Story* opened on Broadway in 1957 (music by Bernstein, lyrics by Sondheim, book by Laurents). In 1961 it became a smash-hit film directed co-directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, who had directed and choreographed the show. 60 years later, Steven Spielberg directed a new version with a number of touching nods to the original; it is this latter film on which the Lent course draws.

This book combines Scripture with key scenes from the film along with reflections, poems, and some recommended 'actions'. For example, a reading with Psalm 116 is followed with 'Pray through the Psalm again with the injured man [from the scene] as he lies on the ground. If you have time, take a ten-minute walk. On the way out pretend you are walking away from Jerusalem; then turn round and face it as a place of salvation as you walk back home' – an approach which some will find helpful.



The authors – Lavinia Byrne, a journalist and former Roman Catholic nun now living in Wells, and Irish academic Jane McBride now in Belgium – both have a strong interest in feminist practical theology which tugs at much of their writing. Lavinia's description of herself as 'a couple of heartbeats from being a refugee' because her grandmother was a French immigrant seems a far cry from anyone crossing the channel in a dinghy today. But it helps her 'sense of belonging to the human family... vastly

expanded because I have travelled emotionally as well as physically'. The point is not always entirely clear, such as when she recounts being in Manila for the visit of Pope John Paul II and at an open-air mass the distribution of communion didn't get around to everyone so 'an enterprising youngster had a gracious thought and opened a box of Dunkin' Donuts which he shared with us. We smiled at each other as the red jam stained our teeth.' She goes on to say she 'had mixed feelings about this experience' and seems to be tilting at the need for enough to go around everyone. Or was it because it was ersatz communion? Or because the mass was a bit chaotic? Or because elsewhere people were hungry?

The passages on the film scenes are without too much analysis, leaving that to charged questions for the group discussion or personal reflection. There is not much in the way of intertextuality or cultural analysis. Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* is referenced as the main source but without any of its theological themes and concerns which carry through, and there is not much either on the particular context of the Latin American community amongst which the film is set. A reference to 'Latina' is tellingly generational;

the modern US preference is for the particular ethnicity or 'Latinx'. But these are not likely to be major issues for the book's intended audience, and as a companion to an audio-visual format it offers a thoughtful framework for the season.

Paul Dominiak, for a while on the staff at Westcott House, Cambridge, where he trained, is now Senior Tutor and Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. His *The Falling of Dusk: The 2023 Lent Book* (from Bloomsbury) is a sophisticated and pensive work on the Seven Last Words of Christ on the cross. This is not easy theology and it rightly shies away from 'cheap grace'. Whoever sits down with this book will need to read carefully and purposefully.

The seven chapters are arranged in thematic order: 'Forgive, Be, Behold, Why?, Thirst, Finish, Commend' – with an epilogue on 'Truly'. Philosophy looms large throughout the text. An extended and interesting discussion on Nietzsche is valuable and in places surprising. Marx and Dionysius get a similar working out. An erudite discussion on the lynching tree makes for one of the most calm and sensitive treatments of black theology and the Black Lives Matter movement whilst linking it to the crucifixion. The 'New Atheists' also get an airing, and Dominiak is always a courteous and confident conversation partner as he vies these various sources, topics and developments in dialogue with one another.

'Whichever way you look at it, theology has failed,' is his quote from the contemporary theologian Marika Rose, and this is not a book which does the hard work of spirituality for the reader. It assumes that prior engagement and is therefore another strong contender for anyone going on retreat. But it is worth getting hold of for more and will enrich anyone's thinking and preaching throughout penitential seasons and beyond.



# This verbal class distinction by now should be antique!

In examining snobbery, accent and education, *Tony Hodgson* wonders about the Church of England

In August the successful and acclaimed production of *My Fair Lady* reached the end of its London run at the Coliseum. Fittingly, the June edition of *New Directions* included Rebecca Maxted's wonderful review of the musical.

Part of the continued popularity of *My Fair Lady* is its commentary on the snobbery of the English class structure; relating this to the system of education. At the beginning of the musical, Professor Higgins pinpoints Colonel Pickering's linguistic pedigree as 'Cheltenham, Harrow, Cambridge, Sandhurst and India'. Then, (during the song, *Why Can't the English?*) the Professor tells the Colonel 'If you spoke as she does [Eliza], instead of the way you do, then, you might be selling flowers too!' The song had several other prescient phrases. For example, 'this verbal class distinction by now should be antique' and 'condemned by every syllable she utters'. The message is - that a person's accent relates to their place within the social hierarchy.

By coincidence, I found myself in the audience at the Coliseum shortly after reading an article posted on *The Guardian* website last June about implicit prejudiced against northern English accents. According to Dr Robert McKenzie, expert in socio-linguistics, verbal class distinction, though less than it once was, is by no means extinct. Seemingly, a research team from the University of Northumbria have observed that there remains a concerning implicit bias against northern English accents and speakers. Northerners being perceived as less intelligent, less ambitious and less educated than speakers of regional- neutral, received pronunciation (RP). Significantly, people with 'stigmatised accents' are less likely to be offered a job after an interview. Dr McKenzie and his team are engaged in a campaign to have accents made a protected characteristic under the Equality Act. The line of reasoning is - that accent can not only signify the geographical origins of the speaker but also socio-economic background. Arguably, if someone speaks with a strong regional accent there is a high probability that they did not attend a private school or originate from an upper-middle class household.

Back in 1993, I distinctly remember conversing with a distinguished visiting speaker, following his lecture at the Westcott House Theological Society. The priest (who later became a bishop) avuncularly enquired where I was to serve my title? I answered, 'Chorley in Blackburn Diocese'. He replied, 'With an accent like yours, I think that's just as well'. Though I was somewhat taken aback by his directness, there was clearly no meanness in-

tended, it was simply an individual being rather too direct and proffering some honest, but discomforting, unsolicited advice. At one point in his respective journey, he found it prudent to lose his own regional voice and was now advising me to 'go and do likewise'. Nevertheless, his comment unsettled me because I did, even at that early stage, appreciate the significance of grammar and the necessity to enunciate clearly. Some years later, I became friends with a residentiary canon of Blackburn Cathedral, who (Durham School and Oriel) was the personification of the quintessential, public-school, Oxbridge cleric. Over many years, my friend customarily greeted me (parodying a Lancashire accent) with '*Ee by gum Lad! How Ye gettin on?*' Always said in a spirit of good-natured jocularly, never with malice. All the same, arising from many similar encounters over the years, I now firmly believe that possessing a strong regional represents a disadvantage; especially when the majority of those in senior positions speak with upper-middle class RP.

Whilst the Lancashire voice has historically been associated with comedy and light entertainment, for instance, Frank Randale, Gracie Fields, George Formby and, more recently, Victoria Wood and Peter Kay, when Lancastrians venture into more serious fields such, as radio and television journalism or *academia*, modifying to regional-neutral RP seems advisable, as both David Starkey and Baroness (Joan) Bakewell testify.

When it comes to the Church of England, could it be that, because of its regional and comedic associations, the Lancashire voice lacks perceived *gravitas* when attempting to articulate profound theological and ecclesiological matters?

## Education, class and voice

Around 2004, when simultaneously involved with two socio-economically different Lancashire primary schools, I had first-hand experience of implementing The Department for Education and Skills' policy *Speaking, Listening, learning: working with children in Key Stages 1 and 2*. This encouraged all children 'to make a verbal contribution; nurturing skills of speaking audibly and making meaning explicit in a structured, socially appropriate and grammatically correct manner'. Fifteen years later, the primary school programme was recalled, and its long-term 'effects' demonstrated, when I undertook a teaching practice on a Level V History module in an FE College in a post-industrial Lancashire town. Many of the undergraduates had inevitably been subject to the

*Speaking, Listening, learning* initiative earlier at primary school.

Since the FE degree assessment included 10% for a seminar presentation, I soon found myself sitting through week after week of student-led seminars. At the start, the students were given a list of approximately fifteen seminar topics; invited to choose one and allocated a date to deliver the presentation. The seminars entailed that week's student verbally taking the class through a PowerPoint; after which the presenter had to field questions from the group. The tutors too asked questions and it fell upon either myself, or my colleague, to give a vote of thanks at the end. Roughly 30 minutes was timetabled for each seminar; although there was latitude for it to run on longer.

Whilst the students' written essays and summative examination were frequently of impressive quality, conversely, the seminars, though on paper thoughtfully planned, in practice proved, with a couple of notable exceptions, disappointing, rushed and lacking enthusiasm. Though 30 minutes was timetabled, they often finished in less. Three were barely fifteen minutes in length (including questions and a vote of thanks). Also, there was reluctance from other members of the group to put questions to the presenter, and when they did, the quality and manner left much to be desired. Additionally, some of the younger members of the class were distinctly uncomfortable and markedly inept at receiving and answering questions. This discomfort appeared to heighten when the speaker was interrupted with a point of clarification. Having had their narrative flow interrupted, they showed difficulty getting back on track. Evidently, they had come expecting to deliver an uninterrupted monologue and were taken aback when another member of the group asked a question.

All the students had been educated within the state sector. Significantly, the age demographic of the class went from early- twenties through to late-fifties; and, from what I observed, it was the two oldest who appeared most relaxed and confident in their respective presentations.

Predictably, it was the younger members of the class who generally created the most technically impressive PowerPoints, clearly displaying their superior IT skills. From this observation, two corollaries emerged: that age and experience made all the difference; and that these two characteristics appeared to count at least as much as (and perhaps even more than) innate intelligence and overall conscientiousness in fulfilling this particular verbal task. This was born out since overall course assessment demonstrated that the highest academic achievers were not necessarily the oldest.

The ability to speak confidently, coherently and convincingly is requisite in many professions, for example,



*Harry Hadden-Paton as Professor Henry Higgins, Amara Okereke as Eliza Doolittle and Malcolm Sinclair as Colonel Pickering. Credit Marc Brenner*

the law, education and the Church; moreover, even in occupations that do not entail public speaking, the capacity to communicate clearly, thoughtfully and courteously with occupational peers is necessary. In face of this occupational necessity, there emerges an unnerving and unprecedented consensus between educational journalists ranging from Poly Toynbee on the left to Simon Heffer on the right, and among popular academics as diverse as Akala to Dr David Starkey. Professor Selina Todd has built much of her career around this particular sociological reality, the journalist Toby Young both talks and writes extensively about it.

In England and Wales, the 7% of the population that are educated privately, and the small minority that attend selective-entry state schools, achieve greater levels of educational and professional attainment than those from the state comprehensive sector.

When it comes to the all-important (zero sum) interview, the fortunate privately- educated 7% have received the type of social, educational and cultural formation that equips them to be more confident and convincing verbal communicators. The reasons for this seem to be that such activities as: school debating societies, school elections; the necessity for prefects and heads of school to address audiences; reading lessons in chapel; participation in school musical and theatrical productions and membership of the school combined cadet *corps* all contribute to producing individuals who are confident, articulate and, more often than not, have a convincing command of RP. Admittedly, it is not just about accent, even so, it is unlikely that parents spend eye-watering amounts (from taxed income) on private education for their sons to sound like Johnny Vegas, or daughters, Philomena Cunk.

### **Two Significant BBC Television Documentaries**

In 2014, Andrew Neil broadcast his belief that since the mid-1990s, opportunities for social mobility in Britain have been diminishing with a gradual return to pre-1964 levels of the privately educated dominating the hierar-



chies of British society. For Neil, it was the system of selective- entry state-funded grammar schools that proliferated throughout Britain, circa 1944 – 1975, that were the engines of the social mobility; from which Neil himself benefitted, but has been continuously contracting since 1997, when the Blair government read the last rites over the 1980 Thatcher government’s assisted places scheme. By 2014 ‘there was nothing in the state sector to match what was offered by the public schools’.

Five years later, Neil’s theme was developed by Amol Rajan (2019) who noted the preponderance of the privately-educated in a number of highly competitive and elite occupations, not least his own, the media. Rajan observed that recruiters to these prestigious ‘first person contact’ occupations often favoured the private rather than state-school educated graduates from the same university, even when the state- educated candidate had a better class of degree in the same subject. Also, Ramel reported, when examining Oxbridge graduates, those who were privately educated on average went on to earn more than their state- educated contemporaries.

When interviewing, recruiters often ask themselves three simple questions: Can the candidate do the job? Will the candidate do the job? Will the candidate fit in? Inevitably, this final question mitigates against the state-educated when competing in this zero-sum game.

Alarmingly, Rajan concluded that many hard-working, highly intelligent and extremely competent state-educated graduates were passed over because they lacked the social and cultural ‘polish’ of their privately-educated competitors. The reality is that state-educated graduates are mistakenly pursuing additional academic qualifications (for example, enrolling for a MA, MBA or doctorate and in the process accumulating a huge debt liability) to compensate for their lack of social and cultural capital.

The concurring messages of Neil and Rajan were later confirmed by Hashi Mohamed (2020) in his semi-autobiographical sociological analysis of modern Britain. He asserts that there is more to occupational and professional success than simply having good qualifications and a high level of individual competence. These qualities are a start, but they are not in themselves enough. In addition, Hashi Mohamed describes the ‘cultural and social capital’ that are essential to gain admission to, and succeed in, certain highly competitive and prestigious areas of English life, for example, the law, merchant and investment banking, the media, publishing and broadcasting.

### **But what of the Church of England?**

The Anglican ordained ministry may no longer be an elite occupation, but it is definitely a first-person contact one and there is much competition for many positions within it. Therefore, possessing the sort of region-neutral, RP voice traditionally associated with the upper-middle class, arguably constitutes the sort of soft skill, polish and social capital to which Rajan and Hashi Mohamed refer. In an ancient and deeply hierarchical institution such as the Church of England, which is by

definition affiliated to the Establishment, it is likely that public-school, Oxbridge sounding voices have traditionally carried considerable currency. Although the Church of England has expended much effort to become more ethnicity, gender and disability inclusive, the subject of classism is less frequently discussed. Yet, both Amol Rajan and Hashi Mohamed have convincingly argued that many of the tensions often attributed to racial prejudice are in fact the result of class prejudice.

Despite John Prescott’s assertion in 1997 that ‘we are all middle class now’, a quarter of a century later it seems that accent remains one of the clearest signifiers of social class. This is not accidental. Regionally-neutral public-school English became synonymous with Oxbridge English and this fashion was later propagated through the BBC; thus, by 1945, becoming nationally recognizable as the language of the ruling class. For those who served in the First and Second World Wars, or later had to undertake National Service, this style of speech became associated with the officer class. Arguably, this has historic and cultural implications for the Church even today.

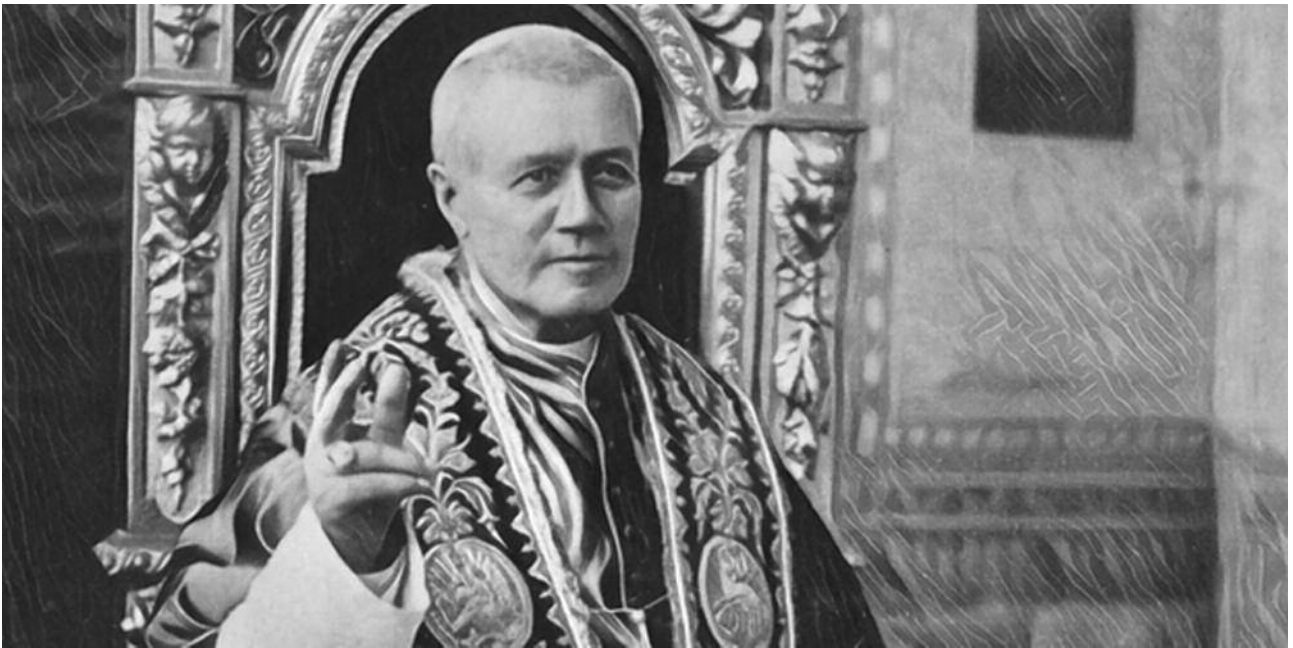
Undoubtedly, when leading worship, preaching, chairing a meeting, pastoral visiting or merely engaging in social conversation, the intonation, clarity, volume and rhythm of the priest’s voice has significant influence and connotations. The ability to transmit a sense of *gravitas* is an undeniable asset within the field of religious verbal communication. In reality, some voices simply sound more authoritative, educated, privileged and entitled than others. Interestingly, when, in 1946, Bishop William Wand of London was describing Walter Baddeley, the Bishop of Melanesia, to Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher, with a view to finding Baddeley an episcopal position in England, something cited against Baddeley was his ‘hard unpleasing voice’. Significantly, Baddeley came from the provincial lower-middle class and had attended Varndean Grammar School. That was then, even so, it would be interesting to differentiate what percentage of today’s clerical hierarchy today attended – private, selective entry or comprehensive schools? Moreover, it would be fascinating to ascertain what proportion speak with regional accents? As Jilly Cooper (1980) sagaciously observed ‘when people talk about class barriers, they often mean sound barriers’.

Class allegiances and tribal *shibboleths* can be exploited; even being turned against the interests of the institutions that foster them. The examples of Burgess, Maclean, Philby and Blunt demonstrated this reality. Comparably, one might conjecture about late Bishop Peter Ball’s career. Undoubtedly, Ball’s path and successful subterfuge resulted from the institution’s lack of procedures and accountability. Still, I wonder whether he would have been encouraged, promoted, and protected by the institutional Church – to the level that he was – had he instead attended a Secondary Modern school in a northern industrial-town and spoken with a working-class accent? **ND**

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# Pope St Pius X, 1835-1914

John Gayford gives a critical review of his life and his legend



Pope Pius X was venerated in his own life time and he was canonised in 1954 by Pope Pius XII when great crowds came to cheer for this occasion. He was the first pope to be canonised since Pope Pius V (Pope between 1566 and 1572 and canonised in 1712). In spite of his personal saintly life, history has shown him as a more controversial figure. Roman Catholic opinion became divided with the traditionalists seeing him as their patron and a cult developing giving rise to the Society of Saint Pope Pius X (SSPX) which is still seen in the Catholic world today. The majority of Catholics see him in a different light with his inhibition of modern theological development and needing the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) to correct the imbalance. In the eleven years of his pontificate (1903 -1914) he showed he was a reforming pope of his own church but had no ecumenical dialogue, not even with the Orthodox churches.

Giuseppe Sarto was born in 1835, the second son of the local postmaster and his mother who was a seamstress in Riese in upper Venetia, Italy. There were ten children but not all of them survived to maturity. Poverty was a badge he was not ashamed to carry with him through life, saying he was born poor and would die poor. He had to walk nearly four miles to school each day, often carrying his shoes to save on their wear. Other pupils ridiculed his shabby clothes and poverty which also restricted his education. It would seem he wanted to be a priest from a young age, walking extra miles to attend the necessary Latin lessons. From the age of 10 he served at mass before school. Later he went on to organise the servers for Sundays and form a small choir to sing

Gregorian chant. In 1850 he was given a place at the Padua seminary, where he was described as a diligent but average student. He was ordained priest in 1858 at the age of 23. For the next seventeen years he was engaged in pastoral work. Thus, when he became pope, he was the first pope for a long time to have had this pastoral priestly background with common people and especially children. He was without university education and had a distrust of academic interpretations of what the Church had taught for centuries. It was his character of simplicity, sincerity and forthrightness that stayed with him.

*Poverty was a badge he was not  
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would die poor*

Fr Giuseppe Sarto was a very hard working parish priest at Tombolo, made archpriest of Salzano, canon of Treviso, spiritual director of the seminary and chancellor to the bishop. While fulfilling all these roles, he increased his knowledge of Thomas Aquinas and canon law. In 1867 he restored the church building and hospital. There was a cholera outbreak in 1870 and he won local admiration for the way he ministered to the sick and dying. In 1884 he was appointed bishop to the rather run-down diocese of Mantua, a task he tackled with his characteristic zeal and personal example. He was appalled that priests retired to the taverns after saying mass on Sundays without giving catechesis to children. They



were interrupted in this habit and sent back to their priestly work with the example of their bishop who in addition this took children for walks in the evening to prepare them for their first communion. His reform was so impressive that in 1893 Pope Leo XIII made him a cardinal and appointed him to the prestigious post of Patriarch of Venice. For 16 months he was unable to take possession of his see as the Italian government claimed the right to nominate the Patriarch of Venice, so he was not formally enthroned until 24<sup>th</sup> November 1894 when the government submitted. The nine years at Venice made little change to Cardinal Sarto; he still retained a love of Gregorian chant and appointed a musical director who supported him. Sarto had a fine voice and could sing the mass with dignity. His love for children continued and his simple catechism was developing. His devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary was becoming more evident. Cardinal Sarto showed his dislike for Liberal Catholics by calling them wolves in sheep's clothing.

*He placed renewed emphasis on the mass and receiving communion which he saw as the safest and most assured way to heaven*

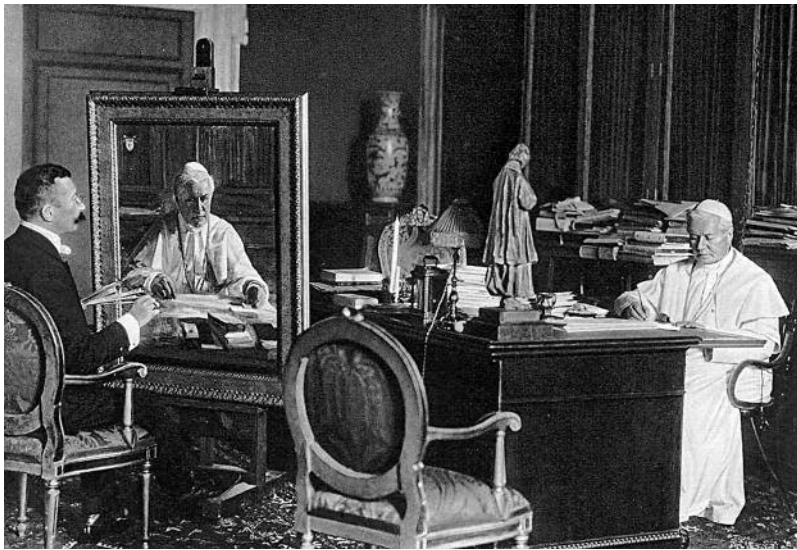
When Pope Leo XIII died in 1903, Cardinal Sarto was a candidate for Papal election but Cardinal Rampolla who had been the previous pope's secretary of state seemed to be favourite. The Austrian Emperor imposed his veto but although the conclave wanted to ignore this Cardinal Rampolla withdrew from the contest and Cardinal Sarto was elected, taking the name of Pius X. He took as his motto *Instaurare omnia Christi* (To restore all things in Christ Ephesians 1.10). One of the first things he did was to abolish secular interference in the election



of popes. Within three month of becoming pope he published *Tra le sollecitudini* showing his continued love of Gregorian chant as source of Christian Spirituality. He chose Joseph Pothier to supervise the Vatican edition of Gregorian chant. He simplified the Breviary and placed renewed emphasis on the mass and receiving communion which he saw as the safest and most assured way to heaven. He lowered the age of receiving communion to seven, as the age of consent when children could tell the difference between Eucharistic bread and common bread. For these actions he received the title 'Pope of the Blessed Sacrament'. The Catechism of Pius was his simple way of teaching the faith. He is accredited with laying down the principles of 'Catholic Action' in the encyclical *Il fermo proposito* of 1905. The aim was to take the faith by lay people under episcopal control into the home, school and workplace. Unlike popes of his time, he did not dine alone but invited friends and engaged in conversation. Throughout his pontifical life three of his sisters cooked for him, the only honour he was prepared to accept for his family.

Modernism in religion became a term used in the Roman Catholic Church during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century associated with Pope Pius X. Initially it was encouraged by the intellectual Pope Leo XIII (pope between 1878 and 1903) until he saw some of its dangers to Catholic theology and philosophy. Pius condemned modernism in two formal documents, *Lamentabili* and *Pascendi*, of 1907 carried into effect by the *motu proprio* of 1910 *Sacrorum Antistitum* which imposed an Anti-Modernist oath on all clergy. The term modernism included any form of biblical criticism and acceptance of Darwin's theory of evolution, reducing teaching to fundamentalism. This ban officially remained in place until 1960 which inhibited even minor biblical criticism in seminary teaching. A.F. Loisy (1857-1940) is accredited with being the 'Father of Catholic Modernism' within the Roman Catholic Church, wanting to broaden philosophical concept beyond Aquinas. He was primarily a biblical scholar having support from





fellow academics and an archbishop in France. Modernists did not present a unity of ideas but aimed to bringing Catholic belief into a closer relationship with what was modern at the time in terms of philosophy, history and science. Loisy's 'little books' were placed on the Catholic Church's Index of Prohibited works in 1903 and he was excommunicated in 1908. In England they were chiefly represented by Baron von Hugel who as a layman was not subject to the oath against modernism and became the first Roman Catholic to receive an honorary doctorate from Oxford University since the Reformation. Teachers in seminaries were frightened of the reaction of their students. Monsignor Umberto Benigni is projected as being in charge of *Sodalitium Pianum* known as *SP* (fellowship of Pius really referring to Pius V but also to Pius X); this allowed a network never as many as 50 but with the function of spies who could open private letters and report. This sent fear among the clergy as report cases could result in dismissal from office. Fortunately in 1960 the Second Vatican Council marked the end of the anti-Modernist period. Roman Catholic studies had been inhibited for 50 years but this vigorous pruning has given rise to much healthier plant in modern times. Pius X is projected as suspecting many of modernism and some would claim this had paranoid features. After his death, papers were found that laid accusations against his successor Benedict XV and other future popes of modernism but there is no evidence that they had actually been seen by Pius X. Researchers are divided on how much Pope Pius X knew of the work of Monsignor Umberto Benigni and the *SP*. Pope Pius X refused the US President an audience when he declined to cancel visit to a Methodist congregation in Rome.

In 1905 he recommended frequent communion, daily if possible, with suggested prayers before the Blessed Sacrament. The lovers of Gregorian chant have much to thank him for in the support of Dom Prosper Gueranger (1805-1875) who had done wonderful work to restore Gregorian chant at Solesmes Abbey in France. Unfortunately at that time the chant was sung in a stodgy, unattractive way. Long had gone what Hildegard of Bingen called 'a feather on the breath of God'. In Italy and other places the High Mass had an orchestra introducing

music from current popular opera sung by singers imported from the theatre. The sung mass had become the poor person's concert. *Tra le Solecitudini* was a *Motu Proprio* promulgated by Pope Pius X on 22 November 1903 on instructions on sacred music and led to the Vatican edition of the chant for Mass and the Offices. There were a number of liturgical changes made by Pius X, the psalms in the Breviary were radically rearranged so that the Offices were shorter, and scriptural readings were provided proper to the season. Each day had its own Psalms with only interruption for major feasts. Some project him as herald of the 'Liturgical Movement'. Pius X in 1909 founded the Biblical

Institute for Scriptural Studies which he entrusted to the Jesuits. The code of Canon Law was close to the heart of Pope Pius X and he employed the best canonists to assist him which included the future Pope Pius XII. This task was not completed in his lifetime but the work went on after his death and it was left to his successor, Pope Benedict XV, to promulgate the completed work in 1917.

*It has always been the duty of the Pope to be a guardian of the faith and Pius X took this very seriously indeed*

Pope Pius X had a myocardial infarction (heart attack) in 1913 and his health deteriorated. After a few months bronchitis developed and he died on 19 August 1914, at the age of 79. He had been very distressed at the prospect of the outbreak of the First World War which officially started in July 1914. Although he knew little of politics, he knew that this conflict would involve Catholics killing Catholics.

Pope Pius X was venerated as a saint with attributed miracles in his own lifetime. There can be no doubt that Pius X lived a saintly life venerated in his own life time but there is controversy in the way he handled the modernist crisis or possibly how others manipulated it in his name. It has always been the duty of the Pope to be a guardian of the faith and this was something Pius X took very seriously indeed. In retrospect the actions taken seem draconian and led in part to the Roman Catholic Church being isolated from the rest of Christendom for some years. We may view the traditionalist Pius X as Pius by name and deeply pious by nature. **[ND]**

#### **Suggested Further Reading:-**

- Cumming, J. *St. Pius X*. in Butlers Lives of the Saints (New Full Edition) August, Burns & Oates. The Liturgical Press Collegeville. Minnesota. 1998.
- Duffy, E. *Saints and Sinners; A History of the Papacy (fourth edition)* Yale University Press, London. 2014.
- Kelly, J.N.D. *Pius X. Saint*. Oxford Dictionary of Popes, Oxford University Press Oxford 1986.

# parish directory

**BATH Bathwick Parishes, St Mary's** (bottom of Bathwick Hill), **St John's** (opposite the fire station) Sunday - 9.00am Sung Mass at St John's, 10.30am at St Mary's 6.00pm Evening Service - 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday at St Mary's and 2nd & 4th at St John's. Contact Fr. Peter Edwards 01225 460052 or [www.bathwick-parishes.org.uk](http://www.bathwick-parishes.org.uk)

**BEXHILL on SEA St Augustine's**, Cooden Drive, TN39 3AZ Sunday: Mass at 6pm (first Mass of Sunday) Sunday: Mass at 8am, Parish Mass with Junior Church at 10am. Further details of services and events at St. Augustine's please visit our website: [www.staugustinesbexhill.org.uk](http://www.staugustinesbexhill.org.uk)

**BIRMINGHAM St Agatha**, Stratford Road, Sparkbrook (B11 1QT) "If it is worth believing in, it is worth travelling for" Sunday Mass 11am. Contact 0121 449 2790 [www.saintagathas.org.uk](http://www.saintagathas.org.uk)

**BISHOP AUCKLAND St Helen Auckland**, Manor Road, West Auckland Medieval church. A Parish of the Society of S. Wilfrid and S. Hilda. Sunday: Sung Mass 10am, Evensong and Benediction (First Sunday of the Month) 6pm. Weekday Mass: Mon 7pm, Tues, Fri, Sat 9.30am, Wed 10am, Rosary Mon 6.30pm. Messy Church every third Saturday 11.30am, Parish Priest: Canon Robert McLeer SSC 01388 604152. [www.sthelenchurch.co.uk](http://www.sthelenchurch.co.uk) Curate Fr Edward Gunn 07485 756177 [st.helen.curate@gmail.com](mailto:st.helen.curate@gmail.com) Youth and Community Worker 07485545278 [communitysha@yahoo.com](mailto:communitysha@yahoo.com)

**BLACKPOOL St Stephen on the Cliffs**, Holmfield Road, FY2 9RG. A SWSH Registered Parish. Sundays - 9am Said Mass, 10.30am Solemn Mass, 6pm Evening Service. Easy Access & Loop. Tel 01 253 351484 [www.ststephenblackpool.co.uk](http://www.ststephenblackpool.co.uk)

**BOSTON LINCOLNSHIRE St Nicholas**, Skirbeck Boston's oldest Parish Church. A Society and Forward in Faith Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday Solemn Mass 9.30am. Daily Mass, Feasts, Solemnities, Offices, Benediction and Confessions as displayed on noticeboards. Parish priest: Fr John Underhill SSC 01205 362734 [www.skirbeckstnicholas.com](http://www.skirbeckstnicholas.com)

**BOURNEMOUTH St Ambrose**, West Cliff Road, BH4 8BE. A Parish under the patronage of Ss. Wilfrid & Hilda. Sunday: 8am Low Mass BCP, 10am Sung Mass Traditional Ceremonial (CW), 4pm Solemn Evensong, 2nd Sunday of the month Solemn Evensong with Benediction. Daily Mass, Monday to Saturday, at 8.45am and Daily Evening Prayer, Monday to Saturday, at 5.30pm and the Rosary on Wednesdays at 5.00pm before Evening Prayer. Parish Priest Fr Adrian Pearce SSC 01202 911569; Parish office 01202 766772. Email: [afpear2@gmail.com](mailto:afpear2@gmail.com)

**BOURNEMOUTH St Katharine**, Church Road, Southbourne, BH6 4AS. A Parish under the Episcopal oversight of the Bishop of Richborough. Sung Mass at 10.30am on Sunday. Contact: Dean Quinton, Churchwarden 01425 672601 [deanquinton@hotmail.com](mailto:deanquinton@hotmail.com)

**BOWBURN, Durham Christ the King**, DH6 5DS; A parish of the Society, under the care of the Bishop of Beverley. Durham City's 'Forward in Faith' parish. Sunday: 11am Sung Mass and Sunday School; Weekday Mass: Wed 9.30am, Fri 6.30pm; Parish Priest: Fr John Livesley SSC 01388 814817

**BRADFORD St Chad**, Toller Lane (B6144, 1 mile from city centre). Society Parish. Sunday: Solemn Mass 10.45, Solemn Vespers and Benediction (Latin) 18.30. Tuesday: Mass 18.00. Wednesday: Mass 19.30. English Missal. Saturday: 18.30 Vigil Mass. For all other services and information please contact the Parish Priest, Fr Liam Beadle [liam.beadle@gmail.com](mailto:liam.beadle@gmail.com)

**BRIGHTON & HOVE WAGNER GROUP St Barnabas'** (11am) Fr. John Eldridge 01273 881761 [www.stbarnabashove.co.uk](http://www.stbarnabashove.co.uk). **St Bartholomew's** (10.30am) Fr. Ben Eadon 01273 325301. **St Martin's** (10.30am) Fr. Trevor Buxton 01273 604687. **St Michael's** (10.30am) 01 273 822284. **St Paul's** (11am) Fr. Ben Eadon 01273 325301. (Sunday Principal Mass times in brackets.)

**BRISTOL Ebbsfleet parishes All Hallows**, Easton BSS OHH. **Holy Nativity**, Knowle BS4 2AG. Sunday Mass 10.00 a.m. (both Churches), Weekday masses: Tuesday 7.15 p.m. & Wednesday 10.00 a.m. (All Hallows). Contacts: Fr Jones Mutemwakwenda

01179551804, [www.allhallowseaston.org](http://www.allhallowseaston.org) Philip Goodfellow, Churchwarden. 07733 111 800 [phil@holynativity.org.uk](mailto:phil@holynativity.org.uk) [www.holynativity.org.uk](http://www.holynativity.org.uk)

**BROMLEY St George's Church**, Bickley Sunday 8.00am Low Mass, 10.30am Sung Mass. Low Mass Wednesday 9.30am, Friday 9.30am, Saturday 9.30am with Rosary. Parish Priest Fr Henry Everett 0208 295 6411. Parish website: [www.stgeorgebickley.co.uk](http://www.stgeorgebickley.co.uk) and find us on Facebook.

**CARDIFF** near rail, bus, Principality Stadium, city centre and Bay Daily Mass **St Mary**, Bute Street Sunday: Solemn Mass 11am; Parish Priest Fr. Dean Atkins SSC 029 2048 7777 [www.stmaryscf10.co.uk](http://www.stmaryscf10.co.uk)

**CHARD The Good Shepherd**, Furnham. Under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday: Sung Mass 9.45am, Miss Alison Cruickshank 01460 68779 [www.churchofthegoodshepherd-chard.weebly.com](http://www.churchofthegoodshepherd-chard.weebly.com)

**CHESTERFIELD S. Paul**, Hasland, Derbyshire, S41 0JX Sunday: Sung Parish Mass 10.30am, Low Mass: Wednesday 10.30am, Benediction: Last Tuesday 7.15 pm, Cell Mass: 2nd Friday 7.15 pm. **S. James the Apostle**, Temple Normanton, Derbyshire, S42 5DB Sunday: Parish Mass 9am, Thursday: Low Mass 7.15pm, except Benediction: 2nd Thursday 7.15 pm. Contact: Fr. Geoffrey Borrowdale SSC 01246 232486 [frgeoffrey@stpaulshasland.com](mailto:frgeoffrey@stpaulshasland.com) [www.stpaulshasland.com](http://www.stpaulshasland.com)

**CHOPWELL Saint John the Evangelist NE17 7AN** A Society Parish. Sunday - Sung Mass 10am. Daily Office & Mass as displayed. Parish Priest: Rev Tom Brazier: 07799 217775 [greenidevicar@solo.net](mailto:greenidevicar@solo.net)

**COVENTRY St. Oswald Tile Hill** Monday & Thursday - 9am BCP Morning Prayer, Tuesday, Friday & Saturday - 9am Morning Prayer [CW], Tuesday - 1pm Rosary Prayers, Wednesday - 9.30am Mass, Sunday - 10am Mass, [First Sunday] 6pm Evensong & Benediction. Fr Edward Backhouse SSC - 07485 493418. Church Office - 07512 924401. Find us on Facebook [www.stoswalds.co.uk](http://www.stoswalds.co.uk)

**DERBY St Anne's**. Sunday Sung Mass 1115. For directions and details of weekday Masses and Choral Evensongs with Benediction - see A Church Near You website. Fr Giles Orton SSC 07768 827101

**DEVIZES St. Peter's**, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire. Society of St. Wilfrid and St. Hilda parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sundays 10am Sung Mass. Wednesdays 10.30am Low Mass. On major festivals & Saints' Days - times vary. Contact: Duty volunteer Tel: 0785269628 [stpetersdevizes@outlook.com](mailto:stpetersdevizes@outlook.com) [www.achurchnearyou.com/9679](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/9679)

**Dewsbury St Saviour's**, Ravensthorpe. A parish under the care of the Bishop of Wakefield. Sundays 10 am Sung Mass. For further details - 'A Church Near You' WF13 3JR, and follow us on Facebook "Savvylove". Fr George Spencer 07388507282

**DONCASTER St Wilfrid's**, Cantley DN4 6QR A beautiful and historically significant church with much Comper restoration. A Society Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Modern catholic worship with a friendly atmosphere. Sunday: 8am Mass and 10am Parish Mass. Wednesday: 9.30am Mass (followed by coffee morning). Friday: 8pm Mass. Saturday 9.30am Mass. Visitors very welcome. Contact: Fr. Andrew Howard ssc. (01302) 285316, mob. 0774 0932758 [fatherahoward@gmail.com](mailto:fatherahoward@gmail.com)

**DONCASTER Benefice of Edlington S John the Baptist (DN12 1AX) with Hexthorpe S Jude (DN4 0BT)**, Sung Mass Sundays 9.15am Edlington. Youth Group at Edlington on Fri 7pm, Messy Church at Edlington on the last Monday of each month 4.00 pm at the ECO centre (DN12 1AB). Please refer to our Facebook pages for details of other activities and service times for St Jude's (Hexthorpe). <https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsEdlington> and <https://www.facebook.com/stjudeshexthorpe>

**EASTBOURNE St Saviour's** A Society Parish. Sunday: Said Mass 9.00am Solemn Mass 10.30am. Daily Mass & Office. For details and information contact Fr. Mark McAulay SSC, 01323 722317 [www.stsaviourseastbourne.org.uk](http://www.stsaviourseastbourne.org.uk)

**ELLAND All Saints**, Charles Street, HX5 0LA A Parish of the Society under the care of the Bishop of Wakefield. Serving Traditionalists in Calderdale. Sunday Mass 9.30am. Mass Tuesday & Friday 9.30am. Other Times from Fr David Burrows SSC, 01422 373184 [David.burrows@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:David.burrows@leeds.anglican.org) <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/9987/>

**FOLKESTONE Kent, St Peter on the East Cliff** A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Solemn Mass: Sunday at 10.30 am. Benediction with Exposition: Sunday at 6 pm. Weekday Masses: daily at 12 noon. Thursday: 11 am coffee/tea prior to Mass. Contact The Parish Priest 01303 680 441 <http://stpetersfolkestone.co.uk> e-mail: [church@stpetersfolkestone.co.uk](mailto:church@stpetersfolkestone.co.uk)

**GRIMSBY St Augustine**, Legsby Avenue Lovely Grade II Church by Sir Charles Nicholson. A Forward in Faith Parish under Bishop of Richborough. Sundays: Parish Mass 10am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction 6pm (Third Sunday). Contact telephone number 07941894822

**HALIFAX St Paul**, King Cross: Queens Road, HX1 3NU. An inclusive resolution parish receiving sacramental provision from the Bishop of Wakefield. Sunday: 11.00 Solemn Mass; Occasional Choral Evensong. [www.stpaulskingcross.co.uk](http://www.stpaulskingcross.co.uk)

**HARTLEPOOL St Oswald's**, Brougham Terrace. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday: Sung Mass 10am. Daily Mass, Offices and Confessions as displayed. Parish Priest: Fr. Richard Massheder, 01429 272934

**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD St Francis of Assisi**, Hammerfield, Glenview Road, HP1 1TD. Under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday Sung Mass at 10am. Solemn Evensong and Benediction at 6.30pm (4th Sunday). Traditional rite and ceremonial sung to Merbecke. Vicar: Fr. Michael Macey, 01 442 243258 e-mail: [vicar@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk)

**KINGSTON-upon-THAMES St Luke's**, Gibbon Road (short walk from Kingston railway station) Sunday services: 8am Low Mass (English Missal), 10.30am Sung Mass (Western Rite), 5pm Evensong. Weekday services Tuesday to Friday 9am Mass. For further information phone the Parish Office 0759 2408419. Web page: [www.stlukeskingston.uk](http://www.stlukeskingston.uk)

**LINCOLN All Saints**, Monks Road. LN2 5JN. Society & F in F Parish under the care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sundays-Sung Mass 9.30am. Evening Prayer 6pm. (2nd & 4th Evensong & Benediction) Weekdays- Monday, Wednesday, Saturday 8.30am; Thursday 7pm (Eucharistic Adoration from 6.15pm); Friday 10am. Vicar: Fr Paul Noble SSC- 01522 524319 [www.allsaints-monksroad.com](http://www.allsaints-monksroad.com) Facebook- All Saints Church, Monks Road

**LOFTUS-IN-CLEVELAND St Leonard**, Loftus & St Helen, Carlin How, situated on the North Yorkshire Coast. Sunday - Said Mass at Carlin How 9am and Family Mass at Loftus 10.30am. Parish Priest Fr. Adam Gaunt 01287 644047. Email: [AdamGaunt@btinternet.com](mailto:AdamGaunt@btinternet.com) Further details on our website: [www.loftusparish.co.uk](http://www.loftusparish.co.uk) or on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/loftusparish](http://www.facebook.com/loftusparish)

**LONDON EC3 St Magnus the Martyr**, Lower Thames Street (nearest Tube: Monument or Bank) A Society Parish Under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Fulham. Mass: Sunday 11am, refreshments following, Tues, Wed, Thur and Fri 12.30. [Midweek mass subject to change] Visitors very welcome. Website: [www.stmtm.org.uk](http://www.stmtm.org.uk) [rector@stmtm.org.uk](mailto:rector@stmtm.org.uk)

**LONDON E1W St Peter's**, London Docks, Wapping Lane. Nearest station is Wapping (Overground). Buses: D3 or 100. A registered parish of the Society of S. Wilfrid & S. Hilda. Sunday Masses: 9.15am and 10.30am. Contact: Fr Jonathan Beswick SSC 0207 481 2985. For daily mass and office times please see website. [www.stpeterslondon docks.org.uk](http://www.stpeterslondon docks.org.uk)

**LONDON N21 Holy Trinity**, Winchmore Hill, Green Lanes, N21 3RS. A modern catholic parish under the Bishop of Fulham. Every Sunday: Parish Mass 10.30am with Junior Church. Weekdays: Wednesday 11.00am Rosary or Exposition and Simple Benediction followed by 12.00 noon Angelus and Mass. Friday 12 noon Angelus and Mass. For the Sacrament of Reconciliation and other enquires contact Fr Richard Bolton at [rdeb2010@btinternet.com](mailto:rdeb2010@btinternet.com) or phone 0208 364 1583



**LONDON N21 Holy Trinity**, Winchmore Hill, Green Lanes, N21 3RS. A modern catholic parish under the Bishop of Fulham. Every Sunday: Parish Mass 10.30am with Junior Church. Weekdays: Wednesday 11.00am Rosary or Exposition and Simple Benediction followed by 12.00 noon Angelus and Mass. Friday 12 noon Angelus and Mass. For the Sacrament of Reconciliation and other enquires contact Fr Richard Bolton at [rdeb2010@btinternet.com](mailto:rdeb2010@btinternet.com) or phone 0208 364 1583

**LONDON NW3 All Hallows** Gospel Oak, Hampstead, NW3 2LD A Society Parish under the Bishop of Fulham. Parish Mass each Sunday at 10am. For further details: Prebendary David Houlding SSC

**LONDON NW9 St Andrew's**, Kingsbury (Wembley Park tube station then 83 bus (direction Golders Green) to Tudor Gardens.) A Society Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Sung Mass 10.30am, Thursday: Mass 10.00am – both followed by refreshments. Contact: Fr Jason Rendell on 020 8205 7447 or [standrews.kingsbury@london.anglican.org](mailto:standrews.kingsbury@london.anglican.org) - [www.standrewskingsbury.org.uk](http://www.standrewskingsbury.org.uk)

**LONDON SE11 4BB St Agnes** Kennington Park, St Agnes Place. Under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. 8 minutes walk from both Kennington and the Oval tube stations (Northern line) Sunday: 10am Solemn Mass. Daily Mass: Mon, Tue, Thur & Fri 10am. [stagneskenningtonpark.co.uk](mailto:stagneskenningtonpark.co.uk) 020 7820 8050 [frpaulensor@btconnect.com](mailto:frpaulensor@btconnect.com)

**LONDON SE13 St Stephen**, Lewisham (opposite Lewisham Station) A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Parish Mass 10am. Weekdays: Mon 10am, Tue/Wed/Thur/Fri 12.15pm, Sat 10am. Parish Priest: Fr Michael Bailey - 07713 258429 [www.sswsml.com](http://www.sswsml.com)

**LONDON SE18 St Nicholas - the Ancient Parish Church** - St Nicholas Road, Plumstead. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. Masses: Solemn Sung 11am; Mon 12 noon; Tu es 12 noon; Wed 9.30am; Fri 12 noon; Sat 10am. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament half an hour before every Mass apart from Sunday. Modern rite, traditional ceremonial. Parish Priest: Fr Andrew Stevens 020 8854 0461

**LONDON SW1 St Gabriel**, Pimlico Sunday: Mass 8am; Sung Parish Mass 10.30am. Choral Evensong (termtime) 6pm. Wednesday: School mass (termtime) 9.15am; Choral Evensong (termtime) 5.30pm. Midweek Mass: Tues 9.30am, Wed 6.30pm, Thurs 9.30am, Fri 10am, Sat 9.30am. [www.stgabrielspimlico.com](http://www.stgabrielspimlico.com)

**LONDON SW7 St Stephen**, Gloucester Road (entrance in Southwell Gardens) A Fulham Jurisdiction Parish. Modern rite, traditional ceremonial, gospel preaching and good music. Sunday: Masses 9am and 11am (Solemn). Daily Mass: Tues 12.30pm, Wed 7pm, Thur 12.30pm, Fri 6pm, Sat 9.30am. Holy Hour: every Friday 5pm. Fr Philip Barnes SSC Contact: 020 7370 3418. Email: [saint.stephen@homecall.co.uk](mailto:saint.stephen@homecall.co.uk) [www.saint-stephen.org.uk](http://www.saint-stephen.org.uk)

**LONDON SW11 The Ascension**, Lavender Hill. Famous and flourishing Resolution and Society Parish, in the care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Solemn Mass at 11am. Weekday Masses: Tuesday at 10am; Wednesday at 19.30; Saturday at 11.30. Rosary: Saturday 11am. Active SOLW Cell which organises pilgrimage, social & fundraising activities. Parish Priest: Fr Philip Kennedy CMP. Contact: 020 7228 5340 [ascensionsw11@gmail.com](mailto:ascensionsw11@gmail.com)

**LONDON SW19 All Saints**, South Wimbledon. Society Parish Under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday Solemn Mass 11am. For other masses and services contact Fr Christopher Noke 020 8948 7986, the church office 020 8542 5514 or see <https://allsaintschurchofSouthwimbledon.com/>

**LONDON WC1 Christ the King**, Gordon Square The Forward in Faith Church. Mon to Fri: Mass at 12.30pm, plus: Thur at 12 noon: Angelus followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 12.25pm. Other services: as announced. Contact the FIF Office on 020 7388 3588 or email: [chaplain@forwardfaith.com](mailto:chaplain@forwardfaith.com)

**LOWESTOFT St John the Baptist**, Lound. Society Parish under the Episcopal oversight of the Bishop of Richborough. A warm welcome awaits you at our listed medieval building with a superb interior by Sir Ninian Comper. Sung Mass regularly each month. Please contact Rev Leslie Hobbs 01502 732536 or Kevin Turner 07828661970 for further details. [www.loundworship.co.uk](http://www.loundworship.co.uk)

**MANCHESTER The Parish of Swinton and Pendlebury: All Saints, Wardley; Saint Augustine, Pendlebury; Saint Peter, Swinton.** A Society Parish. Sunday Masses: 8am and 5.30pm (SP), Sung at 9.30am (AS), 10.30am (SP) and 11am (SA). Daily Mass in Parish. Priest Jeremy Sheehy 0161 794 1578, Parish Office: 0161 727 8175 email: [paroffsandp@btconnect.com](mailto:paroffsandp@btconnect.com)

**MIDDLESBROUGH The Church of St Columba** Sunday: Mass 9.30am. **St John the Evangelist** Sunday Mass 11am. For further information contact Fr Stephen Cooper 01642 824779

**NORTH YORK MOORS S. Leonard, Loftus and S. Helen, Carlin How.** Situated on the Cleveland Coast. Sunday - Mass at Carlin How 9am and at Loftus 10.30am. Further details on our website [www.loftusparish.co.uk](http://www.loftusparish.co.uk) or on Facebook [www.facebook.com/loftusparish](http://www.facebook.com/loftusparish) Parish Priest Fr. Adam Gaunt 01287 644047 [AdamGaunt@btinternet.com](mailto:AdamGaunt@btinternet.com)

**PORTSMOUTH The Ascension and St Saviour**, Society Parishes under the Bishop of Richborough. **The Ascension P02 OJG**, Parish Mass 11am. Low Mass: Thursday 7pm. **St Saviour P02 8PB**, Parish Mass 9.30am. Low Mass: Monday 10am, Wednesday 11.30am, Friday 7pm. Solemn Evensong and Benediction (last Sunday) 6pm. Modern rite, traditional ceremonial. Fr Benjamin Weitzmann SSC 02392439711 [www.ascensionportsmouth.org.uk](http://www.ascensionportsmouth.org.uk)

**PRESTON St George's**, (PR1 2NP) - 'Preston's Hidden Gem'. Affiliated to The Society under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Burnley. Sunday - 10.30am Parish Mass. For Daily Masses see website. Parish Priest: Fr David Craven SSC (01772 755125 or [dacraven@hotmail.com](mailto:dacraven@hotmail.com)) [www.sgp.org.uk](http://www.sgp.org.uk) or [www.facebook.com/stgeorgethemartyrpreston](http://www.facebook.com/stgeorgethemartyrpreston)

**READING St Giles-in-Reading**, Southampton Street (next to the Orade). Medieval church. Forward in Faith, affiliated with The Society. Sunday: Parish Mass 10.30am; Low Mass 6pm. Daily Offices (Mattins, Evensong) and Daily Mass (except Mondays, check website for times). Compline daily online at 9pm. Regular study groups, see our website. Parish Priest Fr David Harris 0118 957 2831. [sgiles.vicar@gmail.com](mailto:sgiles.vicar@gmail.com) [www.sgilesreading.org.uk](http://www.sgilesreading.org.uk)

**REDDITCH St Peter's Church**, Crabbs Cross, Littlewoods, Redditch, B97 5LB - Services: Sunday Sung Mass 10.30am, Thursday Said Mass 10am. Friday Stations of the Cross 11am. Contact: Diane Mowatt 01527 542222

**ST. LEONARD'S-on-SEA Christ Church with St Mary Magdalen and St Peter and St Paul.** Daily Mass 10.30am and 6pm. Sunday Mass 8am, 9.30am, 10.30am. Contact: Parish Office 01 424 447784 [www.christchurchstleonards.co.uk](http://www.christchurchstleonards.co.uk)

**SALISBURY St Martin** - the oldest Church in Salisbury. We can be found in St. Martin's Church Street just over the inner city ring road. Walk up St. Ann Street from the Close and through the tunnel. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday: Mass at 8.00am, Parish Mass at 10.30am. For further information about the Daily Office, weekday mass and confession see [www.sarumstmartin.org.uk](http://www.sarumstmartin.org.uk) or call 01722503123. Parish Priest: Fr. David Fisher. 01722 500896

**SCARBOROUGH St Saviour with All Saints**, Parish affiliated to the Society of Sts Wilfrid and Hilda and under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday Mass 11am with refreshments to follow. Evening Prayer and Benediction as announced. Weekday masses: Thursday 10.15am. Major Festivals times vary. Fr David Dixon 01723 363828 [frdavidstmart@gmail.com](mailto:frdavidstmart@gmail.com) [stsaviour-scarborough.org.uk](http://stsaviour-scarborough.org.uk)

**SEAHAM: COUNTY DURHAM** Parish of The Society in the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Beverley. **S John**, Seaham Harbour SR7 7SA (with All Saints Deneside & S Mary's Seaham) Sunday 11.00am Solemn Mass & Sunday School. 9.30am Sung Mass **All Saints** (9am 1st Sun) 10am Sung Mass **S Mary's** (1st Sun). 5pm Solemn Evensong & Benediction **S John's** (2nd Sun). Mass Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, 9.30am & Tues 6pm & Thurs 12pm noon **S John's**, Sat 10.30am **S Mary's**. Confessions by arrangements with Priests. Clergy: Fr Paul Kennedy SSC 0191 3665496, Fr Chris Collins 0191 5817186.

**SHREWSBURY All Saints with St Michael**, North Street SY1 2JH (near Shrewsbury railway station). A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday Parish Mass 10.30am. Daily Mass and times of confessions: contact the Parish Priest, Fr Simon Sayer CMP: T: 01743 357862. [allsaintscastlefields.vicar@gmail.com](mailto:allsaintscastlefields.vicar@gmail.com)

**SNEINTON, NOTTINGHAM St Stephen's with St Matthias.** Services Thursday and Sunday at 9.30am. Contemporary Worship Wednesday at 7pm. Rev John Blakeley Priest in Charge. Mobile 07368 697 292 Email [john@ststephens.info](mailto:john@ststephens.info)

**SOUTHAMPTON, St Barnabas**, Lodge Road (off Inner Avenue A33 London Road). A Society Parish (under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough) welcomes you. Sunday Solemn Mass 10am, Daily Mass and other service details from Churchwarden 023 8067 1883

**SOUTH SHIELDS, St Michael and All Angels**, South Westoe, NE33 3PD. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday: Mass (BCP) 8am and Sung Mass 11am. Evensong and Benediction, first Sunday of the month, 5pm. Weekday Masses: Monday 9am, Tuesday 6pm and Thursday 11am (BCP). Contact Fr Mark Mawhinney SSC: 0191-454-8060 [fathermarkmawhinney@gmail.com](mailto:fathermarkmawhinney@gmail.com)

**SPENNYMOOR, CO. DURHAM St Andrew**, Tudhoe Grange, DL16 6NE A parish of the Society, under the care of the Bishop of Beverley; Sundays: 9am Sung Mass, Last Sunday of the month - 10.30-12 noon "Messy Church" in the hall for children and families, 6pm Evensong (with Benediction on 1st Sunday of month); Weekday Masses: Tues 7pm, Thurs 10am. Parish Priest: Fr John Livesley SSC - 01388 814817

**STOKE-ON-TRENT, LONGTON SS Mary and Chad.** A Society Parish. Sunday: Parish Mass 10am. Weekdays: Mon. No service, Tues 6.30pm, Wed 10am Parish Prayers online, Thur 11.30am, Fri 6.30pm. Confessions after any Mass by appointment. Fr Kevin Palmer - Parish Office - 01782 313142 - <https://www.facebook.com/stmaryandstchads>

**SUNDERLAND St Aidan**, Ryhope Road, Sunderland, SR2 9RS. A Parish of the Society under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Weekday Masses: Monday 9.30am, Tuesday 12.30pm, Wednesday 9.30am, Thursday 7pm and Saturday 9.30am. Holy Rosary Monday 6pm. Confessions Sat 6.15 pm or by appointment. Parish Office; Thursdays 6.00-6.30pm. Contact: Vicar Fr David Raine SSC: 0191 5143485, [farvad@sky.com](mailto:farvad@sky.com)

**SUNDERLAND St Mary Magdalene**, Wilson Street, Millfield. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday: Parish Mass 10.30am, Benediction 6.30pm, Mass 7pm. Weekdays Mass 10.30am Mon and Wed, 7.30pm Thurs, 7.30am Fri, 10.00am Sat. Rosary 7.15pm Thurs, 6.15pm Sat. Confessions 6.30pm Sat, or by appointment. Parish Priest: Beresford Skelton CMP SSC 0191 565 6318 [www.st-marymagdalene.co.uk](http://www.st-marymagdalene.co.uk) Visit our Facebook page

**SUTTON All Saints**, Benlinton A Parish of the Society in the care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Solemn Mass 9.30am. Weekdays Low Mass: Monday and Tues 7.30am, Wed 7.30pm, Thurs 10am, Fri 7.30am, Sat 10am. For further information please contact Fr David Chislett SSC: 07860 636 270. Churchwardens: Linda Roots 020 8644 7271, Carolyn Melius 020 8642 4276

**SWINDON Parish of Swindon New Town** A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday masses: 9.00am S. Saviour's; 10.30am S. Mark's; 11am S. Luke's. For Daily Mass see <https://swindonnewtown.co.uk>. Contact 01793 538220 [swindonnewtown@btinternet.com](mailto:swindonnewtown@btinternet.com)

**TAUNTON Holy Trinity**, Trinity St, Taunton, TA1 3JG. Society Parish. Modern Catholic liturgy. Musical tradition. Sunday Services 8, 10 & 6.30. Daily Mass. Fr Julian Laurence SSC, Vicar. See website for full details of services and events [holytrinity-taunton.org](http://holytrinity-taunton.org)

**TIPTON, West Midlands St John the Evangelist**, Upper Church Lane, DY4 9ND. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday Parish Mass 9.30am. During the vacancy, please check times on 'A Church Near You' or contact Churchwardens: Annmarie Hinde 07940 991306 or Glenis Darby 07958 371611

**TIVIDALE, Oldbury, West Midlands St. Michael**, Tivdale Road B69 2LO and **Holy Cross**, Ashleigh Road B69 1LL. A Society Parish. Sunday: Parish Mass 11am (St Michael's), Sunday School 2pm (Holy Cross). Contact Fr Martin Ennis 01384 257888 [frmennis@gmail.com](mailto:frmennis@gmail.com), [www.vicaroftivdale.co.uk](http://www.vicaroftivdale.co.uk)

Continued on next page



**N. YORKSHIRE near Skipton.** *Three rural churches.* Sundays: **THORNTON St Mary** Sung Eucharist 9.15am. **MARTON St Peter** Prayer Book Holy Communion 10.45am. **BROUGHTON All Saints** Sung Holy Communion at 4pm. (Winter time) 5pm (BST) Rector Fr. Robert Findlow. As services may vary, please check with Fr Robert on 01282-788621 or the Church Wardens. [robert.findlow@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:robert.findlow@leeds.anglican.org)

**WALSALL St Gabriel's.** Fullbrook, Walstead Road, Walsall, off **Junc 7 or 9 of M6.** A Society Parish. Sunday: 8am Mass, 10am Parish Mass, 5pm Evening Mass. Daily Mass. Parish Priest: Fr Mark McIntyre 01922 622583

**WEDNESBURY, West Bromwich St Francis of Assisi.** Friar Park WS10 0HU (5 minutes from junc 9 of M6) Sunday Morning Mass at 10.00am. Weekday Mass: Tues and Thur 9.30am, Wed and Fri 7.30pm, Sat 10am. *Lively worship in the Modern Catholic Tradition, with accessible preaching, and a stunning gem of a church beautifully restored.* Parish Priest: Fr Ron Farrell SSC: 0121 556 5823 Visit us at [www.saintfrancisfriarpark.com](http://www.saintfrancisfriarpark.com)

**WELLINGBOROUGH St Mary the Virgin.** Knox Road (near BR station) A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the

Bishop of Richborough. Sunday: Mass 10.30am. Daily Mass and Office. For further information see our Website: [www.stmarywellingborough.org.uk](http://www.stmarywellingborough.org.uk)

**WEST KIRBY S. Andrew.** Graham Road, Wirral, CH48 5DQ. *Parish of the Society under the pastoral care of the Bishop of Beverley.* Sunday 10:30 AM Sung Mass. Evensong 6pm Third Sunday. Tuesday 10am Low Mass. Traditional Church of England Parish in the Diocese of Chester, visitors always warmly welcomed. <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12709/> <https://www.facebook.com/saintandrewwestkirby/>

**WESTON super MARE All Saints with St Saviour.** All Saints Road, BS23 2NL. A Member of the Society under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet - All are welcome. Sundays: 10.30am Parish Mass. Weekdays: 10am Mass (Tue and Thur). Priest-in-Charge: Fr Andrew Hughes SSC 01934 204217 [fatherandrew@sky.com](mailto:fatherandrew@sky.com) - Parish Office 01934 415379 [allsaintsandstaviour@btconnect.com](mailto:allsaintsandstaviour@btconnect.com) Visit our website [www.allsaintswsm.org](http://www.allsaintswsm.org)

**WEYMOUTH St Paul.** Abbotbury Road DT4 0BJ Under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Oswestry. Sundays: Morning

Prayer 9.45am, Sung Mass 10.30am (creche and Sunday school from 10.00am), Evensong and Benediction 5pm (BST) or 4pm (GMT). For daily service times see [www.stpaulsweymouth.org](http://www.stpaulsweymouth.org) or ring Vicar: Fr Gregory Lipovsky on 07796 963703 or [stpweymouth@gmail.com](mailto:stpweymouth@gmail.com)

**WINCHESTER Holy Trinity.** A Society Church under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday: Sung Mass 10.30am. Weekday Said Mass: Thur 12 noon. Contact: Churchwarden: John Purver 01 962 73251 - email: [office@holyltrinitywinches-ter.co.uk](mailto:office@holyltrinitywinches-ter.co.uk)

**YORK All Saints.** North Street (near Park Inn Hotel) A Society Parish. Sunday: Low Mass 10.30 am [1st Sunday], Sung or High Mass 5.30pm, Thursday Low Mass 12.45 pm. Feast Days are observed on the Day. Visitors to this beautiful medieval church are always welcome; the church is normally open during daylight hours. - website: [www.allsaints-northstreet.org.uk](http://www.allsaints-northstreet.org.uk)

**WALSINGHAM St Mary & All Saints.** Church Street. A Society and Forward in Faith Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday: Solemn Mass, 11.00 am Weekdays: please see [www.walsinghamparishes.org.uk](http://www.walsinghamparishes.org.uk) Contact: Fr Harri Williams SSC, 01328 821316

# Diocesan Directory

**FIF, DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM** Society Parishes Kingstanding St Luke 0121 354 3281, Kingstanding St Mark 0121 360 7288, Small Heath All Saints 0121 772 0621, Sparkbrook St Agatha 0121 449 2790, Washwood Heath St Mark & Saltley St Saviour\* 0121 328 9855

**FIF, DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY** Society parishes Deal St Andrew 01843 527 576, Folkestone St Peter 07947 064863 (Warden), Harbledown St Michael 01227 479377, Maidstone St Michael 01622 679551, Ramsgate Holy Trinity 01843 527576, Rough Common St Gabriel 01227 479377

**FIF, DIOCESE OF CHESTER** Chester St Oswald and St Thomas of Canterbury, Fr. Stephen Sheridan 01 244 399990; Congleton St James the Great, Society, Fr. Colin Sanderson 01260 408203; Crewe St Barnabas, Society, Fr. Ralph Powell 01270 212418; Crewe St Michael, Coppenhall, Society, Fr. John Leal SSC 01270 215151; Knutsford St John the Baptist, Society, Rev Nigel Atkinson 01565 632834/755160; Liscard St Thomas the Apostle, Society, Fr. Brian Bell 01516332185, Fr. Robert Nelson 0151 630 2830, Stockport St Peter, Society, Fr. Kenneth Kenrick 0161 4830675; West Kirby St Andrew, Society, Fr. Brian Bell 01516332185

**FIF, DIOCESE OF COVENTRY** Coventry Centre: St John the Baptist (Fr. Dexter Bracey 024 7671 1687); Holbrooks: St Luke (Fr. Simon Oakes 024 7668 8604); Radford: St Nicholas (024 7659 9152); Ansty: St James (Richard Grindal 024 7661 2628); Shilton: St Andrew (Interregnum); Nuneaton: St Mary the Virgin (Fr. Roger Butcher 024 7638 2936).

**FIF, DIOCESE OF DERBY** Calow: St. Peter, In Interregnum, contact: Sheila Cotton, 01 246 292538; Derby: St. Anne, Parish Priest Fr. Giles Orton SSC 01168 827101 [frgilesorton@fastmail.fm](mailto:frgilesorton@fastmail.fm); St Bartholomew and St Luke: Fr. Leonard Young SSC 01 332 342806; Hasland St Paul and Temple Normanton St James: Fr. Geoffrey Borrowdale 01246 232 486; Long Eaton St Laurence & Ilkeston Holy Trinity Parish Priest: Father David Lawrence - March 0115 9464060 [fatherdlm@icloud.com](mailto:fatherdlm@icloud.com); Staveley St John Baptist with Inkersall St Columba and Barrow Hill St Andrew: Fr. Stephen Jones, 01 246 498603

**DIOCESE OF EXETER** FIF Recommended Parishes: Abbotsham St Helen, Churchwarden 01 237 470447; Babbacombe All Saints, Fr. P. Jones 01803 323002; Barnstaple St Peter, Fr. D. Fletcher 01271 373837; Bovey Tracey St John, Fr. N. Debnay 01 626 681259; Exeter St Michael & All Angels, Heavitree; St Lawrence, Lower Hill Barton Rd; St Paul, Burnthouse Lane; St Mary Steps, West Street, Fr. B. Rabjohns 01392 677150; Great Torrington St Michael, Taddipott St Mary Magdalene, Vacancy - Churchwarden - 01 805 623328; Newton Abbot St Luke, Milber, Fr. N. Debnay 01 626 681259; Paignton St John the Baptist with St Andrew & St Boniface Fr. N. Knox - 01 803 551866; Plymouth St Peter and the Holy Apostles Fr. D. Way - 01 752 240119; Plymouth

Mission Community of Our Lady of Glastonbury St Francis, Hon- icknowle, St Chad, Whitleigh, St Aidan, Ernesettle, Fr. D. Bailey 01752 773874; Plymouth Sacred Heart Mission Community Parishes St John the Evangelist, Sutton-on-Plym; St Mary the Virgin, Laira; St. Simon, Mount Gould, Vacancy - Church answerphone 01 752 664191; Plymouth Discovery Mission Community, St Bartholomew, Devonport & St Mark, Ford Fr. R. Silk - 01752 562623; Plymouth St Gabriel, Peverell Park Churchwarden 077528 51525; Torquay St Martin, Vacancy 01 803 327223; Torquay St Marychurch vacancy; Torquay St John with Torre All Saints, Fr. P. March 01 803 312754

**DIOCESE OF GUILDFORD, Society Parishes** Aldershot St Augustine, Fr. William Perry - 01276 609498, Hawley Holy Trinity and All Saints, Fr. William Perry - 01276 609498. - For further contact details and details of all activities, events etc in both parishes, visit the church web sites [www.staugustine-aldershot.org.uk](http://www.staugustine-aldershot.org.uk) and [www.parishoffhawley.org.uk](http://www.parishoffhawley.org.uk)

**LEEDS FIF, WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF LEEDS** Belle Isle & Hunslet St John & St Barnabas, Sunday Mass 11am, Vicar: Fr. Chris Buckley CMP 07858 427796; Cross Green St Hilda, Sunday Mass 0930 Vicar: Fr. Darren Percival SSC 07960 555609; Harehills St Wilfrid, vacant: Sunday Mass 10am contact Lynne Dransfield [Churchwarden] tel: 0113 2730323

**FIF, DIOCESE OF LINCOLN** Resolution Parishes: Binbrook Group (Louth) Fr. McEune 07411 761883; Edenham Group (Bourne) Fr. Martin 01778 591358; Grimsby St Augustine vacant contact Mr D. Buten 07848 819068; Lincoln, All Saints: Fr. Noble 01 522 524319 Skirbeck St Nicholas (Boston) & Fosdyke All SS (Kirtton) contact Fr. J. Underhill 01 205 362734; Wainfleet Group (Skegness) Vacant until March contact Mr J. Seymour 01754 881046; Burgh-le-Marsh (Skegness) Vacant until March. Contact Miss L. Kent 01507 463275. Non-petitioning parishes information: South Lincolnshire - Fr. Martin 01778 591358; North Lincolnshire - Fr. Noble - 01 522 524319

**FIF, DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER** Blackley Holy Trinity, Society, Fr. Paul Hutchins - 0161 681 3644; Lower Broughton The Ascension, Society, Canon David Wyatt 0161 736 8868; Chadderton St Mark, Society, Fr. Steven Smith - 0161 624 0535; Failsworth Holy Family, Society, Fr. Paul Hutchins - 0161 681 3644; Hollinwood St Margaret, Society, Fr. Tom Davis - 0161 681 4541; Leigh St Thomas & All Saints, Resolution, Fr. Robert Eloff - 01 942 673519; Lightbourne St Luke, Society, Fr. Paul Hutchins - 0161 681 364; Little Lever St Matthew, Resolution, Fr. John Wiseman, 01 204 700396; Middleton Junction St Gabriel, Resolution, Fr. Steven Smith - 0161 624 2005; Moss Side Christ Church, Society, Canon Simon Killwick 0161 226 2476; Oldham St James with St Ambrose, Society, Fr. Graham Hollowood - 0161 624 4964; Peel Green St Michael, Society, Fr. Ian Hall - 0161 788 8991; Prestwich St Hilda, Society, Fr. Ronald Croft 0161 773 1642; Royton St Paul, Society, Fr. Graham Hollowood - 0161 624 4964; Sal-ford St Paul, Society, Canon David Wyatt 0161 736 8868; Swinton and Pendlebury St. Peter, St. Augustine, All Saints, Society, Fr. Jeremy Sheehy 0161 727 8175; Tonge Moor, Bolton St Augustine, Society, Fr. Tony Davies 01204 523899; Winton St Mary Magdalene, Society, Fr. Ian Hall 0161 788 8991; Withington St Crispin, Society, Fr. Patrick Davies 0161 224 3452

**FIF, DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH** Fareham SS Peter and Paul, Fr. Roger Jackson 01 329 281521; IOW: All Saints, Godshill, and St Alban, Ventnor vacant; Good Shepherd, Lake, and St Saviour on the Cliff, Shanklin, vacant; Portsmouth: The Ascension, North End, Fr. Benjamin Weitzmann 023 9243 9711; Southsea Holy Spirit, Fr. Russell Lawson 023 9229 6364; Stamshaw St Saviour, Fr. Benjamin Weitzmann 023 9243 9711

**FIF, DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER** Beckenham St Michael, 11am Sung Mass; Belvedere St Augustine, 10am Sung Mass; Swanley St Mary, 10am Sung Mass; Bickley St George, 8am Low Mass, 10.30am Sung Mass; Chislehurst The Annunciation, 8am Low Mass, 10am Sung Mass; Elmers End St James, 9.15am Sung Mass, 10am Sung Mass; Gillingham St Luke, Parish Mass 10.30am; Gravesend, Perry Street, All Saints, Sung Mass 10am; Higham St John, 9.30am Sung Mass; Sevenoaks St John, 9am Low Mass, 10am Sung Mass; Tunbridge Wells St Barnabas, 11am Sung Mass; all contact details from Fr. Clive Jones 01634 711019, 07946 867881 or [frdive@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:frdive@tiscali.co.uk)

**FIF, DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS** Society Parishes Bedford St Martin, Fr. Norwood 07886 276467; Bushey Heath St Peter, Fr. Burton 020 8950 1424; Luton: Holy Cross, Marsh Farm, Fr. Brown 07867 494688; St Mary, Sundon & St Saviour, Fr. Smejkal 01582 583076. (Please contact clergy for details of services)

**FIF, DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDSBURY and IPSWICH** Cookley St Michael and All Angels, Fr. Jonathan Olanczuk, 01 502 470079, 9.30am Mass (3rd Sunday in Month); Ipswich St. Bartholomew, Fr. Paul Carter 01473 727441. Sunday Mass 10am.; Ipswich St Mary at the Elms, Fr. John Thackray 07780 613754. Sunday Mass 10.45am, daily Mass at 12.30pm; Mendlesham St Mary, Fr. Philip Gray 01449 766359; Eye SS Peter and Paul - The Rev. Dr. Guy Sumpter 01 379 871986.

**FIF, DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD** Bolton-on-Deane St Andrew, Fr. Schaefer 01 709 898426; Cantley St Wilfrid, Fr. Andrew Howard 01302 285 316; Doncaster Holy Trinity, Fr. Stokoe 01302 371256; Edlington St John the Baptist, Fr. Richard Hume 01709 231326; Goldthorpe SS John and Mary Magdalene, Fr. Schaefer 01709 898426; Hexthorpe St Jude, Fr. Richard Hume 01709 231326; Hickleton St Wilfrid, Fr. Schaefer 01709 898426; Hoyland St Peter, Fr. Parker 01226 749231; Mexborough St John the Baptist, Fr. Morrison 01 709 582321; Moorends St Wilfrith, Fr. Pay 07530921952; New Bentley Ss Philip and James, vacant; New Cantley St Hugh, Fr. Stokoe 01302 371256; New Rossington St Luke, vacant; Rycroft: St Nicholas vacant; Dalton: Holy Trinity, vacant; Doncaster Ss Leonard & Jude (with St Luke) Fr. D'Silva 01 302 784858; Sheffield: St Bernard, Southey Green and St Cecilia, Parson Cross, Fr. Ryder-West 0114 2493916; St Catherine, Richmond Road, Fr. Knowles 0114 2399598; St Matthew, Carver Street, Fr. Grant Naylor 01 142 665681; St Mary, Handsworth, Fr. Johnson 01142 692403 (contact clergy for Mass times, etc)

**FIF, DIOCESE OF TRURO** Falmouth St. Michael, Penweris Fr. Michael Oades 01326 341304; Truro St. George the Martyr, Fr. Christopher Epps 01872 278595

# FORWARD VIEW

## February 2023

- 6 – 10 Monday-Friday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Priests' & Deacons' Retreat Pilgrimage
- 22 Wednesday Ash Wednesday

## March 2023

- 3 – 5 Friday – Sunday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Children's Pilgrimage
- 13 – 16 Monday-Thursday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Lent Retreat
- 15 Wednesday Guild of All Souls: 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at St Stephen, Gloucester Road in London
- 25 Saturday Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage Taster Day at St Andrew, Holborn in London

## April 2023

- 9 Sunday Easter Day
- 15 Saturday Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary: Easter Festival at St Stephen's, Gloucester Road in London

## May 2023

- 6 Saturday Coronation of King Charles III
- 8 Monday Additional bank holiday to mark the Coronation
- 11 Thursday Guild of All Souls: Day Conference at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
- 13 Saturday Society of Mary: May Devotion at St Silas, Kentish Town in London
- 18 Thursday Ascension Day
- 20 Saturday Forward in Faith: National Festival at St Alban, Holborn in London
- 20 Saturday Our Lady of Egmont: May Devotion
- 28 Sunday Pentecost Sunday
- 29 Monday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: National Pilgrimage

## June 2023

- 17 Saturday Society of the Maintenance of the Faith: Annual Festival at St Magnus the Martyr, City of London
- 29 Thursday Ss Peter & Paul

## July 2023

- 8 Saturday Glastonbury Pilgrimage
- 31 July-4 August Monday-Friday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Youth Pilgrimage

## August 2023

- 5 Saturday Our Lady of Egmont: Assumptiontide Mass
- 7-11 Monday-Friday Society of Mary: Pilgrimage to Lourdes
- 15 Tuesday The Assumption
- 28 Monday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Pilgrimage of Healing & Renewal

## September 2023

- 21 Thursday Guild of All Souls: Day Conference at St Wilfrid, Cantley in Doncaster
- 22 Friday Church Union: Catholic Evangelism Lecture to be delivered by the Bishop of Lewes at St Matthew, Carver Street in Sheffield

## October 2023

- 7 Saturday Society of Mary: October Devotion at St George the Martyr, Preston
- 14 Saturday Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary: Autumn Festival at All Saints, North Street in York
- 23-26 Monday-Thursday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Family Pilgrimage

## November 2023

- 1 Wednesday All Saints' Day
- 3-5 Friday-Sunday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Bible Weekend
- 4 Saturday Our Lady of Egmont: Annual Requiem Mass
- 13-20 Monday-Monday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land
- 24-26 Friday-Sunday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Adoremus

## December 2023

- 1-3 Friday-Sunday Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Advent Retreat
- 3 Sunday Advent Sunday
- 25 Monday Christmas Day

*This calendar is refreshed for each edition of New Directions, looking a year ahead each time. Further details of each event will be contained on the lead organisation's website. If you would like to add or amend any items, then please email: [director@forwardinfaith.com](mailto:director@forwardinfaith.com). Thank you. **ND***



## Forward in Faith Festival Saturday 20 May, 2023

12pm to 4pm at St Alban, Holborn EC1N 7RD

All Forward in Faith members are very welcome to attend (as per the revised Constitution)

- Sung Mass with excellent choral music & a joyful atmosphere
- Subsidised hot lunch with wine
- An opportunity to put questions to the Trustees and the Director

*Further details in next edition*

# ◆ AFTERWORD ◆

*Leslie Griffiths writes on a day for remembering*

I'm writing this on January 21<sup>st</sup>, on the fiftieth anniversary of my ordination, and find myself happy to spend the beginning of the day with my friends in the Forward in Faith movement. My mind, of course, is filled with emotions recollected in the tranquillity of this day and I'd like to share some of them with you.

It all took place in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. I'd been sent there from Cambridge where I'd taken the Theology Tripos. The culture shock could hardly have been more radical.

Then, as now, we were in the middle of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Since my arrival in this extraordinary country, the poorest in the Western hemisphere, the first black republic in the world, I'd been a member of the Groupe Oecuménique de Recherches and I was more than gratified when just about all my comrades, confrères, fellow ministers, hierarchical superiors from across the Christian spectrum turned up for the event. The Pentecostals and the Salvation Army were there, so too were the Baptists and Free Methodists, and who could doubt the presence of the splendidly robed Episcopalians and Roman Catholics? The Body of Christ was clad that day in its coat of many colours and I had a keen sense of being ordained into the one apostolic, catholic, charismatic, corybantic, dogmatic, pneumatic church. I've listed those categories in alphabetical rather than hierarchical order. Just in case anyone was wondering.

I'd been befriended by a young Roman Catholic priest who worked with the Apostolic Nuncio, an archbishop no less. Since my ordination service was to include the Eucharist, he knew he'd need the permission of his boss. And his boss said, very firmly, NO. But then, with a twinkle in his eye, he added the word UNLESS. My friend could attend only if he, the archbishop, could also be there. And so it came to pass. There he was, Mgr Luigi Barbarito, to the wonderment of us all, sitting amongst all the other church leaders. A little miracle I think.

That's led me more than once to wonder. There was I, hands laid upon me and the Holy Spirit being invoked by the Jamaican President of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas. Behind me, less than ten yards away, sat a Roman Catholic archbishop. Might it be possible, I've mused, that my ordination may turn out to be more valid than that of the numberless priests who've made it clear down the years that they don't really believe I'm a 'proper' presbyter at all? I suspect that there may be some readers of this piece who still hold that view. But what if, like a spark that jumps the points, grace might have leapt from the nuncio's heart to mine. Another case, perhaps, of *cor ad cor loquitur*? I'd like to think so.

I little realised then how important a part Mgr Barbarito would play in my later life. That began in Westminster Cathedral. I was there for the consecration of Vincent (now Cardinal) Nichols. Part of the ceremony involved the reading aloud of the papal authorisation for this translation. This was done in the name of the Papal Nuncio to the Court of Saint James, none other than dear old Luigi Barbarito himself. We were soon in touch!

I used to go to his home in Wimbledon. We'd play snooker. On one occasion I dared to ask him how, in the time he was in Haiti, he'd felt able to toe the line of the dictator François (Papa Doc) Duvalier. Duvalier had insisted that the Roman Catholic church in Haiti should be led by Haitians rather than, as had previously been the case, by Breton or Belgian or Canadian hierarchs. After the Second Vatican Council, that actually became a desirable objective for Rome too. So Mgr Wolf Ligondé was duly chosen and consecrated to the archiepiscopacy of Port-au-Prince despite his known affiliation to the notorious Tontons Macoute – Duvalier's secret police force. 'Ah!' said Luigi, 'that was to appease him. It allowed me to choose three other bishops who were far more acceptable.' Thus is the world of ecclesiastical diplomacy ordered.

Later, when a Roman Catholic priest and Liberation Theologian, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was elected to be President of Haiti, the Roman Catholic bishops there seemed unwilling to give their blessing – no doubt sensing the difficulty of a priest currently under their authority becoming Head of State under whose authority they would soon sit. I got news of this and went immediately to see Mgr Barbarito. We had a long conversation. He asked me to write the main points of our discussion onto one side of A4 paper. I did that. He sent me a post card – the matter was now with the Secretary of State at the Vatican, he assured me. And that was that. Until, just days later, I arrived in Haiti for the inauguration of the new President to find that the bishops had come 'on side.' They'd issued a declaration and listed the points which led them to their conclusion – the identical points that had figured in my letter to the Nuncio just a week earlier and in the same order. I was chuffed.

Fifty years a minister. A colourful life. The last nineteen of them as a member of the House of Lords. I was invited to write a piece on the fractured nature of our national political life. I'm sorry to disappoint. If I'm invited to do so, I'll have a go at that next time! Meanwhile, God bless all readers of this august journal. **ND**

*The Revd and Rt Hon Lord Griffiths of Bury Port is a Methodist minister, politician and life peer.*

*He was President of the Methodist Conference 1994-95.*



# SMF

**The Society for the  
Maintenance of the Faith**

**The Society for the Maintenance  
of the Faith**

seeks to appoint a

**VICAR  
(0.5 Stipend)**

for the Parish of  
**St Michael and All Angels,  
Brighton**

A Parish Profile and details of how  
to apply can be found at

[www.smftrust.org.uk](http://www.smftrust.org.uk)

St Michael's is a parish of The  
Society of St Wilfrid and St Hilda  
and has passed a resolution under  
the House of Bishops' Declaration.

**Closing date for applications:  
Monday 20th March**

 **THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND**  
**Diocese of Norwich**

**The Bishop of Thetford  
in consultation with the Patron,  
The Society for the Maintenance  
of the Faith  
seeks to appoint a**

**PRIEST IN CHARGE**

for the parishes of St John the Baptist  
Lound and St Mary the Virgin Hemsby.

These parishes are under the Episcopal  
Oversight of the Bishop of Richborough.

Further details can be found on Pathways  
at [http://pathways.churchofengland.org/  
search/category-diocese-of-  
norwich/page-1](http://pathways.churchofengland.org/search/category-diocese-of-norwich/page-1)

## ◆ GHOSTLY COUNSEL ◆

*Andy Hawes*

### Being a Minority

It is official; Christians are now a minority in England and Wales. The number of those who practise their faith is a very small number indeed. In my experience, organisations that have a Christian foundation have become largely secular. This is certainly true of schools



where many secondary schools designated as Christian are extremely secular. Recent changes in society in the area of marriage and sexual ethics are examples of how orthodox Christian perspectives have been cast aside. There is also a widespread ignorance and sneering disdain in much of the media with regard to the Christian faith.

Inevitably this has a real effect on the spiritual atmosphere in which we live and work, and it can seep into our souls creating a deep sense of unease and insecurity. I am not used to being on the margins of society, but now I am. I venture to guess that I am not alone in working out how to live and pray in this new reality. There are many pressures to fall away from regular worship and many people have. For some there is a real crisis of confidence in the Faith. This is without considering the current financial and organisational crisis in the church.

I suggest five areas to explore in prayer and thought (alone or with others). First, avoid nostalgia. It is too easy to travel down the road into a rosy past, it does not help, and it is not a Christian approach to the present. In the whole of New Testament there is not the slightest hint of looking back. To follow Jesus is to reject nostalgia and embrace today. It is true the psalms are full of wistful

looking back to better and faithful times and these can help us pray our way into a more positive and hopeful spirit. I am thinking particularly of psalm 12 'there is not one godly man left,' and psalm 74 'arise O God maintain thine own cause'; there are others, psalm 53

being one.

Secondly, pray in the reality of our situation. Allow the challenges and confusion of the present time come into prayer. Prayer is not an escape, but a creative way to meet challenges and difficulties, again the psalms are full of this seeking and yearning for understanding.

Thirdly, follow the advice of St Ignatius which is to 'go against,' in a deliberate way, difficulties and challenges. If the temptation is to reduce attendance at church go twice as much, if you are finding prayer difficult, pray more. As we enter Lent make a rule to replace your consumption of media with music, film or books which are full of goodness and light. Make an effort to lead yourself out of temptation.

Fourthly, stick together! For faith to thrive, the Christian community must thrive. Do not allow your membership and involvement to slip. Seek out fellowship where you can pray and learn with others.

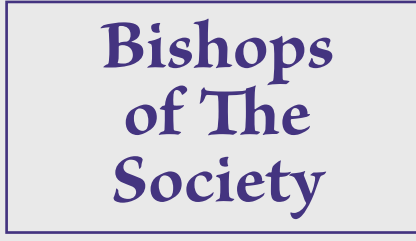
Finally, and perhaps most challenging; recognise and relish the vocation of being a Christian is the present age when our prayer and our witness are so vital to the coming of the Kingdom of God. Now is the time to remember the commission of our baptism – 'to fight valiantly as a soldier of Christ to the end of your life.' **ND**

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