



# All Saints Parish Paper

MARGARET STREET, LONDON W.1

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## ASSISTANT PRIEST'S LETTER

The day after the All Saints Festival ended I was at another set of festivities. Because of my connections with businesses in the West End the Crown Estate invited me to a rooftop reception to witness the turning on of the Christmas lights in Regent Street. For the first time this year, the turning on of the lights in Oxford Street and Regent Street were co-ordinated with the turning on of the lights in the City of London. You may have seen them around St Paul's Cathedral. During the Christmas season the retail sector expects 40 million people to come shopping in the West End.

Those of us who have a deep devotion to the people and events in the stable may find the intense commercial hype around Christmas a cause for anxiety. The poverty and simplicity of the Christmas story is out of kilter with the frenetic spending all around us. The lights went on earlier than ever this year as a prelude to the opening of the blockbusting film *A Christmas Carol* released on November 6th. At the reception I attended, the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said: "Only London could bring together Dickens and Disney — one of the world's best writers with one of the greatest global brands".

As high street shops face another difficult year with the continuing recession many

a store manager is praying for a bumper season. Some shops make 40% of their annual profits in the lead up to Christmas. So I experience a very real tension. On the one hand I am concerned about the people who may well find themselves out of a job if their companies don't do well. But I am also concerned that in order to keep the tills ringing many people are going to be spending money they don't have. This will have consequences in the New Year when the credit card bills start coming in. A recent survey showed that British households owe on average £60k, £10k of which is unsecured — mainly credit cards and store loans.

The financial atmosphere in which many people live today is different to the one that Dickens portrays. Then as now there were rich and poor. Then as now there were people who unwisely got into debt. But now (unlike then) getting into debt has become impersonal. You can apply for credit cards online and get all sorts of loans without ever seeing a lender face to face. Those who do see a lender face to face tend to be up against loan sharks and that's a very scary experience.

There's a sort of anonymity that has crept into our financial dealings and that may account for the lack of morality that we've seen in recent times. As Boris

Johnson quipped at the turning on of the Regent Street lights: “*A Christmas Carol*: what an appropriate tale for our times. After all, what was Ebenezer Scrooge? He was a banker!” There was a good deal of nervous laughter in the room.

Every year we turn on the lights. It’s been happening in Oxford Street this year for fifty years but we can’t turn the clock back. It’s easy to bemoan the disappearance of Christmas Past but if we are to ensure that Christmas Future is to be better then we must find a different approach to morality. The old codes of conduct have worn thin. Rule-based morality seems to have little effect. Those who urgently quote the scriptures or other texts seem to be a bit neurotic. The Church is easily made to look foolish when answers to highly complicated questions are required in a sound-bite.

For me, the foundation of morality is in the face. We all have faces and we see faces all around us. Yet over and again we avoid looking people in the face. We turn away from strangers. It seems that we are much more comfortable looking at people’s faces when they look out at us from the TV than when we are walking past people in the street. We have become wary of each other.

Awareness of damaging behaviour in the past inhibits us from physically touching each other, especially children and those who are lonely — groups who perhaps most need reassurance. But the face tells us whether we are creating joy or causing pain. We see the smiles and the grimaces. We learn to discern whether tears speak of laughter or of distress and we can only know the difference if we look into

people’s faces.

Morality springs from contemplation. We look at the face. We gaze upon images. There are plenty to choose from at Margaret Street. In the great panel of the Nativity on the north wall we have a panoramic, if highly idealised, portrayal of the manger ‘rude and bare’. We see in the best religious art faces that are serene. We see the beauty of holiness, and in the same way that offering a smile is usually answered with a smile, so images of serenity produce in us, the viewer, a similar response.

Having learned morality from images we can test our behaviour against our own faces and the faces of others as we live day by day. We know what it is to light up with joy. We know what it is to wince with pain. What are our faces telling us when we spend money, or do anything else for that matter? Are we cheerful or are we hurting? How do our answers take us forward? How are we growing in wisdom?

None of this is rocket science but it is intensely difficult. Modern life encourages us to live in the fast lane where all we can do is to react not to reflect. But spend time in contemplation. This Christmas let’s worry less about presents and be more concerned with presence: our presence one with another; our presence with the people with whom we shall spend time over Christmas. Time not cash is the currency of this season. Look at the faces that are another year older. Contemplate the stories that have carved themselves into their countenance. Look beyond Dickens and Disney and spy the Deity.

Yours in Christ,

*Fr Gerald*

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## FR ALAN'S LETTER FROM CAMBRIDGE

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I am back in Cambridge for the last stretch of my study leave which will almost be over by the time you read this. It had always been my plan to be at home for the All Saintside celebrations. How could I miss them in our 150th anniversary year with the Archbishop of Canterbury and two of my predecessors coming to preach?

It has been good to see both people and place again. Celebrating the High Mass on All Saints Day, I set off after the intercessions for the chancel steps for the Peace, only to be taken by surprise by one of those pieces of carefully rehearsed spontaneity which I have organised on occasions for others celebrating significant events. This time the perpetrators were Fr Gerald, the Churchwardens and Cedric Stephens and I was on the receiving end. The splendid card, with its reminders of my recent pilgrimage to Santiago, produced by Frances O'Neil and signed by so many of you; the photograph of me as a baby acquired from my mother by Cedric and signed by all the servers; the kind gift of Diarmaid MacCulloch's newly published "*A History of Christianity*" and the generous cheque that accompanied it, are all things for which I am very grateful. (If reading blockbuster histories is not your thing, don't miss the BBC television series which accompanies the book.) I must not forget the application form for my Freedom Pass which Chris Self had included. Reaching the age of 60 will have the advantage of making me one of the most economical clergy in the diocese to run.

John Forde referred to my books, so I ought to explain that while I have been away my study has been redecorated and re-carpeted. Lest you think this is reckless profligacy at a time of economic stringency, this is the first time that one of the most heavily-used rooms in the Vicarage has been decorated in 14 years and we think that the carpet which has been replaced was put in for Fr Marshall's arrival in 1968! The underlay had disintegrated completely.

Removal men dread moving the clergy because we have so many books. As anyone who has been in my study knows, I am no exception. This meant that all the books had to be moved out and then back again. This herculean task was carried out in an operation planned with military precision by Theresa. She conscripted churchwardens, servers and some other pressed men to assist with the hard labour. The books were packed up in hired crates and moved to the living room where Theresa had to live surrounded by them while the work was being done. The books are now back in a new arrangement, planned by my daughter Joanna, which makes the room look lighter and more open. I am very grateful to all those who helped make such a pleasant space to work and see people in.

While I have been away, Theresa has also had to live with having no heating in the Vicarage since the middle of August. The old system which heated both Vicarage and Parish Office gave up the ghost after long years of service. This year's long St

Luke's Summer which lasted until All Saintstide helped and there was a separate electric immersion heater on the top floor which meant that hot showers were still available up there. The Parsonages Board of the Diocese has now installed a new system with separate boilers for the two sections. The new set-up should be much more efficient and reduce both our carbon footprint and our fuel bills.

As well as the pleasure of seeing so many people during the Festival period, I have also been able to enjoy something of the results of the restoration work. It was good to have with us over the festival some of the people who had been involved in the work. Through all the disruption of the project, they were a delight to work with and anyone who loves All Saints cannot but be grateful for their vision, skill and dedication to a task which came in on time and budget and which has produced such a transformation. Some particular impressions stick in my mind already, although I am sure that others will join them as I get to spend more time in the building and appreciate what has been achieved. We have been so used to seeing All Saints in a "dim religious light" that the total effect of removing all that grime and over-painting, even for those of us who had been up the scaffolding and seen some of it close up, has been nothing less than astonishing. The sheer vibrancy and strength of Butterfield's colours is a revelation; as is the effect of the light which comes in through the restored clerestory windows. Our architect Colin Kerr has pointed out a couple of things which I will share with you. If you pause at the church door and look up through

the great arch, you will see the unity of the scheme which links the arches, arcades, clerestory windows and roof in a vision which sweeps the eye upwards. In the proposal for the next phase of the restoration, Colin quotes Butterfield's description of the clerestory windows as "floating jewels". The "grisaille" glass had seemed just that: grey with some muted colours. Now the light streams through and the colours are brilliant once more. Sitting at the confessional table on the north wall one sun-lit lunchtime, I saw that the "floating jewels" were created by the light shining through the small pieces of coloured glass onto the stone of the arches.

One of the gloomiest times in All Saints has always been early autumn and winter mornings during the period of meditation before Morning Prayer. Now that so much has been cleaned, the building seems to glow with light and warmth even at that dark and early hour. I have been particularly struck by the effect of removing paint from the stonework of arches and columns. Where the paint had a deadening and flattening effect, the natural colour and texture of the stone now gives an almost golden light. I could go on about the revelation which is the roof space and the cross on the chancel arch, but that is enough for now; except to say that the results of the work have fired me and others too with a renewed enthusiasm to complete the restoration work and raise the money to do so.

Yours in Christ,

*Alan Moses*

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## PARISH NOTES

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A very successful **Poetry Tea** was held at Pamela Botsford's home in Marylebone on Saturday October 10th. The theme was 'Autumn'. The poems read included John Betjeman — *Diary of a Church Mouse*, Pamela's own *Gardening*, Elizabeth Barrett Browning — *The Autumn*, John Donne — *Elegy IX The Autumnal*, Robert Frost — *Apple Picking*, Thomas Hardy — *The Woodlanders*, Ted Hughes — *The Seven Sorrows*, John Keats — *Ode to Autumn*, William Topaz McGonagle — *An Autumn Reverie*, Shelley — *Ode to the West Wind*, Wallace Stevens — *Autumn Refrain*, Edward Thomas — *October* and Sandra Wheen — *Whitfield Street Rondo*. There will be more such events in the New Year so do watch out for them. You can always be assured of a great tea and they are opportunities for a bit of fundraising.

On Thursday October 15th a group from All Saints joined the people of **St Andrew's, Kingsbury**, celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Church being on its present site. The building itself dating from 1847 was moved in 1934 to its present location. By the 'thirties the congregation had dwindled to below a sustainable level and, given the large number of church buildings in the West End, it was decided to relocate it stone by stone to the then newly built suburbs of North West London. The Vicar, Fr John Smith, made us all most welcome. The Bishop of Fulham, the Rt Revd John Broadhurst was the celebrant. ✠John was a member of the congregation as a teenager. The preacher was Fr Michael Shields CMP, SSC, the only priest ever

to be ordained at St Andrew's and who served as curate, 1964 - 1967.

**Juliet Windham** and her team did the **North London Links Group** proud for the lunch at her home in Highgate on Saturday October 17th. With such an eclectic congregation we have perhaps too few opportunities to gather together, get to know each other's names and find areas of common interest.

**Kenichiro (Ken) Kanno** was one of around ninety people confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral on Saturday November 7th by The Rt Revd Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden. It was very good to see that Ken was well supported by members of the congregation.

We continue to hold in our thoughts and prayers **Denzil Freeth, Doris Sanders** and **Patrick Spencer**, all of whom have had spells in hospital recently.

It was with sorrow that we learned of the death of **Renée Boucher** last month. Renée was a regular member of All Saints when Bishop Michael Marshall was Vicar. She was quite a character, usually arriving at church in her MG sports car. She had always worked as a secretary in Central London — UCL (Classics Department), the National Hospital, Queen Square and Church House to name but a few. Philip Payne writes: 'Perhaps, a tangible memory will be her published history of the Church of Our Most Holy Redeemer and the District of Clerkenwell. She will be remembered for her enthusiasm, vivacity, warmth and her love of partying with her church friends.'

Her funeral took place at Christ the Saviour, Ealing, where she had latterly become a parishioner, on November 2nd. We offer our condolences to her family and friends.

We congratulate **The Revd Canon Martin Warner** who has been appointed Bishop of Whitby. He will be much missed in London and especially at Margaret Street where he was our celebrant and preacher on the Feast of the Assumption. He has also said some of the daily Masses during the Vicar's sabbatical.

An anonymous donor has given the parish **new altar and credence linen**. The sacristy is now fully equipped and we are very grateful for this generous gift. If there are particular things to which you would like to contribute please talk to the clergy or the churchwardens.

Fr Gerald is organizing a visit to **The Sacred Made Real** Exhibition at the National Gallery on Sunday January 24th 2010. This is an exhibition of art from 17C Spain and has had excellent reviews. Tickets £8 (concessions available). Tickets may be purchased online via the gallery's website, in person or by calling 08442091788 (booking fee). We will meet at 2.45.p.m. at the entrance to the exhibition in the Sainsbury Wing, spend around an hour looking at the exhibits and then adjourn to the cafe to talk about it. We will be away from the National Gallery by 5.00 p.m. Please sign the list at the back of the church if you intend coming.

Thank you to those who pointed out the howler in last month's parish paper. In his letter Fr Gerald wrote: 'At All Saints we are

surrounded in the *widows* and on the walls by images of those who have let the light shine through. Haloes abound as we call to mind accounts of love, courage and self-sacrifice.' For 'widows' read 'windows'. It's reminiscent of Gerard Hoffnung's letter from a continental hotel replying to an enquiry about the room facilities: 'There is a French *widow* in every bedroom... affording delightful prospects.' It just shows the error of proofreading one's own work and being over-reliant on the computer spellchecker.

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## THE ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL

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The Festival was a triumph this year. With phase 1 of the restoration works completed on budget and on time the church looked magnificent. It was very good that we were joined by so many of those who had worked on the restoration, or who had contributed to it financially, on the Eve of All Saints. It was an appropriate occasion on which to say a very big 'Thankyou'.

At the final site meeting on Monday October 12th, Colin Kerr, our architect, said that it was one of the happiest projects on which he had worked. Restoring a building which is still in use and co-ordinating such diverse trades requires a high level of co-operation and flexibility all round. It was quite an achievement.

Evensong broadcast live on Radio 3 Wednesday October 28th at 4.00 p.m. and repeated on November 1st was a great success. Many thanks to Fr Peter McGeary who presided at the Office. There has been a lot of positive feedback both directly and via the BBC. Congratulations to Paul Brough and the choir on the music and

to the servers and congregation for not producing any unnecessary sound.

Numbers at the Festival were significantly up on last year especially on Sunday evening when the Archbishop of Canterbury preached and presided at Benediction. His sermon as well as the Vicar's will appear in the January parish paper all being well. Bishop Michael Marshall's and Fr Hutt's appear elsewhere in this edition. Many thanks to all who provided a welcome and hospitality. The All Saints Club kindly donated the refreshments.

We are very grateful to Harry Brama for his beautiful anthem *This is the day the Lord has made* written especially for Evensong and Benediction on All Saints Day. It is a welcome addition to the repertoire.

Congratulations also to Frances O'Neil and the Publicity Committee for producing the splendid new appeal brochure. What has been achieved so far shows what could be done with more financial resources.

The final total on Fr Alan's fundraising efforts is £18,200 and the collections at the Festival amounted to just over £6,600. A huge 'Thankyou' to everyone who contributed.

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## THE CELL OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

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The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk is an important reference point for many in their journey of faith. England's Nazareth welcomes thousands of pilgrims every year including many from All Saints who go on the National Pilgrimage in May, on the parish pilgrimage or at other times of the year. One of the ways in which we keep the experience alive is through the Cell. This organises regular events sometimes 'at home' with a visiting speaker or devotion, or 'away' with a visit to somewhere with a strong Marian heritage. New members are always welcome. It's a good way of developing the spiritual life and getting to know people at the same time. If you would like to know more please speak to Fr Gerald, Juliet Windham or Ross Buchanan.

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## DIARY DATES

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### Sunday 29 November — ADVENT 1

**11.00 a.m. Litany in Procession and High Mass**

*Preacher:* Fr Gerald Beauchamp

**6.00 p.m. Advent Carol Service** with the Choir of All Saints

### Thursday 3 December

**7.05 p.m. HOLY HOUR** led by Fr Gerald Beauchamp

### Saturday 5 December — Conception of Our Lady *Cell of OLW/All Saints*

11.00 a.m. Low Mass with hymns

11.30 a.m. "**Michael Rides for Mary**" an account by Michael Gester, Secretary of the Society of Mary's Our Lady of Joy Ward, of his fund-raising cycle ride from London to Lourdes. Followed by a buffet lunch. *All are welcome.*

**Thursday 10 December**

**4.00 p.m. University of Westminster Carol Service**  
*Chaplain: Fr David Cherry. All are welcome.*

**Thursday 17 December**

**5.15 p.m. Wells Street Family Proceedings Court Carol Service**  
*All are welcome.*

**6.30 p.m. Carol Singing in The Plaza, and in and around Oxford Street**  
(starting from the Courtyard).

**Friday 18 December**

**12.30 p.m. LUNCHTIME CAROL SERVICE**  
followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the courtyard.

**Monday 21 December**

**6.00 p.m. FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS**  
with the Choir of All Saints.

**CHRISTMAS AT ALL SAINTS**

**Thursday 24 December — Christmas Eve**

**11.00 p.m. Midnight Mass**  
*Preacher: The Vicar*

**Friday 25 December — Christmas Day**

8.00 a.m. Low Mass

**11.00 a.m. High Mass of the Day**  
*Preacher: Fr Julian Browning*

**Wednesday 6 January — THE EPIPHANY**

**6.30 p.m. Procession and High Mass**  
*Preacher: Fr Allen Shin, Chaplain, Keble College, Oxford*

**Sunday 10 January**

**6.00 p.m. EPIPHANY CAROL SERVICE**  
with the Choir of All Saints

**Tuesday 2 February — PRESENTATION OF CHRIST**

**6.30 p.m. Procession and High Mass**  
*Preacher: Bishop John Gladwin*



## CONFESSIONS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

### Monday 21 December

12.00 - 1.00 p.m. The Vicar

5.00 - 6.00 p.m. Fr Julian Browning

### Tuesday 22 December

12.00 - 1.00 p.m. Fr John Gaskell

5.00 - 6.00 p.m. Fr Gerald Beauchamp

### Wednesday 23 December

12.00 - 1.00 p.m. Fr Gerald Beauchamp

5.00 - 6.00 p.m. The Vicar

### Thursday 24 December

12.00 - 1.00 p.m. The Vicar

## A SERMON PREACHED BY THE RT REVD MICHAEL MARSHALL AT SOLEMN EVENSONG AND BENEDICTION ON THE EVE OF ALL SAINTS, OCTOBER 31st 2009

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*Readings: Ecclesiasticus 44: 1 - 15; Revelation 19: 6 - 10*

**TEXT: ‘O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, let the whole earth stand in awe of him.’ Psalm**

‘Why was I created,’ is the first and fundamental question for all humanity and indeed is the central question of the Scottish Catechism. ‘Why was I created?’ (The ‘how’ question is only secondary.)

So, ‘Why was I created?’

And the reply? — again from the Scottish Catechism. ‘I was created in order to worship God and to enjoy him for ever’. Or if you would prefer a more secular testimony then, what about those words of the psychiatrist in Peter Shaffer’s play — *‘Equus’* when he says to the young, deeply disturbed teenager: *‘If you don’t worship, you’ll shrink: it’s as brutal as that!’*

Yet — so fundamental and instinctive is this deep desire for worship within each one of us, that worship is not restricted to religion or to what goes on in churches. On the contrary, the evidence for this basic human instinct and drive — almost compulsion for worship and self-transcendence, is blatantly obvious. There is the cult of celebrity in our own day or the mindless and passionate adoration of football crowds; the drug culture even or even that binge drinking — call it escapism or whatever, but I think you could make out a striking case for these instances and many more as being examples of a misplaced or displaced desire for self-transcendence or ecstasy — but of course, a very different kind of ecstasy to the drug that bears that name.

So, I would want to go further and correct the slogan of Descartes when he

proclaimed the unquestioned dogma of the Enlightenment: ‘*Cogito ergo sum*’: ‘I think therefore I am.’ No! ‘I **worship** therefore I am.’

But does it matter what you worship, you might well ask, so long as you find **your** way of losing yourself — **your** private road to that self-transcendence, ecstasy or worship?

Well, yes I think it **does** matter — and I’ll tell you why. You see — are you ready for this: ‘**You become what you worship**’ — which is why I suppose some people over the years begin to look a little like their dogs or pets. (Or worse still that pets can begin to look a little like their owners over the course of time!) You see we were not born to be free. That’s the dangerous half-truth of nineteenth century romanticism. No! We were born to be possessed, for eventually we are possessed by the object of our worship which increasingly involves a self-surrender. So beware of what you surrender to and become possessed by — for when we are possessed by the objects of our worship it is not long before possession becomes obsession. Enslaved in addiction to the object of our desires.

**But** — when we worship the one true God, he gives us back our freedom as we are best able to handle it — that old paradox of Augustine — ‘whose service and slavery is perfect freedom’.

‘O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, let the whole earth stand in awe of him,’ exclaims the psalmist. So, on this the eve of your Feast of Title you are rightly thanking God for the

beauty of this church building in which over the years many, many men, women and children have worshipped and praised God and over the years have in the words of St Richard of Chichester come to ‘know God more clearly; love him more dearly and follow him more nearly, day by day’. And in that process of worship and prayer, lives have slowly been transformed and changed into the likeness of God in which we were first created. For a hospital for sinners can also be a school for saints in the making. Or put another way, those who have worshipped here have grown in holiness. And if it is true that we become what we worship, then there is a certain beauty in holiness, an attractiveness or to use an old fashioned word — ‘winsomeness’. Jesus claimed you remember to be ‘The Good Shepherd’. But in Greek there are two words for our one English ‘good’. There is the word which means simply morally good — and I have to say that that kind of goodness is not always particularly attractive!

But there is that second word — the word Jesus used when he claimed to be the **Good** Shepherd. That word is more accurately translated — beautiful or attractive, for beauty, truth and goodness are all of a package — packaged in that one word — holy and holiness.

And tonight we are especially thanking God for the beauty of this house of prayer and this shrine; thanking God for all those who have contributed, either by their gifts and generosity or by their skills, in the simply glorious restoration and renovation of the glittering interior of this Butterfield architectural triumph. Here in

brick and stone is a true icon — a whole building, pointing beyond itself like all true icons to the source of its beauty, and so leading us to the true worship of the One who is beyond all our understanding of beauty, truth or goodness. For even the best and the most beautiful in this world, C.S. Lewis reminds us, can at best only be ‘the echo of a tune we have not yet heard, the scent of a flower we have not yet picked and news from a country we have not yet visited’.

But make no mistake about it: holy buildings do not of themselves make holy people. Rather it’s the other way about. It’s people, praying and worshipping in our churches and shrines over the years, who are themselves first transformed (unselfconsciously into the likeness of God’s beauty and holiness). Then in turn, outsiders on entering these places sense and capture something of the transcendent Other — of the God to which the whole building so powerfully and irresistibly points them. It’s as though the very stones and fabric of the building have taken on some of this spirit of holiness: ‘the beauty of truth and goodness’. As we sing: ‘These stones that have echoed their praises are holy and dear is the ground where their feet have once trod’.

Yes — ‘O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness’. But beware for icons have an unfortunate knack of becoming idols, trapping us in the prison house of idolatry. For worship must issue in discipleship, which necessarily implies the willingness to be transformed and changed from one degree of glory to another, to use St Paul’s words. The danger always is and has been for the Church, that inevitably men and

women have lavished great gifts on the Church in thankfulness to God for what the Church can come to mean in their lives. We rightly thank God for that. But — but icons have a dangerous tendency to become idols — signposts masquerading as finishing posts. I sometimes think there are two sorts of Christians in our churches. Dog Christians and cat Christians. Dog Christians will follow the Master wherever he goes, while cats — some people would claim — are much more interested in the fixtures and fittings of their home rather than being willing to follow their homeowner wherever their owner chooses to live!

So our task tonight is quite clear. As we celebrate with thanksgiving the uncovering and recovering of the former beauty and glory of this truly heavenly building, let us also re-dedicate ourselves as we continue on our spiritual journey, surrounded with that great cloud of witnesses — the named and unnamed saints who have gone before us; and let us seek with fresh zeal that holiness and transformation that comes through true worship of the one true God in whose likeness as well as in whose image we were originally created. For the test of the true Catholic Church has nothing to do with taking sides on this or that issue. Rather the test of the true Catholic Church is not so much whether it can make good men and women better, but rather whether by the grace of God it can make flawed men and women like you and me holy.

So in the meantime let us draw near to the throne of grace in the worship of God here on earth, until that day when together

with all the saints, we will enjoy him for ever in heaven, and where in the words of St Augustine of Hippo, ‘we shall be still and see; we shall see and we shall love; we shall love and we shall worship’.

[‘*Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heaven we take our place.  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,  
Lost in wonder love and praise.*’]

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**A SERMON PREACHED BY THE REVD CANON  
DAVID HUTT AT THE HIGH MASS OF REQUIEM  
ON ALL SOULS DAY, 2nd NOVEMBER 2009**

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**Readings:** *Wisdom 3: 1 - 9; Romans 5: 5 - 11; John 6: 37 - 40*

It may seem strange that a sermon on All Souls Day should begin with a reference to Oscar Wilde. A new film released in September, “*Dorian Gray*”, tells the story of a young man whose portrait kept in an attic, slowly reflects the corruption of debauchery and ageing, while the young man himself remains seemingly ageless and youthful.

It is, of course, a fantasy and yet an uncanny prediction of what the future may hold for humanity. Crumbling canvases apart, scientists are exploring the possibilities of a healthy life-style, good genetic structure and medical programming linked to timely intervention, all of which may produce well-being, vitality and youthfulness throughout an amazingly long lifetime.

From a life expectancy of 50 a hundred years ago 75 is now the norm, with the realistic projection of 80 or 90 for those in middle years today. Some biologists speculate that children, yet to be born, will, as a matter of course, expect to live in excess of 120 years, with the possibility that there is already a baby alive who will reach the age of 150.

Out there — somewhere in the future, it is forecast, the process of ageing will be halted, reversed and be seen as no longer inevitable. The consequences for society as we know it and the human race in general are awesome in their implications. In a word, we will not have to die.

Does this assume that our reality, our recognisable appearance, our worth are purely material? “The body” is “us” it is claimed. But this is far from the whole picture (if you will forgive the pun).

All the great Faiths and philosophies of the world maintain the intrinsic value of human life. For most of these faith-systems there exists a supra-natural Being, a source, a creator, a God or a pantheon of lesser deities. Buddhism is interesting by contrast because it locates the source of authority and judgement within the individual. All are at one in the idea that we experience a uniqueness in the awareness of our own existence. An awareness not apparent in other orders of creation. The Christian claim is unique. It is also startling. The creator God, responsible for the process of evolution, makes a direct intervention in the affairs of human-kind in the person of

Jesus Christ. He it was who:

*“Emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.”*

(Philippians 27: 8)

Despite attempts throughout history to elevate the spiritual element over and against the physical, Christianity has always maintained the importance of the body — a vessel in which the spirit dwells — a means by which God expresses himself. But occupying a body is not a matter of perpetual health, beauty and harmony as we well know. All of us have experienced pain, sickness and bereavement. If it were not so we would not be truly human. Seemingly God does not choose perfection and completeness in his scheme but rather identifies himself with the pains, struggles and aspirations of very ordinary people. So it is that we can sing the hymn that includes the words:

*“Disposer supreme, and judge of  
the earth,  
Who chooseth for thine the weak and  
the poor;  
To frail earthen vessels, and things of  
no worth,  
Entrusting thy riches which ay shall  
endure.”*

(NEH 216)

What then are we to learn from All Souls Day 2009? I believe there are three things upon which to focus. The first is the reality of mortality. Whatever the future may hold for those who come after us we can be certain about one thing, we will not be around to see it. “Life”, as someone once remarked, “is a terminal condition”.

To Shakespeare we owe those memorable lines from *As You Like It* (Act 2 scene 7):

*“All the world’s a stage, And all the men and women merely players...”*

He then speaks of the ages of man:

*“The sixth age shifts into the lean and slippered pantaloon, With spectacles on nose and pouch on side...”*

The last scene of all, that ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and mere oblivion, “*sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything*”.

I cannot find within myself a fear of death. Year by year I observe — perhaps become part of, the dying process in nature, the turning of leaf, the intensity of colour in late flowers determined to catch and reflect the waning light, morning chill and smell of wood smoke in the evening. Autumn for me is a dignified, calm and reflective time. It is purposeful and an essential prelude to winter and the seeming suspension of life.

The second point of focus is the urgency of good stewardship.

Bishop Thomas Ken, the author of the familiar hymn which begins:

*“Awake my soul and with the sun  
Thy daily stage of duty run...”*

Continues in the second verse:

*“Redeem thy mis-spent time that’s past,  
Live this day as if ’twere thy last...”*  
(NEH 232)

How is time, past time to be redeemed? I remember hearing someone say “We are condemned to repeat our mistakes until we learn not to”. Earthy and home-spun

perhaps, but a little reflection will prove rewarding.

Somewhere on my bookshelves is a finely bound copy of Dean Stanley's *History of Westminster Abbey*. I used it as a prop on the occasions when I talked to new members of staff or conducted a simple assembly for the choristers. I would lay the book in the palm of my hand with the spine towards me and the leaves facing outwards. Then I would open the pages and isolate a single sheet. "Without that page" I would say, "the book would not be complete, the history would not be complete, the continuity of a place would not be complete. Now, let's suppose, just for a moment, that the thickness of that leaf represents 5, 10, 15 years of passing time. Some of us here will be part of the life of the Abbey for roughly one of those periods. For that time we are the inheritors of what's gone before, the custodians of the present and the people with whom the responsibility of handing on the tradition lies. There is no-one else to do it. Will we bequeath a better inheritance? Will we have maintained standards of excellence of which we may be justly proud? Are we up to the task?"

Fanciful, of course, but a way of making the idea of stewardship real and immediate.

And the third focus.

The God of the old covenant and the New Testament is a God who defies description and cannot be 'shaped' by our finite minds. And yet — we *sense* that this person, beyond gender, beyond description, is something other than the creation of an

evolving human consciousness. Part of our ongoing task as Christians is to come to terms with the fact that the God of whom we think and speak is a God who *destroys* as well as creates.

Dying and death are essential elements of the dispensation. If our birth is part of a glorious mystery, why should our departure from the stage of life be any the less glorious?

The last word shall be that of the theologian Oscar Cullman:

*"Only he who apprehends with the first Christians the horror of death, who takes death seriously as death, can comprehend the Easter exaltation of the primitive Christian community and understand that the whole thinking of the New Testament is governed by belief in the Resurrection.*

*"Belief in the immortality of the soul is not belief in a revolutionary event. Immortality, in fact, is only a negative assertion: the soul does not die, but simply lives on.*

*"Resurrection is a positive assertion: something has happened... something fearful: Life formed by God has been destroyed. The whole man, who has really died, is recalled to life by a new act of creation by God..."*

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

[*"Immortality and Resurrection"* by Oscar Cullman, ed Krister Stendahl, Macmillan New York 1965. p. 19, quoted in *"The Hallowing of Time"* vol 2 Carol Wilkinson (Hodder & Stoughton 1998)]

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## 100 YEARS AGO

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### Nashotah

The Vicar asked Mrs Romanes before she left England for America to send him an American experience for the *Parish Paper*. Mrs Romanes has most kindly sent him the following:

Nashotah, Wis,  
*All Saints Day*

MY DEAR VICAR,

You wanted some account of my experiences of the American Church. Nowhere could we have spent a happier All Saints' Day in America than here. Just when one began to feel a little touch of homesickness for the dear All Saints', Margaret Street, one found oneself in a hallowed spot. Perhaps some of your readers of your *Parish Paper* may like an account of the work done here since 1845. Does it not seem strange that just when Dr Pusey was restoring the religious life in England the same idea was stirring in the minds of some in America?

"Four men came to this spot in 1841 resolved to start the religious life. For various reasons this first idea failed; Nashotah became what it is — a theological College. Saintly men, unknown, or almost unknown in England, gave of their best, and from it have gone forth many who have given God of their very best, and the atmosphere breathes devotion and love and faith.

"The College lies in a beautiful region about thirty-five miles from Milwaukee. It is a place known as the region of Five Lakes, and, not so very long ago, Indians

and fur traders could be seen roaming the slopes above these beautiful little lakes. Mr Brock, the first of the devoted band, purchased 460 acres, and it need hardly be said that the first buildings were very rude and simple, and the life rough and strenuous. Now there is a beautiful chapel, a large Hall and a group of buildings where the students and Professors live. One of the halls, called the Alice Sabine Hall, has an interesting story, for it was built by one who when a little girl had heard Nashotah described, and year by year had sent an offering, and finally left sufficient money to build the Hall which bears her name.

"We arrived under the conduct of the Bishop of Milwaukee, who was Dean of the College for fifteen years, in time for the Missa Cantata at 10.30. A long procession of surpliced students, followed by the Celebrant and the Bishop, clothed in their respective vestments, filed along the Cloister and up the Chapel, and a most beautiful Mass was sung, with familiar hymns, among them Mr Athelstan Riley's beautiful "*Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones*". But I confess that I yearned for All Saints' "*In our Day of Thanksgiving*".

"We stayed for a lovely festal Evensong. The American Church has one advantage at least over us in that special psalms are provided for festivals, so that instead of the rather inappropriate "Domine, ne in furore," we had the joyous 112, 121 and 149, and this happy day ended.

"But I cannot tell you the deep impression left on me by the College. One saw the American Church at her very

best. Milwaukee Cathedral breathes an atmosphere of Catholic devotion, with its daily Mass and frequent beautiful services, and the Diocese is happy in its Bishop. And here, away in this quiet place is a nucleus and source of future blessing."

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## SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

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### • SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER ADVENT II

#### HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

*Entrance Hymn:* 7

*Introit:* Populus Syon

*Mass:* Missa 'Alma redemptoris  
mater' — Victoria

*Lessons:* Baruch Ch 5  
Psalm 126  
Philippians 1: 3 - 11

*Hymn:* 10

*Gospel:* Luke 3: 1 - 6

*Preacher:* Fr Julian Browning

*Anthem:* Vigilate — Byrd

*Hymns:* 6, 18, 3 (ii)

#### SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

*Psalms:* 75, 76

*Lessons:* Isaiah 40: 1 - 11  
Luke 1: 1 - 25

*Office Hymn:* 1

*Canticles:* The Short Service — Gibbons

*Anthem:* Rorate coeli desuper — Byrd

*Preacher:* Fr Gerald Beauchamp

*Hymn:* 15

#### BENEDICTION

*O Salutaris:* 493

*Hymn:* 8 (T 128 (ii))

*Tantum Ergo:* 490

### • SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER ADVENT III

#### HIGH MASS at 11.00 a.m.

*Entrance Hymn:* 12

*Introit:* Gaudete

*Mass:* Mass in C — Schubert

*Lessons:* Zephaniah 3: 14 - 20  
Canticle 9  
Philippians 4: 4 - 7

*Hymn:* 5

*Gospel:* Luke 3: 7 - 18

*Preacher:* The Vicar

*Creed:* Credo III

*Anthem:* O thou, that tellest good tidings  
to Zion — Handel

*Hymns:* 286, 315, 499

*Voluntary:* Fantasia sopra 'Wachet auf,  
ruft uns die Stimme'  
— Johann Ludwig Krebs

#### SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

*Psalms:* 50: 1 - 6; 62

*Lessons:* Isaiah Ch 35  
Luke 1: 57 - 66

*Office Hymn:* 1

*Canticles:* The Fifth Service — Tomkins

*Anthem:* Rejoice in the Lord alway  
— attr Redford

*Preacher:* Fr Gerald Beauchamp

*Hymn:* 170 (i)



## BENEDICTION

*O Salutaris:* Harry Bramma (No 1)  
*Hymn:* 443  
*Tantum Ergo:* Harry Bramma (No 1)  
*Voluntary:* Trio Sonata No 2, Largo  
(2nd movement) — Bach

## ● SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER ADVENT IV

### HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

*Entrance Hymn:* 188 (ii)  
*Introit:* Rorate  
*Mass:* Mass in G — Poulenc  
*Lessons:* Micah 5: 2 - 5a  
Psalm 80  
Hebrews 10: 5 - 10  
*Hymn:* 17  
*Gospel:* Luke 1: 39 - 45  
*Preacher:* Fr Gerald Beauchamp  
*Creed:* Credo II  
*Anthem:* Vox dicentis: clama — Naylor  
*Hymns:* 275, 303, 297

### SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

*Psalms:* 123, 131  
*Lessons:* Isaiah 10: 33 - 11: 10  
Matthew 1: 18 - end  
*Office Hymn:* 181  
*Antiphon:* O oriens  
*Canticles:* Fauxbourdons — Byrd  
*Anthem:* Komm, Jesu, komm — Bach  
*Preacher:* The Vicar  
*Hymn:* 182

## BENEDICTION

*O Salutaris:* 238  
*Hymn:* 187  
*Tantum Ergo:* 295

## MONDAY 21 DECEMBER

FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND  
CAROLS AT 6.00 P.M.  
With the Choir of All Saints

## THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS EVE

### MIDNIGHT MASS AND BLESSING OF THE CRIB at 11.00 p.m.

*Entrance Hymn:* 29 (v 4 Descant  
— Willcocks)  
*Introit:* Dominus dixit  
*Mass:* Missa Sancti Nicolai — Haydn  
*Lessons:* Isaiah 9: 2 - 7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2: 11 - 14  
*Hymn:* 32 (v 5 Descant — Armstrong)  
*Gospel:* Luke 2: 1 - 14  
*Preacher:* The Vicar  
*Anthem:* O magnum mysterium  
— Poulenc  
*Hymns:* 35, 42 (vv 3 and 6 Descant  
— Gray)  
*Motet:* Hodie Christus natus est  
— Poulenc  
*At the Procession  
to the Crib:* 30 (omit v 4, vv 6 and 7  
arr Willcocks)  
*At the Crib:* Infant Holy, Infant lowly  
— Polish trad arr Willcocks  
*Voluntary:* Carillon de Westminster  
— Vierne

**FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER  
CHRISTMAS DAY**

**HIGH MASS OF THE DAY**

**AT 11.00 a.m.**

*Entrance Hymn:* 30 (omit v 4; v 7  
Descant — Fleming)

*Introit:* Puer natus est

*Mass:* Spaurmesse — Mozart

*Lessons:* Isaiah 52: 7 - 10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1: 1 - 4

*Hymn:* 25

*Gospel:* John 1: 1 - 14

*Preacher:* Fr Julian Browning

*Creed:* Credo III

*Anthem:* Hodie Christus natus est

— Sweelinck

*Hymns:* 28, 31, 26 (omit\*; v 3 Descant  
— Willcocks)

*Voluntary:* Radetzky March

— Johann Strauss I

**● SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER  
ST JOHN THE  
EVANGELIST**

**HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.**

*Entrance Hymn:* 34 (arr Willcocks)

*Introit:* In medio

*Mass:* Mass in G minor

— Rheinberger

*Lessons:* Exodus 33: 7 - 11a

Psalm 92

1 John 1: 1 - 10

*Hymn:* 202

*Gospel:* John 21: 19b - end

*Preacher:* The Vicar

*Creed:* Credo II

*Anthem:* This little babe — Britten

*Hymns:* 39 (v 5 arr Willcocks), 40,  
432 (omit\*)

*Voluntary:* Prelude sur le nom d'Alain

— Duruflé

Evening Prayer is *said* at 4.30 p.m.

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## FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS

The Friends support the work of this centre of Christian witness and worship, teaching and spiritual counsel, through their prayers, their financial help and their concern.

Please write for further information to The Friends' Secretary at the address below.

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The Revd Julian Browning 020 7286 6034

Prebendary John Gaskell 020 8858 9589

### Parish Administrator:

Mr Dennis Davis 020 7636 1788 / 9961

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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. and 6.30 p.m.

Confessions from 12.30 - 1.00 p.m. and 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

020 7636 1788

Instruction in the catholic faith as taught by the Church of England can be obtained on application to any of the priests, who will also give help in preparing for the sacraments.

## PARISH OFFICIALS

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### Electoral Roll Officer:

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# CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER 2009

1	<i>Charles de Foucauld, hermit</i>	The unemployed
2		Church Schools
3	<i>Francis Xavier, missionary</i>	Unity
4	<i>John of Damascus; Nicholas Ferrar</i>	Those in need
5		Those to be married
6	✠ <b>2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	<b>OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE</b>
7	St Ambrose	Teachers of the faith
8	Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Walsingham
9	Ember Day	Friends of All Saints
10		Unity
11	Ember Day	Those in need
12	Ember Day	Theological Colleges
13	✠ <b>3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	<b>OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE</b>
14	St John of the Cross	Writers
15		The homeless
16		The sick and disabled
17	<i>O Sapientia; Eglantyne Jebb, social reformer</i>	Unity
18		Those in need
19		Society of All Saints' Sisters of the Poor
20	✠ <b>4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	<b>OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE</b>
21		Local businesses and stores
22		World Peace
23		The Samaritans
24	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	Preparation for Christmas
25	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	Thanksgiving for the Incarnation
26	<b>ST STEPHEN, FIRST MARTYR</b>	Witnesses to the Faith
27	✠ <b>ST JOHN, APOSTLE &amp; EVANGELIST</b>	<b>OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE</b>
28	<b>THE HOLY INNOCENTS</b>	Children's Charities
29	St Thomas Becket	Archbishop of Canterbury
30		Hospitals
31	<i>John Wyclif</i>	Unity

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**Please note:**

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



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