



All Saints Parish Paper

MARGARET STREET, LONDON W.1

AUGUST 2007

£1.00

VICAR'S LETTER

Shortly after I came home from hospital my computer had the electronic equivalent of a nervous breakdown. Then to make things worse, our internet connection decided to have one too. Thanks to James and Sally North, two parishioners who speak fluent cybernetic and have the necessary patience to cope with sick computers and call centres in far away places with strange sounding names, the technology is now restored to working order. I have discovered the paradox that machines which speed things up for us, are incredibly slow to fix.

The internet was one way in which I could keep in touch with people, and the computer was the means by which I can write for the Parish Paper. The technology cannot provide the inspiration but it does help with the business of getting it organised into readable form. I resisted the lure of the word processor for quite a long time, but since my conversion have found it quite difficult to return to writing by hand.

100 years ago, Fr Holden had much less in the way of technological assistance in preparing his material for the Parish Paper. In the August edition, he explained that it was a thin issue.

“It is characteristic of the Parish Paper that its circulation depends very largely on the presence in town of the regular congregation. It has a circulation generally of about 1,500, but on occasions it has risen up to 1,800.

“It is therefore an admirable medium for teaching, and in my judgement is well worth the very considerable time and trouble it involves in thinking for it, reading for it, and writing for it.

“At the same time, we are well advised I think in August and September to limit our space.

“From the middle of July onwards there is a steady drop in the size of the congregation reflected only too obviously in the size of the offertory. This, of course, also means of necessity a heavy drop in the circulation of this Paper. I do not in the least grudge any time or trouble in writing for these papers but the greater the size of the Paper the greater the expense in printing, and we must needs study strict economy at all times...”

The circulation of the Parish Paper is now much smaller — about 330. Of course, this reflects the decline in church attendance over the past century, the reduction in the population of the parish and the change

in the nature of the congregation. The August 1907 issue recorded five baptisms in the previous month. All the children lived close to All Saints, in Amen Court, Marylebone Passage, Great Titchfield Street and Ogle Street.

In fact, the Parish Paper is not the only printed form of communication suffering a decline in circulation. Most of our national newspapers have steadily declining circulations and a number have them have not made a profit for years. Newspapers are now investing huge sums in the development of electronic means of communication, so that news can be read by computer or mobile phone. As many of you know, we have not been left entirely behind in this, as All Saints has its own website which contains a wide variety of material about the life of our parish. In fact, it allows us to display photographs of many activities, such as the Corpus Christi celebration, which could not be published in the Parish Paper in its present form. I suspect that one of the reasons why sales of the Parish Paper in printed form have declined of late is that it now appears on the website and many people choose to read it that way rather than paying for it in church or having it posted to them. Others perhaps content themselves with the Sunday notice sheet, something which did not exist in Fr Holden's day. Then, of course, there are probably those who don't read either!

A few weeks ago, I acquired a new mobile phone to replace my first one which was showing signs of old age. In a few short years, the technology has moved on so fast that if I wished I could use a phone for email, accessing the internet, taking and sending photographs, listening to music and

watching television programmes. Many of you will of course know this already, and are thinking, "Where's he been all this time?", but you have to understand that I am a reluctant technophile.

These developments present us with new challenges and opportunities. We have responded by the development of our website. There are other possibilities such as pod-casts of sermons, so that people can listen to them rather than read them. One person has asked about the possibility of making our main services available on the internet. I'm not sure what the financial implications of this would be. The problem with the Internet of course is that it is free — we don't make much money directly from it.

I am sure that there is more that we can and should be doing to use these new methods of communication, but we should heed a cautionary note. One of the lessons of recent church history is that those Christian communities which have done most in the exploitation of modern technology, have been those which have little or no place for our sacramental, liturgical, and, I hope, thoughtful and reasoned approach. Anyone who has encountered American religious radio and television will know what I am talking about. It is an interesting fact that the exploitation of the latest technology seems to go hand in hand with reactionary if not downright weird religious opinions.

There is an ad on TV just now for a brand of toffees, one marketed for its old-fashioned, traditional qualities — sounds a bit like All Saints. A dad is driving his son to the school sports day. The lad is

going on about a friend's father who has all the latest electronic gadgetry. When dad, clearly a bit irked, says he is looking forward to meeting this technological paragon, his son replies, **"Oh, he won't be there. He's more of a 'virtual' dad. Not like you. There's no getting rid of you!"**

Sometimes modern communications equipment does actually help us to communicate. Many people who would never dream of writing letters do send emails. It is good that people can be part of our extended family, can keep in touch by reading the Parish Paper in electronic form. Like Fr Holden, I regard time and effort spent on writing material for the Parish Paper as well worth it.

However, there is no form of human activity which cannot be corrupted. We know that the internet has already been colonised by a host of pornographers and confidence tricksters who seek to steal our identities and empty our bank accounts. There is too a less obvious downside. It is that we can end up not only with virtual dads but virtual churches and communities. Religion becomes something to be downloaded from the internet. It becomes a matter of individual taste. Something we do in a little private world of our own.

There is nothing wrong with listening to church music or even a sermon on your I-pod, but there has to be a church where that music is sung and that sermon preached. There might be something quite congenial about all this individualistic spirituality; we wouldn't have to put up with all those people. But putting up with those people is at the heart of what Christianity is about.

We are the people called together by God for a common purpose; the service of the Kingdom. Whatever certain brands of individualistic evangelicalism might suggest, we cannot be saved on our own. We cannot love the God we have not seen if we do not love the neighbour we have seen. It must be pretty hard to love the neighbour we have never seen or met.

The Eucharist, in which we gather with others at the Lord's Table, is the centre of the life of All Saints. This is not just because we prefer it to another form of service, but because at the heart of Christianity is the business of eating and drinking with other people and with our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Communion is the heart of our life, not because it is a nice service, but because Holy Communion is what we are meant for by God and the Holy Communion both expresses that truth and works to bring it to reality. As human beings made in the image of God, made to share in the life of the Trinity, we do not need a virtual community but a real one, one we can't get rid of. Because we can't get rid of it with the click of a computer mouse, it is there for us all the time; something I have cause to be grateful for.

At present I am forced by illness to be something of a "virtual vicar", although I trust no less "real" in my care for you all. One of the consequences of "living over the shop" is that I am able to see many of you as I attend Sunday and weekday Masses, and keep in touch with what is going on. I continue to be grateful to those who keep contacting us; thankful for your kindness, prayers and good wishes. At the time of writing I am still waiting to hear when the surgery to remove my gall bladder is to

take place. My hope and intention is to be back in action as your “real” Vicar, the one you can’t get rid of, in the autumn.

Yours in Christ,
Alan Moses

PARISH NOTES

Congratulations to:

Fr Tony Halton, the latest in a long line of ordinands from All Saints to be priested. He was ordained by the Bishop of Edmonton at St John’s, West Hendon, on the Feast of St Peter and St Paul, June 29th. Bishop Peter included the contingent of supporters from All Saints in his welcome at the beginning of the service. Fr Alan preached the sermon which is reproduced in this issue of the Parish Paper. All Saints was again well represented when the celebrations continued on the following Friday with Fr Tony’s first Mass at St Matthias, Colindale: the other church in the parish.

to:

Aiden Hargreaves-Smith on being made a partner in his law firm Winckworth Sherwood. Aiden works in the office of the Diocesan Registrar. An enjoyable drinks party was held in his honour by the firm at which most of the guests were his, including the Vicar and Theresa in their separate ecclesiastical rôles, along with sundry bishops, archdeacons and deans.

and to:

Mhairi Ellis and **Michael Adam** on their engagement. Mhairi is well-known as our female alto, choir librarian and “fixer”. We look forward to getting to know Michael better.

Farewells

In July, we bade farewell to two members of the All Saints residential community. **Fr John Gaskell** has moved to Morden College in Blackheath and **Dr Harry Brama** to a flat in Beckenham. This is not “goodbye” but “au revoir” as both intend to maintain their links with All Saints. A house-warming present has been given to Fr Gaskell as a token of our affection and gratitude.

In August, we will say our farewells to the **Aquilina family**. Fr Ivan will celebrate and preach at the High Mass on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15th. We hope that all who are not on holiday at the time will be present. Fr Aquilina’s Induction as Vicar of St John’s, Sevenoaks, will take place on Saturday September 29th at 4.00 p.m. Again, we are sure there will be a good crowd of supporters from All Saints.

Musical Movements

At the beginning of July **Paul Brough** was welcomed home after his study leave in Venice. A month in Venice sounds like an ideal holiday, but he was studying the conducting of Wagner at La Fenice, the opera house. We shall have to see whether his conducting style has acquired a Wagnerian tone.

We had one Sunday when the three musketeers, Director of Music, Organist and Organ Scholar were together, then **Andy Arthur** headed off to Carmel in California. Carmel is perhaps best known as the home of the actor and director Clint Eastwood, but it also hosts an annual Bach Festival of which Andy is the organist. He

assures us that it is hard work and that the weather is often quite foggy!

The South Aisle Gates

The present wooden gates, installed in the early 60s, are not in keeping with the rest of the building. They are to be replaced with a set in wrought iron. This was the original intention then but had to be abandoned because of lack of funds.

A new set of gates, in sympathy with the wrought iron work in the chancel, has been designed by our architect Colin Kerr.

The gates have now been delivered and will be installed at the end of July. They will be dedicated as a memorial to Helen Clayton, in thanksgiving for her many contributions to the life of All Saints, not least as Churchwarden. This will take place on Sunday October 7th, our Dedication Festival.

The wooden gates will go to a good home at St Peter le Poer in Friern Barnet, where Colin Kerr is a Churchwarden. Our intention is to find a suitable home here for the figures of significant people in the history of All Saints.

A.M.

DIARY DATES

Sunday 5 August

Our visiting preacher at 11.00 a.m. High Mass (and on August 26th also) is **Canon Martin Warner** of St Paul's Cathedral.

Fr Allen Shin, Chaplain, Keble College, Oxford, will preach at 6.00 p.m.
Fr Shin will be resident here at All Saints throughout August.

Wednesday 15 August THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

6.30 p.m. High Mass Preacher: Fr Ivan Aquilina

*Music: Missa Brevis in B flat — Mozart; Ave Maria — Mendelssohn
We bid farewell to Fr Ivan who leaves us this day to take up his appointment as Vicar of St John's, Sevenoaks, in September.*

August 22nd - 29th 2007 A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Fr Ivan Aquilina, organised by McCabe Pilgrimages.

London Open House Weekend, 15 and 16 September:

All Saints will be participating as usual. *There will be short talks about All Saints Church at 10.00 a.m., 1.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. on Saturday and at 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. on Sunday.*

Sunday 7 October — Dedication Festival and Friends Day

11.00 a.m. High Mass

Preacher: The Very Revd Robert Willis, Dean of Canterbury

RESTORATION APPEAL

The last three fund-raising events before the summer recess took place as follows. On Sunday May 27th (Pentecost) **The Slovenski Oktet**, a group of singers from Slovenia, gave an outstanding recital of sacred and secular music which raised £650 for the Appeal.

On Friday June 15th Rachael Leggett and **Ad Hoc Opera** presented a new programme of popular operatic favourites for our enjoyment and the Appeal benefited by £780.

And finally Jean Fairweather and

her troupe presented readings of Jean's powerful play **Shushanik** in the Parish Room on June 29th and 30th when £225 was raised for the Restoration Appeal.

We would like to record our grateful thanks to all the artists for their dedicated hard work for our pleasure and for the Appeal, and to all who helped in any way 'on the night'. It is always good too to welcome new people into All Saints on these occasions.

The Appeal stands at £635,000, at the time of writing.

THE PARISH RETREAT AT HEMINGFORD GREY JUNE 1st - 3rd 2007

The Community of the Resurrection's Retreat House, dedicated to St Francis at Hemingford Grey, is an ideal venue for a silent retreat and All Saints has been 'retreating to advance' there for several years.

The simple, meditative chapel with the Reserved Sacrament; the well filled library; beautiful walled and open gardens with colourful roses, herbaceous borders and flowering shrubs; walks along the banks of the River Ouse in sunny weather; not forgetting the good food, comfortable beds and the unobtrusive, thoughtful attention of Mary and Anne and their staff, were all appreciated by us and contributed to our spiritual refreshment.

We were very fortunate to be conducted

by Canon Donald Gray, who retired from Westminster Abbey, St Margaret's and as Chaplain to the House of Commons in 1998. He was a member of the Liturgical Committee that replaced the Alternative Service Book with Common Worship, so Mass, Morning and Evening Prayer and Compline were according to the Book of Common Worship, which was a revelation to the majority, but we coped!

In spite of leaving a hospital bed shortly before the Retreat, his four short talks on St John the Baptist and four poems of R.S. Thomas, spoke to us individually, calming our doubts and misgivings and giving reassurance, as we meditated on them in the quiet of the chapel or garden.

The only sadness of the weekend was

the small number of retreatants — only eight made it in the end — and although we had plenty of room in the chapel and dining room, it would have been good to have shared our good fortune in attending, with a few more!

Do make a note of the next Retreats:

2008 May 16th - 18th

2009 March 13th - 15th

It really is a wonderful opportunity in the midst of our busy lives to spend a short time with Our Lord.

Jean Castledine

Folk Tale — R.S. Thomas

Prayers like gravel
Flung at the sky's
window, hoping to attract
the loved one's
attention. But without
visible plaits to let
down for the believer
to climb up,
to what purpose open
that far casement?
I would
have refrained long since
but that peering once
through my locked fingers
I thought that I detected
the movement of a curtain.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2006 - 2007 — Part III

The conclusion of the Report presented to the Annual Parochial Meeting on Sunday April 29th 2007.

The Servers

Domenico Aquilina and Barry Lee have joined our loyal and hardworking band of servers led by Cedric Stephens. In addition to the regular round of services, and all the preparation needed for them, the servers often are called for duty at short notice for additional services. Many of the tasks which the servers undertake are 'backstage', unseen and unknown by the congregation. Whatever is asked of them they do with willingness and do their best to maintain the high standards for which All Saints is justly known. The Council wishes to place on record its thanks to them.

Ordinands

Two members of the serving team are currently training for the priesthood, Matthew Duckett on the North Thames Ministerial Training Course, and Julius Makoni at Westcott House in Cambridge. Two previous members of All Saints congregation were ordained this year. Tony Halton, now serving his title at St John's West Hendon, and Sarah Eynstone, now serving at Hampstead Parish Church. It is encouraging that All Saints continues to provide candidates for ordination.

Backstage Volunteers

Kate Burling, our sacristan, continues to work behind the scenes, washing, ironing and caring for the vestments and vessels and ensuring that everything goes smoothly.

The list of other tasks which are undertaken by our volunteers is a very long one, but includes, cleaning, folding service sheets, arranging flowers, and cleaning the silver. Many of these are unglamorous tasks, but essential for the smooth running of the Church. The Council appreciates the time taken to undertake these tasks, and would like to thank all those who in any way contribute, including Christine Auton Chris Ellis, Jean Castledine, Denzil Freeth, Rosemary Harris, Pauline Makoni, Priscilla Oakeshot, and Juliet Windham.

Doris Sanders continues to be our Parish Paper Secretary and Martin Cullingford helps to keep the website up-to-date, which with the advent of the Restoration Appeal takes up more of his time.

Martin Woolley continues to maintain the roster of readers at the High Mass (even when on extended leave in Australia) and Jasmine Cullingford that for the participants in the Offertory Procession.

The Ministry of welcome continues to be of great importance, and members of the Churchwatch team continue in their valuable rôle of being on hand to welcome visitors, and answer their questions. Keith Postance continues to lead the Sidesmen who are on hand to welcome people into the church for services, and also to 'clear up' hymn books and kneelers afterwards.

The Parish Shop, where Christine Auton and her helpers sell a wide range of merchandise, is held in the Parish Room on Sunday mornings. Although a very useful generator of needed finance, the Shop plays a very important rôle in the ongoing social side of the life of All Saints.

The bar and the courtyard continue to be the focus of most social gatherings at All Saints. We would like to say a special thankyou to the Club Management Committee, Kate Hodgetts the Bar Steward and all those who serve behind the bar, provide the refreshments in the courtyard and serve Sunday Lunch and look after the needs of congregation and visitors alike.

All these facets of the life at All Saints would be severely curtailed if it were not for the fact that so many people are willing to give so generously of their time and talents. There is always 'room' for more, and so please think carefully as to whether you could join in this vital ministry, tedious and unseen sometimes, but vital to the life of this place.

The Parish Office

The work carried out by the Parish Office continues to be diverse and extensive, all the more so, now that the Restoration Campaign is well under way. The Council wishes to thank Dennis Davis, the Parish Administrator, for all the work he undertakes, in particular that connected with the preparation of Tax Reclaims.

Dennis is assisted in the Parish Office by Mrs Anne Merritt, the Parish Secretary and several of our volunteers.

Churchwardens

Frances O'Neil surprised many when she stood down as a Churchwarden in 2006, an office which she had held for ten years. During her time, in addition to the formal duties of Churchwarden, she was instrumental in promoting the 'social' side of the life of All Saints, for

example maintaining the Sunday Lunch rota and organising the retirement party for Dr Bramma. The Vicar paid tribute to Frances at the 2006 Annual meeting, and presented her with a token gift of flowers and a bottle. A more formal presentation was made to Frances later in the year. Frances continues to play a very full part in the life of All Saints, and the Council thank her both for all that she did during her ten years as Churchwarden and for all she continues to do.

Both John Forde and Chris Self somehow manage to combine busy professional commitments with being Churchwardens at All Saints, not an easy task. In addition to the visible, public rôle of Churchwardens, there are many and varied tasks which have to be performed here by the Churchwardens. The Council wishes to thank them for their hard work during the last year on our behalf.

The Clergy

The Council would like to place on record their thanks to clergy who help the 'home team' maintain the regular pattern of daily services, Prebendary Donald Barnes, Canon Geoffrey White, Fr John Barrie and Fr Chad Gandiya.

We are very fortunate in having as Honorary Assistant Priests, Prebendary John Gaskell, Fr John Rick III and Fr Neil Bunker. Fr Gaskell, a priest of great wisdom and experience, continues to give freely of his time, and his presence among us is greatly appreciated. Fr Rick spends much of his time away from London, shuttling between mainland Europe and America, but when he is here at 'base', plays a full part in the life of the parish. Although Fr

Neil Bunker has been assisting here for a relatively short time, he is no stranger to All Saints, having worshipped here during the time of Fr Sparrow. He brings to All Saints the experience of many years as a hospital Chaplain, and has fitted in to the parish so well that it seems as if he has been with us for much longer. To all three, the Council would like to say thank you for their considerable contributions to the life of the parish.

Over the years Bishop Ambrose Weekes has given considerable service here, and although he is not able to be with us as often as in the past, it is always good to see him.

It hardly seems yesterday that we were welcoming Fr Aquilina as our new assistant Priest, but we now have to prepare to say goodbye, following the announcement on Lent 1 that he had accepted the living of St John the Baptist, Sevenoaks. Although there will be time in the future to formally say thank you and to wish the Aquilina family all the best for the future, the Council would like to place on record now its appreciation of what he has achieved in his relatively short time with us. We are very fortunate to have as our Assistant Priest a person of such versatility.

Fr Alan has many responsibilities, but his first priority is always All Saints and its people. It is very easy to take for granted everything that he does, but the Council would like him to know how much his hard work is appreciated. The Restoration appeal has added greatly to his workload, but fortunately Fr Alan has great resilience and stamina.

He writes, in conclusion:

‘I write this immediately after returning from Jerusalem where as Chairman of USPG, I was representing the Society at the enthronement of Bishop Suheil Dawani as the new Anglican bishop there. The service was a large international gathering to which many had come to support a beleaguered Christian Church in the Holy Land. As an added bonus, I lost count of the number of people who told me how much All Saints has meant to them on occasional visits over the years. I was able to pray at the Holy Sepulchre for

our parish pilgrimage to the Holy Land which Fr Aquilina will lead in August.

‘I am grateful to Dilys for her kind words about my resilience and stamina. As well as from the support of my family and colleagues, they are drawn in large degree from the worshipping and prayer life of our parish and the fellowship of its people.

‘This year’s record of the variety of things which go on at All Saints demonstrates that we all need to renew our strength for the task which God has called us to in this place.’

Fr Alan Moses, Vicar

THE SERMON PREACHED BY THE BISHOP OF TRURO, AT HIGH MASS ON CORPUS CHRISTI 2007

One of my hobbies or interests is reading detective stories and I have had many a happy hour reading about murder and mystery. Many of the stories have a theological content, and I sometimes use them to illustrate what I want to say in sermons. Indeed, once, because of my interest, I was invited to talk to the National Association of Crime Writers at a hotel in St Ives. I was asked to talk about the concept of sin in modern detective stories and I kept my audience either amused or asleep for an about hour. There were about a hundred of them — some of them very well known — and they were very kind to me. They gave me a golden dagger, which is the badge of their Association, and also lots of their books to remind me of my visit, and in her thankyou speech one of the crime writers was kind enough to say that I was the kind of bishop who made her wish that she was an actress! I took that to be an enormous compliment and it

has certainly never been said to me after a church service!

Anyway, I invite you to join me in a mystery story. I want us all to use our imaginations. One of the common ingredients, certainly in some of the more old-fashioned detective stories, is often a meeting of the family after a murder, and the family solicitor formally reads the Will, and often there is something surprising or shocking in it. Sometimes, for instance, the Will is missing, or at other times someone is included, and/or indeed left out, which causes anger or surprise. Normally only the members of the family are there for the reading and it is done with the door of the room firmly shut.

This evening we meet as the family of God in this place. We meet with the door shut and I want to read to you the last Will

and Testament of Jesus, formerly of the Carpenter's Shop, Nazareth.

I appoint my Church as my Executor and authorise her to act in my name, to continue my work and to share my estate and treasures with all people.

The only earthly property I possess is the seamless cloak my mother, Mary, made for me, and that I give to those who have the job of putting me to death.

I give and bequeath to all generations of men and women without distinction of race, colour, class, educational upbringing, to all who will accept my Bequest whether they live in mud huts, multi-storey blocks or shanty towns in cities or countries, whether they live in London or Lima, in Truro or Tel Aviv, a full share in my triumph.

All that I am I give to you without reserve or hesitation. I give you my mind and my Spirit, and I do so with only one condition — that you do not keep them to yourself but give them away.

I have cleared away the dirt and damage of human wickedness. The stranglehold of self is broken, the firm grip of sin is no more, the cul-de-sac of Death is now the open road to Life.

And finally, my last gift, especially for those who are lost, for whatever reason, I give my love and my promise that I will not let you go.

Signed in the Blood of the same Testator, Jesus Christ

It is an astonishing Will — nobody left out but in it now we, the family, have a real worry and problem because we've got to share it with everybody else. But surely we must keep some to ourselves. It would be irresponsible to do otherwise. But perhaps then, as a family we will remember that during his life there always did seem to be enough to go round. Five thousand people fed with just a few loaves and fish, and yet twelve baskets left over. It seems we are to share in that extraordinary generosity for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer.

But then there is that last haunting clause of the Will with its special reaching out to those who are lost.

This perhaps, above all makes us think. There is a short story by Ernest Hemmingway called "*The Capital of the World*" which begins "*Madrid is full of boys called Paco, which is the diminutive of the name Francisco, and there is a Madrid joke about a father who came to Madrid and placed an advertisement in the personal columns of the newspaper which said "Paco meet me at Hotel Montana noon Tuesday. All is forgiven. Paco"* and how a squadron of the civil guard had to be called out to disperse the eight hundred young men who arrived to answer the advertisement.

Losing and finding are two of the great fundamental human themes found in all cultures and at all levels. It is a constant theme in children's stories — it is there in Dante and in Shakespeare, it is painted by Rembrandt, written about in countless modern novels and plays, and there are all kinds of variations of it.

Above all, of course, it is there in Scripture, beginning with Adam and Eve, continuing with the story of Joseph and his brothers, and it is always there in the Gospels — sometimes in the background — but in Chapter 15 of St Luke it becomes the dominant theme, beginning with the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, and then of course continuing with the story we call The Prodigal Son, which was the Second Lesson.

Perhaps though we would do better to think about the Prodigal Father, because it is the Father's love that is truly prodigal, that is always longing for the return of the person who is lost and who is indeed looking out for him or her.

This experience of lostness is one of the familiar features in the lives of countless Christians, written about in extraordinary detail by Augustine of Hippo, by Teresa of Avila, by John Bunyan, John Wesley, John Henry Newman, and countless others.

And always the Love of God is looking out, watching and longing, and in terms of the Will we are commanded to do the same. Perhaps we need to begin by reflecting on our experience of being lost, for that will often be the means by which we can enter imaginatively into the lostness of others, and in so doing we shall be the means by which God reaches others through us.

Right at the end of that wonderful book *"The Go-between God"* there is an extraordinary description of this.

"A colleague has recently described to me an occasion when a West Indian woman in a London flat foretold her

husband's death in a street accident. The shock of grief stunned her like a blow. She sank into a corner of the sofa and sat there rigid and unhearing. For a long time her terrible tranced look continued to embarrass the family, friends and officials who came and went. Then the school teacher of one of her children, an English woman called, and seeing how things were, went and sat beside her. Without a word she threw an arm around the tight shoulders, grasping them with her full strength. The white cheek was thrust hard against the brown. Then, as the unrelenting pain seeped through to her the newcomer's tears began to flow, falling on their two hands linked in the woman's lap. For a long time that was all that was happening. And then at last the West Indian woman started to sob. Still not a word was spoken, and after a little while the visitor got up and went, leaving her contribution to help the family meet its immediate needs.

"That is the embrace of God, his kiss of life, that is the embrace of his mission and of our intercession. And the Holy Spirit is the force in the straining muscles of an arm, the film of sweat between wet cheeks, the mingled wetness on the backs of clasped hands. He is as close and unobtrusive as that, and as irresistibly strong."

So, we are given the Spirit of Jesus, but in receiving him he does not become ours — we become his. But then what we are asked to do is to pass him on, to give him away and discover the miracle that in giving we receive. It is to that principle at the heart of all things — God's overwhelming generosity. It is for

that principle that we commit ourselves, we become, in the words of the Will, an executor of Christ — that is someone who carries out his wishes — his commands rather than our own.

So what we share in is both a real privilege and a real responsibility, and we do that with all God's people.

All that because of the Will. But where there is a Will there is a death, and we know that in this particular case it was the execution of an innocent man.

But now we are back where we began with a mystery, and indeed with losing and finding. Where is the body? It simply cannot be found, and that is baffling. Baffling to Sherlock Holmes, to Miss Marple, to Hercule Poirot, to Lord Peter Wimsey, to Inspector Morse, to that miserable Cornish detective, Inspector Wycliffe, and all those other clever detectives on the television or in books.

But we, the family, who have heard the

Will, have accepted its terms; we know where the body is. Like his mind and his Spirit, the Testator, Jesus, formerly of the Carpenter's shop at Nazareth, has given his body away in the way that he wanted his followers to have it — in the Upper Room on the night before his death when he took bread and wine and said "*This is my Body. This is my Blood. Do this in remembrance of me.*"

So we receive the body of Christ in order that we may better be the body of Christ, Corpus Christi. In a moment we, the body of Christ, will be in the street, taking with us the body of Christ as an expression of the fact that we are indeed Corpus Christi.

So, as members of the family we know the body to be lost and found. We ourselves are witnesses, but that doesn't mean we have solved the mystery. We live within it and we live by it, and one day we shall meet God face to face and we shall know as we are known. Found by him who all the time has been waiting for us.

**SERMON PREACHED BY THE VICAR AT THE
ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE REVD TONY
HALTON ON JUNE 29th AT ST JOHN'S, WEST HENDON**

In the autumn of the year 1623, the Dean of the St Paul's, the great poet-preacher John Donne, lay desperately ill. The "Spotted Fever", as it was known, left him physically helpless but mentally alert. He was forbidden to read but insisted on having pen and paper to hand so that he could record the effects of the fever on body and mind.

His mind explored the depths of his own condition, and also related what he was going through to the rest of humankind. For all his position of privilege, he realised that he was exempt from nothing that could lay others low. He discovered depths within his own being, and thus within all people, he had never known before.

Donne survived, but given the medical care of the time, recovery could hardly be taken for granted. When the fever reached its peak, his physicians applied dead pigeons to his feet. Not quite what you would expect from the NHS. He also had to endure “cupping”, the application of heated glasses. According to my daughter’s *“Hello”* magazine, which I read to keep up with contemporary celebrity culture, the actress Gwyneth Paltrow pays real money to have this done to her.

As he lay on his sick bed, the sound Donne found hardest to ignore was that of funeral bells. Who was being buried? Those who heard the death knell ringing for someone else would know that one day it would ring for them. It was a sound that bound everyone with everyone, and it stimulated the thought at the heart of Donne’s life:

“No man is an island, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod be washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse...; any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

I am no John Donne, certainly no poet, but I am a preacher and one who has recent experience of illness, with an unplanned sojourn in University College Hospital. By accident or coincidence, or perhaps even by Divine providence, I found myself being cared for in the very place where, until recently, Tony had followed his other vocation, his “day job” as a nurse.

This gave me time, sometimes during long sleepless nights, to think about this sermon; in the hope that I would be well enough to preach it. It was a salutary experience in more ways than one; to be on the receiving end, to be ministered to. So often the clergy operate from a position of strength, authority, health; especially in relation to the sick, the poor and the needy.

It is good for pastors to enter into the weakness which many of those we minister to experience some of the time, even all of the time:

Not being in control, being dependent on others for the most basic of things

Not knowing what the outcome will be.

Will I recover?

Will I be left chronically ill?

Will I die?

It is good to experience something of that common humanity which Donne sensed from the bells of City churches, from what went on around me in that hospital ward. Among both patients and staff, there were those more patient than others; those more demanding and impatient. All this can make a priest who is more able to sympathise with us in our weakness, as the Letter to the Hebrews portrays the priesthood of Jesus.

Tony brings to the ministry of a priest what he has learned in his training; the theological studies he has undertaken. As he enters the work of his ministry, he will discover, I’m sure, that the business of learning the things of God is never finished in the life. It is not just the acquiring of

facts about God, it is the pursuance of a relationship with God and his people.

Tony will need to devote himself to the disciplines of ministry, and sheer hard work, just as he has done to the skills of nursing. He will not be of much use to the people he serves, if he abandons study and prayer and self-examination and worship, even when he does not feel like doing any of these things; if he ever thinks that sermons are something to be downloaded from the internet on a Saturday night, rather than wrestled with in the night hours, even when you are not stuck in hospital.

But as well as that, and equally vital to his ministry, he brings his experience of life and work and relationships. At the heart of his priesthood will be the exploration of that common humanity he shares with us all. Priests and preachers need to devote themselves to the study of both divinity and humanity, if they are to be of any good to either. Priesthood is about knowing the things of God and the things of the world. It is about holding them together in a tension which will not let us go, which is never finally resolved in this life. If we lose touch with either then we will fail in our calling to be mediators, bridge-builders.

One place in which we glimpse that vital link is in the ministry of intercession in which priests enter into the presence of God with people on their hearts. This is more than the recital of a shopping list. It is about opening our hearts to people, as Christ opens his. This is a costly business for us, as it was for him. As someone

once said, **“If you would avoid tragedy and suffering, avoid love; if you cannot avoid love, avoid integrity; if you cannot avoid integrity, avoid the world.”**

Today is both the feast of the apostles Peter and Paul and the anniversary of the consecration of this church. Peter and Paul might seem unlikely leaders for the infant Church. Would they have got through the selection and training procedures to which Tony has been subjected? Would the Crown Appointments Commission have seen them as suitable bishops? I wonder.

The one, a headstrong character, given to professions of undying loyalty, only to deny them when the going got tough. The other, the zealous Pharisee and persecutor of the Church, until his conversion on the road to Damascus. But it was not just a conversion, as we often understand it; a private matter between him and God. It was a commission to be the apostle of the nations. Peter too had his conversion in his encounter with the Roman centurion Cornelius. He discovered that “God shows no partiality”, that God’s gifts were poured out on Gentiles as much as on Jews, so that they could receive baptism and he could sit at table with them. Peter then has to persuade his Jewish fellow-Christians of this. Even then, he would backslide under pressure and Paul would have to reprove him to his face.

The mission of this parish and the ministry to which Tony is being called tonight must be marked by that same concern for the wideness of God’s mercy, the expansiveness of his love. Tony’s

place here is not simply to provide spiritual comfort for those who already belong. Your mission here is not simply to receive it, so that you can all feel warm and cosy. The purpose of a hospital is not so that we can remain permanent invalids, but so that we can be restored to health. The purpose of a parish is not to be a refuge from the world, but a base from which we engage with that world, a school in which learn to see it in God's light, a place of hospitality where we welcome it, a place of healing and restoration in which our common humanity is transformed, a place from which we are sent out to love and serve the Lord; serve him in the people around us. A church is not a place where we keep God. It is one where God has promised to be present, but only so that we can go out and find, like Peter, that he is out there already. We do not go out to take God to the people of Hendon and Colindale. We go out and find him there before us.

If Tony's ministry is going to make a difference, then he has to have something of the mark of both God and humanity about his. The same is true of you. If you are going to make a difference, people have got to be able to see that being a Christian makes a difference to you. You don't have to have a glow-in-the-dark halo, or one of those jaw-aching "I'm a Christian" grins. You don't have to pretend that you are perfect. In fact, it helps if people can see that God has been able to make something of folk who are just as odd and flawed as they are. But they do need to see that God has made a difference. Otherwise, why should they bother?

I am sure that Tony, supported by the

prayers of the people here, encouraged by those who love him, strengthened by the Spirit of Christ whose priest he becomes tonight, will make a difference by holding the divine and the human together.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 5 AUGUST 9th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 296 (i)

Introit: Ecce Deus

Mass: Mass for four voices — Byrd

Lessons: Ecclesiastes 1: 2, 12 - 14
2: 18 - 23

Psalm 49

Colossians 3: 1 - 11

Hymn: 392

Gospel: Luke 12: 13 - 21

Preacher: Canon Martin Warner,
St Paul's Cathedral

Anthem: Alleluia, I heard a voice
— Weelkes

Hymns: 294, 281 (T 250), 361 (T 493)

Voluntary: Christus der uns Selig macht
— Bach

SOLEMN EVENSONG

at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 107

Lessons: Genesis 50: 4 - end

1 Corinthians 14: 1 - 19

Office Hymn: 150 (S)

Canticles: The Third Service — Byrd
Anthem: O Lord, arise — Weelkes
Preacher: Fr Allen Shin, Chaplain,
Keble College, Oxford
Hymn: 476

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Tallis
Hymn: 283
Tantum Ergo: Victoria (No 2)
Voluntary: Adagio — Travers

• SUNDAY 12 AUGUST 10th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 336
Introit: Dum clamarem
Mass: Messe Basse — Fauré
Lessons: Genesis 15: 1 - 6
Psalm 33
Hebrews 11: 1 - 3, 8 - 16
Hymn: 382
Gospel: Luke 12: 32 - 40
Preacher: Fr Allen Shin
Creed: Credo III
Anthem: Lift thine eyes
— Mendelssohn
Hymns: 273 (T 302), 282, 448 (T 195)
Voluntary: Chanson de Matin — Elgar

SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 108
Lessons: Isaiah 11: 10 - 12: end
2 Corinthians 1: 1 - 22
Office Hymn: 150 (R)
Canticles: Service in C
— Christopher Robinson

Anthem: O love, I give myself to thee
— Lloyd Webber
Preacher: Fr John Rick III
Hymn: 438

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Fauré (à 3)
Hymn: 289
Tantum Ergo: Fauré
Voluntary: Lied — Vierne

WEDNESDAY 15 AUGUST THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

PROCESSION AND HIGH MASS AT 6.30 p.m.

Processional: 188 (ii)
Introit: Signum magnum
Mass: Missa Brevis in B flat
— Mozart
Lessons: Revelation 11: 19 - 12: 6, 10
Psalm: 45
Galatians 4: 4 - 7
Hymn: 180
Gospel: Luke 1: 46 - 55
Preacher: Fr Ivan Aquilina
Creed: Credo II
Anthem: Ave Maria — Mendelssohn
Hymns: 305, 307, Joy to thee Queen!
Voluntary: Magnificat, BuxWV 203
— Buxtehude

● **SUNDAY 19 AUGUST**
11th SUNDAY AFTER
TRINITY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 377

Introit: Deus in loco sancto

Mass: Mass for three voices
— Byrd

Lessons: Jeremiah 23: 23 - 29
Psalm: 82
Hebrews 11: 29 - 12: 2

Hymn: 449

Gospel: Luke 12: 49 - 56

Preacher: Fr Neil Bunker

Anthem: Hear the voice and prayer
— Tallis

Hymns: 291 (i; omit *), 275,
436 (v 4 Descant — Blake)

Voluntary: Fantasia à 5 — Bach

SOLEMN EVENSONG

at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 119: 17 - 24

Lessons: Isaiah 28: 9 - 22
2 Corinthians 8: 1 - 9

Office Hymn: 150 (S)

Canticles: Service — Binchois; English
14th Century

Anthem: I will lift up mine eyes
— Walker

Preacher: Fr Allen Shin

Hymn: 450

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Bach (No 2)

Hymn: 313

Tantum Ergo: Bach (No 2)

Voluntary: Meine Seele erhebt den
Herrn, BWV 733 — Bach

● **SUNDAY 26 AUGUST**
12th SUNDAY AFTER
TRINITY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 285 (i)

Introit: Deus in adiutorium

Mass: Mass in G minor — Jongen
Lessons: Isaiah 58: 9b - end
Psalm 103
Hebrews 12: 18 - end

Hymn: 461

Gospel: Luke 13: 10 - 17

Preacher: Canon Martin Warner,
St Paul's Cathedral

Creed: Credo III

Anthem: Panis angelicus — Franck

Hymns: 302, 309, 381 (v 4 Descant
— Caplin)

Voluntary: Final (Symphony No 2)
— Widor

SOLEMN EVENSONG

at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 119: 49 - 56

Lessons: Isaiah 30: 8 - 21
2 Corinthians ch 9

Office Hymn: 150 (R)

Canticles: Service in F — Darke

Anthem: O gladsome light — Darke

Preacher: Fr Neil Bunker

Hymn: 216 (v 5 Descant — Caplin)

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Nicholson

Hymn: 277

Tantum Ergo: Nicholson

Voluntary: An interlude — Darke

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Subscription Rates:

12 issues inc. postage and packing:

UK £13.00

Europe (Airmail) £16.50

Rest of World: £17.30

(Surface Mail Printed papers rate)

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Sundays Low Mass at 6.30 p.m. (Sat), 8.00 a.m. and 5.15 p.m. Morning Prayer 10.20 a.m. HIGH MASS and SERMON at 11.00 a.m. SOLEMN EVENSONG, SERMON and BENEDICTION at 6.00 p.m.

Monday to Friday Morning Prayer at 7.30 a.m.

Low Mass at 8.00 a.m., 1.10 p.m. & 6.30 p.m.

Confessions from 12.30 - 1.00 p.m. & 5.30 p.m.

Evening Prayer at 6.00 p.m.

Saturday Morning Prayer at 7.30 a.m.

Low Mass at 8.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.*

(* First Mass of Sunday)

Confessions 5.30 p.m.,

Evening Prayer 6.00 p.m.

Confessions are also heard by appointment

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CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR AUGUST 2007

1	The unemployed
2 v for Unity	Christian Unity
3	Those in need
4 <i>Jean-Baptiste Vianney, Cure d'Ars</i>	St Paul's Cathedral
5 ✕ THE 9th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
6 THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD	Renewal in holiness
7 <i>John Mason Neale</i>	Church Musicians
8 St Dominic	Friends of All Saints
9 Mary Sumner, Founder of the Mothers' Union	Unity
10 St Laurence	Those in need
11 St Clare of Assisi	Religious Communities
12 ✕ THE 10th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
13 Jeremy Taylor	Teachers of the Faith
14 <i>Maximilian Kolbe</i>	Martyrs of our time
15 THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	Walsingham
16 r Requiem (6.30 p.m.)	The departed (Unity)
17	Those in need
18	Holidaymakers
19 ✕ THE 11th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
20 St Bernard of Clairvaux	West London Day Centre
21	Our Deanery
22	The Holy Land Pilgrimage
23	Unity
24 ST BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE	Those in need
25	Church Army
26 ✕ THE 12th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
27 St Monica	Joyfulness in our faith
28 St Augustine of Hippo	Theologians
29 The Beheading of St John the Baptist	Prisoners
30 John Bunyan	Unity
31 St Aidan of Lindisfarne	Those in need

Please note:

All Friday Masses are 'for those in need' — intercessions from the board inside church are used on these days.

r — Requiem — the monthly Requiem, 6.30 p.m. this month

v — a Votive Mass



Set and Printed by
S Alban's Church Litho Unit
Birmingham B12 0XB