



All Saints Parish Paper

MARGARET STREET, LONDON W.1

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VICAR'S LETTER

‘And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace”.’

Those words of the angels in St Luke’s Gospel have been incorporated into the worship of the Church as the basis for the *Gloria in excelsis* which is sung at the Eucharist on Sundays (except in Advent and Lent) and major feasts. In fact, in the space of a couple of chapters, St Luke has provided the Church with not one but four canticles which are at the heart of its worship: the *Benedictus*, *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* as well as the *Gloria*.

The Christmas story has down the centuries also been a source of inspiration to composers and writers who have produced carols and anthems and this flow of words and music shows no sign of drying up. The singing of carols, in a cathedral or college chapel, in a primary school or, as some of us did this year, on a temporary stage in Oxford Street during the car-free Sunday, is something which can tug at the heart-strings even of those who rarely if ever attend church.

Christmas is a time when the choral tradition of the Church of England is very much in public hearing and sight. But that tradition is not something which is simply

dusted off each year for the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. It is an ongoing and living tradition which spans the whole of the Church’s year to include everything from the wonderful Advent repertoire (which here at All Saints we do not allow to be submerged by Christmas), through Christmas and Epiphany, Lent and Eastertide, and the ordinary seasons in between.

When I was on study leave in Cambridge a couple of years ago, I would walk out on a Sunday evening to go to church and pass as many as a dozen churches and chapels where Evensong was being sung. Dr Duncan Dormer, the President and Dean of St John’s College, Cambridge, has written recently in the *Church Times* about the impact on students and others of this tradition of worship which has until recently gone unrecorded and thus unnoticed. Research carried out recently has shown that almost ten percent of students at Cambridge attend worship in chapel every week; in some colleges the percentage is much higher. Dr Dormer links this to the increasing popularity of cathedrals which have seen congregations grow by 37% since 2000.

Dr Dormer identifies a number of causes for the increasing popularity of what might seem old-fashioned and far-removed from the more populist styles which are presented as the only means to reach the young. Chaplains work hard to provide

special services which fit the rhythms of student experience. “Choral Evensong and Compline provide an accessible and non-threatening space within which young people can think about their lives and become accustomed to the idea of worship — the possibility that worship might actually make sense.” Colleges, perhaps surprisingly in a supposedly secular age, have been willing to invest in music, and large numbers of students are involved in the choral music in their chapels.

What can we learn from this? Music has always been at the heart of our life and mission here in central London. We have had two reminders of this recently: the celebration of Harry Bramma’s 75th birthday with the launch of the choir’s recording of his music and, sadly, the death of Norman Caplin. You can read both the sermon from Norman’s funeral Mass and an appreciation of him as a musician written by Paul Brough in this issue. Both Harry and Norman have made an incalculable contribution to the making of music to the glory of God in this place.

Music is one of the principal items in our annual budget. Is this just a luxury item for a narrow range of people who like that kind of thing: the Wigmore Hall with religion? Dr Dormer’s article helps us understand that it is far more than that. It is a major part of our mission here in central London. It should provide that “accessible and non-threatening space” where people can explore and think about the meaning or purpose of life in the light of the faith which is celebrated day by day. What is true for students can be true for people from all sorts of backgrounds.

If we are to take our mission seriously, then music must remain one of the principal

items of our budget. Indeed, should we not be trying to expand it so that we can do more? At the moment, about half of the music budget is provided by the Choir and Music Trust. The Trust’s income comes largely from capital which has been bequeathed by former worshippers who have died.

Music at All Saints has always included a strong dose of robust congregational singing. Should we be looking at ways in which we might involve more people in making music to the glory of God, if as Dr Dormer says, this is one of the factors encouraging growth?

Students often work on different timetables from the rest of humankind; sometimes turning night into day. Chaplains have to take that into account. We are open twelve hours a day but life in the West End does not stop at 7.00 p.m. Many of those who work around us are on their way home by then, but others often stay on after work. Shops increasingly stay open late. People come here for entertainment and recreation: something highlighted by the ongoing row over Westminster Council’s plans to introduce parking charges in the evenings and on Sundays. Ought we to be thinking of late opening on at least some days? If we should, how can we manage it?

At the close of one year and the opening of another, we find ourselves in times of great economic uncertainty. It is possible that we may face another economic recession, or even a decade of economic stagnation. Such times should make us think seriously about our financial affairs. What do we spend our money on? What is really necessary? For Christians, this should not be an excuse to cut down on our support of the Church’s work. That work will be even more important and should be a priority.

Over the past fifteen years we have made an enormous investment in the future of our church building. Much of this has come from the resources of the congregation, past as well as present. The work of restoration is not yet complete, but in the coming years we need to pay renewed attention to our other major budget items: our parish staff and our music. That means we all need to take seriously our duty to give as generously as we can in support of God's mission here. Many already do, but others do not seem to have got the message yet! Our income from live-giving has levelled out while expenditure has not. We keep a tight watch on expenditure and the only major savings we could make would involve reducing clergy, musical or office staff. We could run the parish a great deal more cheaply if we abolished Sunday Evensong, or reduced the weekday services to a level which could be managed by one priest; but make no mistake about it, All Saints would be a shadow of its former self.

I feel sure that is not what people want, but it is up to you.

With blessings for Christmas and the New Year.

Alan Moses

PARISH NOTES

Sunday Parking

Westminster City Council continues to press ahead with its plans to introduce parking charges in the evenings and on Sundays, in spite of a storm of opposition. This began with church-goers, who were the first to wake up to what was going on, and has now been joined by a chorus of businesses and politicians including the Mayor of London and cabinet ministers.

Unless the Council has a last minute change of mind, the charges will come into force on January 9th. On Sunday they begin at 1.00 p.m. and will be £4.80 per hour.

Restoration Programme

We are enjoying the results of Phase 3 of the restoration. Even on a dull winter day, the church seems to glow. There has been considerable interest in what has been achieved: Colin Kerr has given no less than three illustrated lectures on it in the space of one week: one of them the Ecclesiological Society's **Stephen Dykes Bower Memorial Lecture**. He was joined in this by the Vicar who spoke about the restoration programme from the parish point of view and Deborah Collis of Taylor Pierce who spoke about the work of the conservators. The Ecclesiological Society is the successor of the Cambridge Camden Society which sponsored All Saints as its model church.

There are some smaller items which remain to be completed when funds become available:

- some work on the east wall just above the altar which has suffered a good deal of damage at some time in the past;
- the chancel gates;
- the altar rails which we are going to extend (they had been cut back to their present minimal length in the past);
- the Lady Altar needs some cleaning and repair work.

On a larger scale, the New Year will see us beginning the planning for a new lighting system which will also involve rewiring.

Email Newsletter

This new form of communication from All Saints now has 145 subscribers, including

some from as far away as Australia and the United States. Our thanks to Fr John for setting it up.

Advent Course

Our course on pictures which illustrated the Four Last Things — Death and Judgement, Heaven and Hell — at the National Gallery, was a great success. Our thanks are due to Fr Pritchard for the inspiration and the organisation, and to our two lecturers from the Gallery, Al Johnson and Carlie Allan, who gave us much to think about.

One participant commented: “Special quiet time in the hectic weeks before Christmas — to pause, reflect, enquire, gain insights, getting to know people, pictures and themes. Glad I came.”

FUNERALS

Philip Gould (Lord Gould of Brookwood) first came to All Saints about four years ago, when he was already ill. He was prepared for confirmation and, when well enough, was a regular on Sunday evenings.

His funeral Mass was celebrated on November 15th. All Saints is used to organising big services, but this one had elements which we don't normally encounter: not least the presence of two former prime ministers and more politicians than we could count. This was the first time we have had a service preceded by sniffer dogs checking the church for explosives: the kind of thing which is routine at Westminster Abbey and St Paul's. We were greatly helped by Philip's colleagues from Freud Communications in Newman Street, especially our own Rebecca Hirst. They made the logistics of bringing in an extra 200 chairs to seat the congregation, liaising with the police about security,

coping with the media, and a host of other things manageable, so that All Saints could do what it does best. The lessons were read by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown; the intercessions were lead by Philip's sister, the Revd Dr Jill Tucker, Fr Beauchamp and Philip's friend Matthew Freud. Before the Commendation, another friend from the world of politics, Alastair Campbell, read a letter he had written to Philip just before he died.

Fr Gillean Craig of St Mary Abbots in Kensington told the Vicar that he had met someone at his parish school who had been at the funeral. As well as the liturgy and music, she had been struck most by how welcome the congregation, many of them unused to our ways, had been made to feel.

Norman Caplin died in hospital after a stroke on November 18th. Norman had been at church earlier in the month when his Mass setting was being sung. Parts of it were sung again at his funeral Mass which was attended by a large congregation made up of his family and friends, fellow-members of All Saints, former choristers and fellow-church musicians. The lessons were read by Norman's son and daughter Michael and Elaine.

Our original plan was to have refreshments in the courtyard after the Mass, as we had done after the Harry Brama birthday celebration. However, the weather was against us and the catering team had to turn to plan B which was to have the refreshments in church. This worked well and follows the practice we have become familiar with at the Annunciation and St Cyprian's, which like us have very limited space other than in the nave of the church itself.

The Vicar's funeral sermon and an appreciation of Norman the musician by Paul Brough both appear in this issue.

Mary Burton

As this issue of the Parish Paper was going to press we were preparing for the funeral of Mary who died suddenly on Sunday December 4th. She had been with us at the National Gallery for the Advent Course on the previous Thursday and for the Walsingham Cell Mass the day before she died.

May they rest in peace.

Dr Harry Brama Writes:

I very much want to record my thanks to all who were involved in the occasion to mark my birthday on November 11th. First to Paul Brough whose idea it was and to Mhairi Ellis who helped with the organisation. And off course to the Choir and organists who performed magnificently.

I am grateful to the Vicar and Churchwardens for their support, and to all the members of the All Saints family who worked hard on the night to make sure all went smoothly; in the church and with refreshments afterwards.

A frequent refrain from those attending was how well-organised it all was. I would agree with that. For me the evening was rather daunting, but I continue to look back on it with much pleasure. Thank you.

MOVES

Canon James Rosenthal

Fr Jim who has been living at No 8, will leave us in January to take up a house of the duty post as priest at St Nicholas at Wade and St Mary the Virgin, Chislet, in

Thanet in the Diocese of Canterbury. He is to be licensed at 3.00 p.m. on Saturday January 21st.

He is organising a coach for friends from London. This will leave Westminster at 10.45 a.m. and cost £17 per person. Please contact Fr Jim if you wish to go.

In the meantime, in his rôle with the St Nicholas Society, he celebrated the 8.00 a.m. Mass on St Nicholas Day and entertained the congregation to drinks and cake afterwards. There was another St Nicholas celebration on the following Saturday at the Annunciation.

We are grateful to him for his help, especially with weekday services, and wish him every blessing in his new ministry.

Bishop Michael Marshall

Bishop Michael has been asked to be Interim Rector of the Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York City. His last Sunday at the Annunciation will be on January 8th.

Bishop Ambrose Weekes

Bishop Ambrose has left Charterhouse to go to a nursing home in Isleworth which is better equipped to provide the care he needs.

“**Kids For Kids**” is a charity which works in the troubled Darfur region of the Sudan. One of its activities is to provide goats which can then supply milk for malnourished children to drink: hence the name. We were approached earlier in the year by its founder and director Patricia Parker to host its 10th anniversary Carol Concert. We do not normally do carol concerts, but made an exception for this good cause.

THIS IS OUR FAITH

A course for people from our three parishes: those who wish to be prepared for adult baptism and confirmation or reception into the Church of England; or simply to find out more about the Christian faith and life.

There will be an introductory meeting at 3.30 p.m. on Sunday January 29th in the Parish room at All Saints.

The Confirmation will be on March 26th at the Annunciation.

If you would like more information in the meantime, please speak to one of the clergy.

BIBLE STUDY

Last year we ran a monthly series of Bible Studies on St Matthew's Gospel. Unfortunately, this ran into diary problems when we were short-staffed.

Now that we are up to strength, we plan to resume the studies. We will be studying St Mark which is the Gospel the Church is reading at the Sunday Eucharist this year.

The group will meet in the Vicarage for a simple supper at 7.00 p.m. and aim to finish by 8.30 p.m.

The dates are: Wednesdays — January 18th, February 15th, March 14th, April 18th, May 16th, and June 20th.

DIARY DATES

Sunday 1 January — Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

9.30 a.m. and 5.15 p.m. Low Masses

10.20 a.m. Morning Prayer

11.00 a.m. High Mass

4.30 p.m. Evening Prayer *said*

Monday 2 January

Low Mass at 1.10 p.m. only

Friday 6 January — The Epiphany

6.30 p.m. Procession and High Mass

Preacher: Canon Chris Chivers, Vicar, John Keble Church, Mill Hill

Low Masses at 8.00 a.m. and 1.10 p.m.

Sunday 8 January — The Baptism of Christ *1st Sunday of Epiphany*

11.00 a.m. High Mass

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

Monday 16 January

There is a meeting of the **Parochial Church Council** at **7.00 p.m.**

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: 18 - 25 January

Friday 27 January — Quiz Night

Fr Beauchamp and his Churchwardens have invited us to hold the next Quiz Night at St Cyprian's, Clarence Gate, commencing at 7.00 p.m. Many of you have taken part in previous Quiz Nights and will know that they are occasions for fun, friendship and fierce competition. Fuller details will be provided, but in the meantime please put the date in your diaries and start forming your teams!

Thursday 2 February — Presentation of Christ *Candlemas*

6.30 p.m. Procession and High Mass

Preacher: The Very Revd Victor Stock, Dean of Guildford

Low Masses at 8.00 a.m. and 1.10 p.m.

LONDON CALLING 2012

Dinners for the Community at the Annunciation, Marble Arch

In October 2011 a Stewardship Dinner was held at the Annunciation. The speaker was Mark Field, our local MP. He addressed the question of localism. One thing which came out of the dinner was a desire to have similar events so that people can have an opportunity to talk about the big issues. People with young children often find it hard to have time away that combines with a good night out and some time to reflect. Two members of the Annunciation, Billy Murray and Ben Wegg-Prosser who are both journalists, have put together a series of dinners with guest speakers starting in February.

- Wednesday February 8th ***“The Past and Present Community”***: Tristram Hunt MP and historian, and Graham King (Westminster Council)
- Tuesday March 6th ***“The Future Community”***: Matthew Taylor (Royal Society of Arts) and Bill Moore (Portman Estate)
- Wednesday April 11th Mayoral Hustings
- Wednesday May 2nd Anton Thallman (Swiss Ambassador) and Earle Arney (Architect)
- Wednesday June 13th ***“Children and the Community”***: Jo Shuter (Quintin Kynaston School) and Louise Casey (Government Troubled Families Team)
- Wednesday July 4th ***“Public Services and the Inner City Community”***: Nigel Adams (Retired Police Officer).

The dinners are being provided by local restaurants and caterers at cost and the Cumberland and Churchill Hyatt Regency Hotels are providing other resources.

Tickets for dinners cost £25 each and if you book all six at once, you get one free.

For more information and booking, contact Londoncallingdinner@yahoo.co.uk or 020 7549 6611. Do come and be part of this exciting venture at the other end of Oxford Street.

Fr Gerald

SECURING THE FUTURE

The great programme of restoration work on which we have been engaged over the last 15 years is not simply for the benefit of those of us who now worship at all Saints, but for future generations.

The All Saints Choir and Music Trust

The Trust exists to support the musical life of All Saints which had always been at the heart of our worship. Income from the trust's capital is used to help the PCC with the costs of the choir.

At present, the income allows it to meet approximately half of our music budget. The hope since it was founded by Fr David Hutt, was that sufficient capital would be amassed to meet the whole music budget.

The All Saints Foundation

The Foundation exists to assist the PCC in the care of our Grade 1 listed building. The Trust's capital can be spent and the expenditure of recent years on our restoration programme means that its reserves are now quite low.

The PCC encourages members and friends of All Saints to remember one or both of the trusts in their wills.

Further information is available from Trusts' Administrators:

Geoffrey Woodcock for the Choir and Music Trust

and

Damon Brash for the All Saints Foundation.

Both can be contacted through the Parish Office.

NORMAN CAPLIN — THE VICAR'S SERMON AT THE FUNERAL MASS NOVEMBER 29th, 2011

Someone pictured Norman in heaven the other day: leaning against a wall, glass in one hand and cigarette in the other. Well, there is no mention of tobacco in Isaiah's vision of the heavenly banquet, so Norman will just have to make do with incense. He's had plenty of practice.

But that passage from Isaiah seemed apt for one whose worship of God in this place was always rounded off with a visit to the Cock along the road for a pint with the

choir. His last visit was only a few short weeks ago when the choir was singing the Mass he wrote for this church and for them; and they are singing part of it for him again today.

When I first got to know Norman in my early years here, he was still active; playing the organ and directing the choir when needed. He could still drive in those days; indeed he would often act as my chauffeur, taking me to visit Nell Titley

in Whipps Cross Hospital or at home after she had a stroke.

Norman's driving, it has to be said, could be almost as much of an incentive to prayer as his music, but for a rather different reason. His approach seemed to be to point the car in the direction he wanted to go and trust that everyone else would get out of the way. His pedal technique on the organ and in the car seemed at opposite poles. Then for a short while, he had one of those electric buggies for the disabled, but a racing turn gone wrong in South Woodford High Street brought his driving career to an end.

Norman spent his working life in insurance at Lloyds. Whenever he talked about that life, it almost seemed that he enjoyed it most for the places it took him to and the people he met through it; and the financial security it gave to enjoy a much richer and wider life: a life of music and family, intellectual curiosity and conversation; and of course a certain amount of beer.

He had come here to serve as assistant organist to Dr Eric Arnold, in those difficult times after the closure of the choir school. The two men were, as Bishop David Hope said to me the other day, quite a contrast.

Since those days, Norman has collaborated happily with both **Harry Bramma** and **Paul Brough**. When we were celebrating Harry's 75th birthday a couple of weeks ago, I said that, in addition to his musical skills, Harry had brought to the life of this place a theological understanding of the relationship between music and worship, a deep Christian devotion and a warmth of humanity and friendship.

This was equally true of Norman, which is perhaps why he and Harry got on so well; although we can't forget their shared love of beer.

Norman and Lily had begun their Christian lives as Baptists: a far cry from a place like this, but they had found their spiritual home in the Church of England; in a wider room, as the hymn we have just sung suggests.

In one of the first conversations I remember with Norman, I think it was when Lily was the one who was incapacitated — by a broken hip after falling on holiday in Derbyshire — he quoted from memory a sentence of **Karl Barth**, the theological giant of the last century.

Barth, whom I had to study as a Divinity student in Edinburgh, was a German-speaking Swiss Reformed theologian who did not do short and pithy sentences. All Saints, Margaret Street, would not have been his natural home, save for one thing. He would have forgiven us much, because we sing Mozart. For him Mozart was the greatest of all composers because, unlike the romantics who followed, he was no solitary, heroic figure glorying in iconoclasm and, novelty. For Barth, he gave music and voice to creation's praise of its God, from within the limits of a fallen humanity dependent on the grace of God rather than human exertion and genius alone. From within the boundaries of the tradition, he was enabled to produce something new and original.

Norman would modestly brush aside any comparison with Barth's musical hero. He would refer to all of those descants produced at the request of members of the choir with a wry self-deprecating smile

as: “**ABCD — Another Beep Caplin Descant**”. We will have one of them later.

If we think about Norman’s musical work: the major compositions he wrote for this place, his *Missa Omnium Sanctorum* which the choir will sing part of, and “*Christ is the Morning Star*”, came when his physical disabilities made it increasingly difficult and then impossible to play; they made him concentrate on the essentials. They were also the fruit, I’m sure, of long years of reflection on the Church’s musical tradition, this place’s musical life, on his reading and thinking about faith and worship; all those sermons, which unlike some church musicians, he always listened to attentively. Out of them all came something which was original and beautiful.

His music could not only lift our hearts and praises to God, it had the power to convert. His niece Heather, who was definitely off God for many years, came to hear his music being sung. She is now a reader in the Church of England.

Another theologian-musician of the last century was the German martyr **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**, who might have had an easier and longer life if he had become a concert pianist. He wrote from his prison cell, where the music he kept in his head was one of the things that sustained him, of the Christian life as a polyphony, in which various voices are held together by the *cantus firmus* which is faith in Christ as the revelation of God’s love.

Norman’s *cantus firmus* was provided by his faith but also by family and friendship. It’s impossible to entirely disentangle them.

I don’t know about you, but I find it impossible to think of Norman without Lily. I think it was on my last visit to take them communion at home, when we were sitting having a sandwich afterwards, and Norman was looking intently at Lily with a smile on his face. She thought that he was trying to say something and asked if he wanted something. He didn’t say anything, and I said, “**Oh, it’s just quiet adoration**” and he responded, “**That’s right**”.

Paul Brough said to me that, in the pub after church, they often struck him as being like a couple of teenagers in love. There was never any doubting their love for each other. Teenagers in love of course tend to have eyes for no one else, to be completely absorbed in each other. No one could say that of Norman and Lily. They married sixty two years ago and had children and grandchildren; and how devoted to them and proud of them he was. But their life and love was not restricted to each other or their inner family circle: its very depth and quality was what enabled them to be so open to so many people who found in them, their home and their company, welcome and friendship, encouragement and support, through bad times as well as good; even when the givers themselves might have reasonably expected to be supported rather than supporting.

In these last dozen years, Norman had to learn to cope with incapacity, to be dependent on others, and not just on people he knew, but on nurses and carers, on the kindness of strangers. That is no easy lesson but it is a vital one. We are not made to be solitary individuals but persons in relationship, in family and friendships. That’s where we grow and that’s where

Norman grew; even as his physical frame shrank, became too small for him, as Elaine said to me the other day.

Their joint example has encouraged many who have known them to be better than we might otherwise have been. That this church has been a gentler and kinder, a more gracious and thoughtful place than it might well have been, is in some measure due to them.

We have come together today to thank God for Norman, to hold him and his family in the love which they shared with us. We have come to **“sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in our hearts to God”** we will go on making music to the glory of God.

We will raise a convivial glass in

Norman’s memory.

We have come to share in those things of faith which shaped and strengthened him: word and sacrament and prayer and mutual love.

And we will, I hope, as we think of him, take faith and love, family and friendship the more seriously, as we recognise in them the sources of a life richly and well-lived; a preparation for the greater life to which, in those words of the Venerable Bede which will be sung as he is carried from church:

“Christ the Morning Star, who, when the light of this world is past, brings to his saints the promise of the light of life, and opens everlasting day” has now called Norman.

NORMAN CAPLIN THE COMPOSER

One Low Sunday in the late 1970s I attended High Mass at All Saints, being then a teenager who’d “got High Church”. As members of our music department still do, a dapper gentleman in cassock and cotta crossed the chancel a few minutes before Mass, genuflected and made his way to the organ. This was not Dr Arnold, I thought, and I was to learn that the exemplary improvising and accompaniment of the choral items and plainsong, but above all the superb leading of the hymns were the work of his assistant, Mr Norman Caplin.

As the Vicar explained in his sermon at the Funeral Mass, Norman’s physical disability later in life was to bring about a more active pen on the manuscript paper. I first encountered his music when producing the choir’s recording *“Gaudeamus”* for

Dr Brama. Here, I thought, is something original. Though steeped in the craft of Dr Lloyd Webber, Norman’s music is severely striking. I am certain that his grasp of harmony and voice-leading is up to the standard of one of the old University doctorates; those held by Francis Jackson and the late Bernard Rose, for example. More than this, somehow, there is a fusion with those great theatre composers that Norman loved so much: Rodgers, Kern, and even Bernstein. And of course there’s absolutely nothing wrong with that, not least because such devices were beloved of two more of our favoured All Saints composers, Mozart and Poulenc. But it is all shot-through with the deepest possible understanding of music as the liturgical servant.

All of this it should be remembered, was developed as a disciplined amateur with a talent and standards that would shame many so-called professionals. One of Norman's pet pub conversations was to muse on the world in which he was brought up, where expectations of joining the Services and labouring in business put paid to even

the faint notion of a professional musical education. In this matter, as in all other obstacles in his life, he never complained. All of these paradoxes and coincidences have meant that we at All Saints have benefited from an outstanding musician and a true friend.

Paul Brough

ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL 2011

THE SERMON BY THE REVD DR ANDERS BERGQUIST, VICAR, ST JOHN'S WOOD CHURCH ON ALL SOULS DAY 2 NOVEMBER 2011

"In the eyes of the foolish, they seemed to have died..."

I'm not sure why the author of Wisdom thought they were foolish. Presumably they had died, and their death was real. Death is real. In this Mass, as in every Mass, but with special clarity tonight, Christianity deals with the reality of death. Many of you will be familiar with a passage that is often read at funerals. The words are by Henry Scott-Holland, sometime Canon of St Paul's, and the passage begins "Death is nothing at all". I recognise, and am grateful, for the comfort that these words bring to many who grieve, but I can never hear them read without a sense of inner protest. "Death is nothing at all." Really? It seems a very great deal. "Call me by my old familiar name." You can call him what you like: he can't hear you. He's dead. That's the terrible reality of death: the way that the possibility of relationship seems to be utterly taken away. You cannot be with the dead as you were, because they are dead — beyond ordinary relationship.

When they took Jesus' body down from the cross, it lay as dead weight in their arms; and when Joseph of Arimathaea and the Marys prepared his body for burial and laid it in the tomb, their loving offices were terribly one-sided. They could do this for the body of Jesus, but he could do nothing in return. It is this absence of relationship that is expressed on that most extraordinary day of the Christian year, Holy Saturday: the day that has no liturgy, and can have no liturgy, because it is the day of the being dead of the Son of God. The yearning for lost relationship is movingly expressed in the recitation of the names of the dead at the All Souls' Day Mass: we start, tonight, by weighing the heavy reality of death.

Then, in the face of that reality, we also affirm tonight the precise contours of our Christian hope. This is not a vague hope in "life after death"; it is a proclamation of the risen-ness of the once-dead Christ, and of our participation in his risen life. "Do you not know," says St Paul, "that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus

were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6: 3 - 4.) In newness of life: that is, in newness of relationship, with Christ and with one another. Therefore Christian hope insists on the resurrection of the body, because for us human beings, relationships are mediated through the body, and disembodied relationship is unimaginable.

What sort of a body we shall eventually have, Paul struggles to explain to the Corinthians; and I was always rather delighted by those sixth-century Egyptian monks who thought that, because the sphere was the mathematically perfect shape, our resurrection bodies would be perfectly spherical. However that may be, the New Testament suggests that we first wait after death, and then take our place at the heavenly banquet, on the ultimate day when God’s loving purpose is fully and finally accomplished: when we enter on what Tom Wright calls “life after life after death”. Then there is perfection of relationship. In T.S. Eliot’s wonderful line, “the communication of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living”.

But what are we to say in the meantime? Do the dead, who have gone before us, know what we are doing tonight? Do they hear their names read? I feel this question with special force when, as sometimes happens, I am taking a wedding where the bride’s father is not there to bring her into church, because he has died, perhaps quite recently. Does he know? Is he proud of

his daughter on her wedding day? There is a most interesting answer to this kind of question in *The Divine Comedy*. The happy dead in the *Paradiso* are entirely concentrated on the contemplation of the beauty of God; it is inconceivable that they should look backwards towards earth. But when lovely things happen on earth, there is a tremor or vibration of love and delight in heaven, and so the dead can see these earthly things as movements across the face of God, from whose contemplation they do not cease for a moment. It is out of love that we remember those whom we remember tonight, celebrating a relationship which seemed to be sundered by death, but which has been made possible again — and not only made possible, but renewed and transformed — in Christ. Our prayers for them are spontaneous expressions of that living relationship.

This is the point at which our evangelical brothers and sisters often become nervous. They are properly anxious that nothing should undermine the finality and sufficiency of what Christ has done for us by his gift of himself on the cross. When we pray for the dead, do we not imply that Christ’s sacrifice was not enough of itself, and that, even if nothing more needs to be added, at least something more is needed to realize its full efficacy?

I hope reassurance can be given. There is no suggestion tonight that anything more is needed, beyond the faithful receiving of what Christ alone has completely and wonderfully done. So what prayers can the dead need then? The answer is intuited. We know intuitively that we are, none of us, not even the best

of us, entirely ready for the unmediated experience of the beauty and holiness of God. We are cleansed indeed by the blood of Christ, but this experience will be like Dante's staring at the sun as he starts his journey through Paradise. Your eyes have to get used to it. The light is too bright at first; the holiness of God too searing. We have to grow.

This intuitive sense of the need for post mortem growth is the heart of the idea of Purgatory. Article XXII of the Thirty-Nine tells us to reject the "Romish Doctrine" of Purgatory — that is, as it was articulated in the sixteenth century. This ended up being a fantastical banking system, in which the church issued indulgences, i.e. a species of cheque, drawn on the "treasury of merits", i.e. the works of supererogation built up by the saints, which let you off x years in Purgatory in return for y or z good work. In practice, it became a way of raising money (famously, for the rebuilding of St Peter's, which was the occasion of Luther's attack), and we are well rid of it. It seems a curiously one-sided system of accountancy in any case: you are only ever told how many years of remission you will get; you never know how long your sentence is in the first place.

But the true insight, that we must continue to grow after death to become capable of the vision of God, and that there is something searing about that growth as well as wonderful, remains. And so we, stumbling to grow as disciples in this life, modestly struggling to learn

holiness, join ourselves in prayer to those whose learning has become immeasurably deeper.

And who is to say that the learning ever ends? Gregory of Nyssa thought that, because the love and beauty and holiness of God were inexhaustible, our journey of discovery into the heart of God must also be endless. The more we grow in our capacity to contemplate the love and beauty and holiness of God, the more we find there is to contemplate, and the deeper we are drawn into the mystery. Eternal life is not, then, a static vision, or an endlessly repeated moment ("casting down their golden crowns upon the glassy sea" — what do they do then? — pick them up, and cast them down again, over and over?); it is the exploration of a divine landscape which becomes more beautiful and more extraordinary the more you venture into it. Its exploration has no end. Gregory called this idea *epektasis*, stretching out or reaching out.

The same idea is more familiarly found in *The Last Battle*, the last of the Chronicles of Narnia. There has been a train accident on earth, and the Pevensy children have, in earthly terms, died. In Narnia, they set off behind Aslan on an endless journey of discovery — "higher up, and further in". That is what waits for us, as it waited for those who have gone before us: the endless exploration of the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to whom be glory and majesty now and to the ages of ages. Amen.

A SPEECH BY WILLIAM MURRAY GIVEN AT THE DINNER FOR THE COMMUNITY AT THE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION, MARBLE ARCH, ON WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 19th 2011

My banns were read here, my children were christened here. My family went through the highs of the Designer Jumble Sale (twice), and the lows of Post-Natal-Depression here. Our home abuts the bell tower — the tolling bell telling us that we are running late. Choir practice floats up into our bathroom and our bedroom.

Father Barrie, soon, Bishop Michael and Father Gerald, Patrick and Mavis, Laurie and her Rainbows.

Sunday School growing from tiny to enormous. My daughter went to nursery downstairs, and now goes to Hampden Gurney — and my son follows her, far too small to be in uniform, to nursery. This place provides the literal and metaphorical backdrop to my life as a husband and a father. Sometimes it also reflects it. I am sometimes deficient, sometimes absent, but mostly I try my best.

It, like the other critical institutions in my life — wife, family, love, friendship — is always there — out of the window, downstairs, tolling, singing, reminding me of its permanence, its constancy.

Nowadays more and more of us live in cities. For the first time over 50% of the world lives in urban environments, and 79% of Britons do. London is the 20th biggest city in the world, with a population of about 12.5 million people with about 300 languages spoken.

However, we still basically know the same 150 people (for that is Dunbar's Number — or the optimum number for human social groups) — but they are no longer the 150 people nearest to us — or the 150 people on whom we are most dependent — or in fact the only 150 people that we know — as they would have been living in a country hamlet in Hardy's Britain. They are the 150 people, probably spread around the world, with whom we have regular social contact, where we understand their relationship to us, and to the group.

Because of the Internet, because of the compacted nature of our modern existence, we get much greater choice about who make up our groups. Groups become more specialised, less representative of real society — and potentially, more isolated.

It is this geographically disparate, and sometimes socially divisive nature of contemporary society that makes regular, physical, inclusive, social and local interaction of community so important.

It is the gathering together; the broadest welcome; the collective worship within a meeting place that is timeless and permanent — where a truth greater than ourselves transcends the fleeting nature of our corporeal lives.

A place where we can be reminded of the structural web beneath our daily lives that connects society together — school, church, government and community.

So to answer the question that Father Gerald asked me to address — what does the Annunciation mean to me?

Lord Rees, the Astronomer Royal, said “I grew up in the traditions of the Anglican Church and those are the customs of my ‘tribe’.”

Well, this is my tribe. These are part of the foundations, walls and beliefs that make up the boundaries of who I am, of what I think is important in life.

The physical embodiment of the spiritual.

The Real opposed to the Virtual.

A constant reminder of the value of humanity.

A smile, a nod or a card. A hello, a chat and a ‘how are you?’.

A shared experience. A shared belief. A sense of belonging.

Greater than the sum of its parts. Dynamic, cosmopolitan and eternal. Forgiving, human and constant. Vibrant and giving.

A community.

100 YEARS AGO

The Vicar wrote:

“The Midnight Mass at Christmas was more moving and beautiful than any words of mine can suggest.

“The church was comfortably filled,

not painfully crowded, and all the arrangements for the big Communion worked quite smoothly. I had limited the number to 150 so as not to prolong the service too far into the morning. Large numbers visited the Crib before leaving the church, and since, during the hours which the church is open, there has been a constant succession of worshippers to the quiet chapel into which the baptistery has been temporarily transformed. All are agreed that the Crib, which is a gift of a member of the Men’s Guild, is an extraordinarily beautiful one.”

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 1 JANUARY THE NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 338

Mass: Mass of St Ignatius — Laloux

Lessons: Numbers 6: 22 - end

Psalm 8

Galatians 4: 4 - 7

Hymn: 37

Gospel: Luke 2: 15 - 21

Preacher: The Vicar,

Prebendary Alan Moses

Creed: Credo II

Anthem: A New Year Carol — Britten

Hymns: 39 (v 5 arr Willcocks), 387, 258

Voluntary: March from the Occasional

Oratorio — Handel

FRIDAY 6 JANUARY EPIPHANY

PROCESSION AND HIGH MASS AT 6.30 p.m.

Processional Hymn: 50 (T 338)

Introit: Ecce advenit

Mass: Missa Brevis in F — Mozart

Lessons: Isaiah 60: 1 - 6

Psalm 72

Ephesians 3: 1 - 12

Hymn: 49 (ii)

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1 - 12

Preacher: The Revd Canon Chris Chivers,
Vicar, John Keble Church,
Mill Hill

Anthem: There shall a star from Jacob
come forth — Mendelssohn

Hymns: 48, 51, 47

Voluntary: Fuga con Corale 'Jesu, meine
Freude' Op.87 No 2
—Karg-Elert

● SUNDAY 8 JANUARY FIRST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 55

Introit: In excelso throno

Mass: Missa 'O magnum mysterium'
— Victoria

Lessons: Genesis 1: 1 - 5

Psalm 29

Acts 19: 1 - 7

Hymn: 58 (T 128 (ii))

Gospel: Mark 1: 4 - 11

Preacher: Fr Julian Browning

Anthem: O magnum mysterium
— Poulenc

Hymns: 52, 57, 470

Voluntary: Les enfants de Dieu
— Messiaen

EPIPHANY CAROL SERVICE at 6.00 p.m.

A Service of Readings and Music for the
Epiphany with the Choir of All Saints.

● SUNDAY 15 JANUARY SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 475 (v 4 Descant
— Gray)

Introit: Omnis terra

Mass: Jugendmesse — Haydn

Lessons: 1 Samuel 3: 1 - 10

Psalm 139

Revelation 5: 1 - 10

Hymn: 349

Gospel: John 1: 43 - end

Preacher: Fr John Pritchard

Creed: Credo III

Anthem: Lo! Star-led chiefs — Crotch

Hymns: 294, 295, 271 (T Vale)

Voluntary: Tanz-Toccata — Heiller

SOLEMN EVENSONG at 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 96

Lessons: Isaiah 60: 9 - end
Hebrews 6: 17 - 7: 10

Office Hymn: 46

Canticles: Service in B minor — Noble

Anthem: Holy is the true light — Harris

Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses

Hymn: 401

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Harry Bramma (No 2)

Hymn: 287
Tantum Ergo: Harry Bramma (No 2)
Voluntary: Adagio — Bridge

● **SUNDAY 22 JANUARY**
THIRD SUNDAY
OF EPIPHANY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 56
Introit: Adorate
Mass: Missa secundi toni — Lassus
Lessons: Genesis 14: 17 - 20
Psalm 128
Revelation 19: 6 - 10
Hymn: 443
Gospel: John 2: 1 - 11
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Creed: Credo II
Anthem: O ye little flock — Amner
Hymns: 302, 287, 361
Voluntary: Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist
— Bach

SOLEMN EVENSONG
AT 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 33
Lessons: Jeremiah 3: 21 - 4: 2
Titus 2: 1 - 8, 11 - 14
Office Hymn: 46
Canticles: The First Service — Morley
Anthem: O magnum mysterium
— Victoria
Preacher: Fr John Pritchard
Hymn: 484 (T 167)

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Sheppard
Hymn: 481 (T 462)
Tantum Ergo: Duruflé
Voluntary: Fantasia — Cosyn

● **SUNDAY 29 JANUARY**
FOURTH SUNDAY
OF EPIPHANY

HIGH MASS AT 11.00 a.m.

Entrance Hymn: 498
Introit: Adorate
Mass: Missa Brevis — Berkeley
Lessons: Deuteronomy 18: 15 - 20
Psalm 111
Revelation 12: 1 - 5a
Hymn: 360
Gospel: Mark 1: 21 - 28
Preacher: Fr John Pritchard
Creed: Credo III
Anthem: Steal away to Jesus
— trad spiritual, arr Tippett
Hymns: 53, 391, 415 (T 346;
v 6 Descant — Gray)
Voluntary: Allegro Risoluto (Plymouth
Suite) — Whitlock

SOLEMN EVENSONG
AT 6.00 p.m.

Psalm: 34
Lessons: 1 Samuel 3: 1 - 20
1 Corinthians 14: 12 - 20
Office Hymn: 46
Canticles: The St John's Service
— Tippett
Anthem: Jesu, the very thought of thee
— Bairstow
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning
Hymn: 353

BENEDICTION

O Salutaris: Laloux
Hymn: 386 (T 385)
Tantum Ergo: Laloux
Voluntary: Trio Sonata in C 1st
movement BWV 529
— Bach

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All matters relating to Stewardship should be addressed to the Stewardship Administrator, Mr Dennis Davis, c/o All Saints Vicarage, 7, Margaret Street, London W1W 8JG

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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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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.

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CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY 2012

1 ✕ NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS

OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 2 | St Basil the Great and St Gregory of Nazianzus | The Bishop of London |
| 3 | | The homeless |
| 4 | | The unemployed |
| 5 | | Unity |
| 6 | EPIPHANY | Those in need |
| 7 | | Society of All Saints' Sisters of the Poor |

8 ✕ THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE

1st Sunday of Epiphany

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|
| 9 | | The Emergency Services |
| 10 | <i>William Laud, archbishop</i> | The Archbishop of Canterbury |
| 11 | <i>Mary Slessor, missionary</i> | Friends of All Saints |
| 12 | St Aelred, abbot; <i>Benedict Biscop, scholar</i> | Unity |

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------|
| 13 | St Hilary, bishop | Those in need |
| 14 | | Hospitals |

15 ✕ 2nd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE

- | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------------|
| 16 | | Parochial Church Council |
| 17 | St Antony of Egypt; <i>Charles Gore</i> | Community of the Resurrection |

18 **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: 18 - 25 January**

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 19 | St Wulfstan, bishop | Unity |
| 20 | <i>Richard Rolle, spiritual writer</i> | Those in need |
| 21 | St Agnes, child martyr | Roman Catholic Church |

22 ✕ 3rd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 23 | | The Orthodox Churches |
| 24 | St Francis de Sales, bishop | The Free Churches |
| 25 | Conversion of St Paul | Unity of the Church |

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------|
| 26 | St Timothy & Titus, companions of St Paul | Vocations |
| 27 | | Those in need |

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|-------------|
| 28 | St Thomas Aquinas | Theologians |
|----|-------------------|-------------|

29 ✕ 4th SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 30 | St Charles, king and martyr | The Queen and Royal Family |
| 31 | <i>John Bosco, priest</i> | Church Schools |

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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