



All Saints Parish Paper

7, MARGARET STREET, LONDON W1W 8JG
www.allsaintsmargaretstreet.co.uk

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VICAR'S LETTER

One of the objects of our Lenten giving this year is the **Bishop of London's Mission Fund** which supports new mission efforts in our diocese with its expanding population. I should, in a spirit of transparency, declare an interest here, as my wife is its Secretary.

The origins of Lent go back to the early centuries of the Church. One of them was as the time of instruction and preparation for adult converts to be baptised at Easter.

The rites of Baptism and Confirmation in Common Worship include a Commission with a series of questions addressed to the newly baptised and confirmed which also form part of the renewal of baptismal vows at Easter. One of these is:

Will you proclaim by word and good example the good news of God in Christ?

I don't imagine that anyone taking part is likely to answer, "No," but I suspect many of us will have anxieties and reservations about the "by word" part. Perhaps we feel unskilled in speaking about our faith. We may have encountered manipulative and insensitive forms of evangelism in the past. A good many people at All Saints could be described as "recovering evangelicals". But bad evangelism should not mean no evangelism, and perhaps some of us need to get beyond the recovery stage.

When a group of us from our three

churches had a day on evangelism with Fr Tim Sledge a few months ago, one of the things he asked us to do was simply talk to the person next to us about our faith. Most of us found that it was not as frightening as we feared!

Fr Sledge made what I think is a vital point: that evangelisation — the proclamation of the Gospel, bringing people to faith — is a long term business, not a matter of quick fixes. The word "intentional" has been attached to evangelism in recent documents from the Church of England.

Churches like ours have tended to wait for people to turn up, rather than go out looking for them. We have assumed that most of them will have come to faith somewhere else. Is this an assumption we can make any longer?

The conclusions of the Church of England Church Growth Research Programme published as "**From Anecdote to Evidence**," suggest that we cannot. The evidence of declining church attendance, especially by the young, is too clear for that. The Church is declining because generations of church-goers are not being replaced and because the Church is not keeping young people in their teens and into young adulthood.

One widely-held myth is that it doesn't

matter if we don't have many young people in church, they will come when they get older. But the evidence shows that the large decline in church attendance has happened not because many adults have stopped going to church, but because more and more never start attending in the first place.

A bright young curate who worshipped with us on a Sunday off recently reported to his Vicar that the worship and preaching, music and hospitality, were excellent, but the congregation looked as if it did not have long for this world. He was exaggerating for effect, as cheeky young curates sometimes do, but even if the congregation at High Mass doesn't look like God's waiting room, we have been celebrating a lot of significant birthdays recently. I do not take back anything of what I said recently about the positive rôle of older people in the Church, but if we are to have more generations of old people, we must get them when they are young.

The research programme did not look specifically at parishes like ours. The nearest comparison seems to be the category called "Cathedrals and Greater Churches". "Greater Churches" are large city or town centre parishes with civic rôles. Many have them have been renamed as "Minsters". Like cathedrals they tend to have good music and to be open daily. They are looked to by other churches as a resource.

In recent years, cathedrals have experienced an increase in attendance, especially on weekdays.

When asked about reasons contributing to growing services, Deans suggested:

- ❖ Worship — the liturgical tradition and user-friendly service sheets
- ❖ Music — especially choral evensong and in congregational worshipping

- ❖ Preaching — confidence in the Gospel and teaching
- ❖ Generous hospitality — welcome, friendly atmosphere, personal feel
- ❖ Sense of Community — fellowship, young families, students
- ❖ Willingness to explore new patterns of worship
- ❖ Spiritual openness — inclusivity, prayer, pastoral care, reflective space, anonymity
- ❖ Emphasis on families and young people
- ❖ Engagement with culture and arts
- ❖ Educational programmes
- ❖ Discipleship and Christian nurture.

When worshippers were asked what the highest motivating facts for attending were, they said:

- ❖ Peace and contemplation
- ❖ Worship and Music
- ❖ Friendly atmosphere

The entries in our Visitors' Book echo these.

While all this may have come as something of a surprise to many, it is not just accidental. There seems to have been a major shift in consciousness in cathedrals. In times past, they just did what cathedrals do, daily worship and occasional special services, without worrying much whether anyone came or not. Now, as one Dean has said, "Cathedrals are about mission. To miss this is to misunderstand the task. Both traditional and new aspects of cathedral ministry are missional."

Speaking at a meeting on the mission of cathedrals Archbishop Justin, who has worked in two, suggested that it is the stability of cathedrals which enables them

to take risks, to try new things. If they don't work, the cathedral will go on. He also suggested that those who hadn't tried something which didn't work weren't trying hard enough!

It's clear that many of the features which have contributed to growth in cathedrals are present at All Saints. Fr Sledge suggested to us that it was not so much a matter of finding lots of new things to do, but doing what we do as well as possible. But just as cathedrals have had to become intentional about mission, so must we. Just as they have an ongoing stability, so have we, and we are being challenged to use that foundation to dare to do new things.

In a sense, we have already been doing that. When the Annunciation, and then St Cyprian's were in need, we could have said that we were far too busy here to support them, but we did not. It was a bit of a stretch, but look how it has been rewarded. The transformation in the life of the Annunciation and the signs of new life at St Cyprian's are due in some measure to our willingness to risk leaving our comfort zone to help others.

"From Anecdote to Evidence" highlights the importance of good leadership when it comes to growing churches, but it is good lay leadership as well as priests. Indeed, congregations which "leave it all to father," tend to decline.

The urgency of the situation, not just in Britain, but in Europe and other places, has prompted Pope Francis to write his letter "*Evangelii Gaudium* — The Joy of the Gospel: On the Proclamation of the Gospel in the Modern World". Papal documents are not often a gripping read, but this one bears the marks of its writer, rather than of being edited by ecclesiastical bureaucrats. On a humbler scale, that same sense of urgency has prompted me to arrange a Lenten study of the Pope's letter and the issues it raises, along with some of the agenda suggested by "From Anecdote to Evidence". I hope as many of you as possible will come along on Thursday evenings to explore how we might become more intentionally missionary at All Saints.

Yours in Christ,
Alan Moses

**ALL SAINTS, MARGARET STREET
CONFESSIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF LENT
and ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES**

Monday 3 March	12 - 1pm — Fr Barrie	5 - 6pm — The Vicar
Tuesday 4 March	12 - 1pm — The Vicar	5 - 6pm — Fr Browning

ASH WEDNESDAY — 5 March 2014

Low Mass with Ashing at 8am
Confessions 12 - 1pm — The Vicar
Low Mass with Ashing at 1.10pm
Confessions 5 - 5.45pm — The Vicar

6.30pm HIGH MASS AND IMPOSITION OF ASHES

FR MICHAEL BOWIE

Fr Michael will be licensed as our new assistant priest by the Archdeacon of Charing Cross at Evensong on Sunday 6th April. Dr Jacob will also preach at the service. We look forward to welcoming both Fr Michael and friends from Berkhamsted and elsewhere.

LENT AT ALL SAINTS

STUDY GROUPS AND DEVOTIONS

This year, we have two Lent Study Groups.

1. THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

We will be using the letter of Pope Francis on The Proclamation of the Gospel in the Modern World.

The Group will meet on Thursdays at 7pm in the Parish Room.

2. LOVE BADE ME WELCOME

The Poetry of George Herbert. The group will meet on Friday mornings at 11am in the Vicarage.

3. THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The devotion of Stations of the Cross will be held in church after the evening Mass on Fridays during Lent.

LENT APPEAL

Our Lenten almsgiving this year will be divided between our Mission Projects:

- ❖ The Church Army Hostel for Homeless Women in Marylebone
 - ❖ The work of Us (formerly USPG) in Zimbabwe
- and

The Bishop of London's Lent Appeal,

which will support:

- ❖ ALMA (The Angola, London and Mozambique Association) and
- ❖ The Bishop of London's Mission Fund.

Lent Boxes will be available in church.

HOLY WEEK AN INTRODUCTION

Saturday 22 March — 11am to 3.30pm —
A day to help us observe Lent, organised by Anglican Catholic Future in the Diocese of London and led by **Fr Christopher Woods**.

Fr Christopher was until recently Secretary of the Liturgical Commission and taught liturgy at Westcott House in Cambridge. He is now responsible for Adult Learning and Professional Development in the Stepney Episcopal Area. He has also long been a member of the Friends of All Saints!

Fr Gerald Beauchamp will speak about the devotion of the Way of the Cross. The day will end with Stations of the Cross, using our recently commissioned set.

Please sign up on the Anglican Catholic Future website or let the Parish Office know you are coming.

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week is a particularly special time at All Saints.

We will welcome as our preacher this year, an old friend of All Saints, **Bishop John Flack**.

Bishop John's ministry has stretched from West Yorkshire to the Diocese of Ely, where he was Bishop of Huntingdon, to Rome, where he was Director of the

Anglican Centre and the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative to the Holy See, then to the Diocese of Peterborough where he was both a parish priest and is an assistant bishop.

PREACHING AT ST JOHN'S, UPPER NORWOOD

Fr John Pritchard has been making good use of his former colleagues as guest preachers. Both Fr Gerald and Fr Michael Bowie have been to St John's in recent months. Fr Alan joined the roll on Sunday 9 February. He joked that, unlike London cabbies, clergy from north of the river are not afraid to travel south. Indeed, some of them even stay. The Mass was celebrated by the Bishop of Southwark (another émigré from the Diocese of London) and there were two archdeacons present. Fr Alan wondered if he was considered so dangerous a character, so much ecclesiastical authority was on hand to keep him under control! It was a very enjoyable visit, with a splendid lunch afterwards, and good to see Fr John happily settled; although not underestimating the magnitude of the task he faces. The beautiful church needs considerable work to make it structurally safe and the Vicarage and hall are to be rebuilt. Then there is the mission in the district.

A SWEDISH INVASION

The Vicar and Theresa hosted an "End of Christmas" party for the Deanery clergy on Friday 31 January, just before Candlemas. Our ranks were augmented by the presence of **Bishop Sven-Bernhard Fast** of Visby in Sweden and a group of colleagues. Bishop Fast is responsible for the oversight of Swedish congregations in England, and

the Swedish Church in Harcourt Street is part of our Deanery of St Marylebone. The party was a great success, not least thanks to our Scandinavian guests.

BRAY DAY CELEBRATION

Thomas Bray was the extraordinarily energetic priest founder of both SPCK and SPG in the 17th century (later USPG and now "Us"). The two societies held their joint commemoration at St Matthew's, Westminster, on Friday 14 February. All Saints has a long history of involvement with both societies. That tradition remains strong. Present at the service were a number of All Saints people: Clive Wright (a former chairman of SPCK), **Pat Phillips**, one of its longest-serving staff, **Theresa Moses** (a former Governor), **David Craig** (who has the distinction of having worked for both societies), **Jasmine Cullingford** (accompanied by Sophia) who is now working part-time for SPCK, and the Vicar who is a former Chairman of USPG and, like David Craig, an honorary Vice-President of the Society.

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, SUNDAY 30 MARCH 2014

A meeting of parishioners will be held on Sunday 30 March 2014 at 12.45pm in Church, at which Churchwardens for the year 2014 - 2015 will be appointed. Members of the Electoral Roll and residents of the Parish on the Electoral Register are eligible to attend. Any person wishing to be considered for the Post of Churchwarden must be (a) 21 years of age or over, (b) on the Electoral Roll and (c) an actual communicant member of

the Church of England. Nominations must be proposed and seconded, and candidates must indicate their willingness to stand. In addition, candidates are asked to submit a short typed or clearly written statement giving the reasons for their wishing to stand, and the benefits they could bring to the post if appointed.

Nominations for the post of Churchwarden MAY NOT be made at the meeting.

Prebendary L. A. Moses, Vicar

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will follow immediately. Only members of the Electoral Roll are eligible to attend.

At the meeting four members of the laity will be elected to serve on the Deanery Synod for the years 2014 - 2017. Retiring members are Mr R. Buchanan, Mr C. Stephens, Dr D. Thomas and Mr M. Woolley. All are eligible for re-election.

Six members of the laity will be elected to serve on the Parochial Church Council for the years 2014 - 2017, and three members of the laity to serve for the year 2014. The retiring members of the Council are Miss G. Dare, Mr D. Fielden, Miss C. Hodgetts, Mr R. Oram, Mr G. Prince and Mr Q. Williams. Of these, only Mr Williams is NOT ELIGIBLE for re-election. The one year vacancies have been caused by the resignations from the PCC of Mr D. Brash, Mrs D. Prior and Dr N. Hartman.

Candidates for election must be (a) on the Electoral Roll, (b) at least 16 years of age, and (c) actual communicant members of the Church of England. All nominations must be proposed and seconded by persons on the Electoral Roll and all

candidates must indicate a willingness to stand. In addition, candidates are asked to submit a short typed or clearly hand-written statement giving their reasons for standing for election. Nomination forms may be obtained from the PCC Secretary. Although nominations may be made at the meeting, it would be helpful if completed nomination forms, together with statements, are returned to the PCC Secretary by **Monday 17 March** to enable the papers to be available one week before the Annual Meeting.

Sidesmen for the year 2014 - 2015 will be appointed at the meeting.

Dilys M. Thomas, Hon PCC Secretary

REVISION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL

The Electoral Roll has to be revised before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 30 March 2014. Inclusion on the revised Roll is the qualification to attend, participate and vote at the Meeting.

The Roll will be closed for revision between Monday 10 March and Friday 14 March. No further entries may be made to the Roll between 10 and 30 March close of the APCM.

Would all members of the congregation please check their entries on the copy of the Roll available in the Parish Office; any alterations should be notified to me, c/o the Parish Office.

Anyone who wishes to be included on the Roll, and who is qualified to do so, should complete one of the forms available from the table in Church, and send it to me **no later than Sunday 9 March.**

*Catherine T. Burling,
Electoral Roll Officer*

The Annunciation Marble Arch



**Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord
to the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Tuesday 25 March 2014

**7.00pm High Mass
& Procession of the Image of Our Lady**

Preacher: Bishop Rowan Williams,
Baron Williams of Oystermouth

Followed by a Reception

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

As well as large restoration projects in church, we also have to maintain and improve other parts of our buildings. In recent years these have included the Parish Room and Office. The latter restored to being the one fine space Butterfield intended by the removal of a partition wall. Tucked away at basement level in a courtyard behind the dining room is the Choir Room which has not had much attention for some 25 years. That has now been remedied. First, some much needed restoration work has been undertaken on the Steinway piano, left to the church by Dr Walter Vale, for many years the organist. He was the driving force behind the installation of the 1910 organ and the All Saints Psalter which we still use at Evensong. Now the Choir Room has also been redecorated, re-carpeted with shelves fitted for the storage of our expanding Music Collection. We hope these enhancements make a pleasanter working environment for our musicians.

NICHOLAS LUFF

Nick died on January 1, his birthday. His Funeral Mass was celebrated in All Saints, where he had been Associate Director of Music with Dr Harry Bramma, on 30 January.

The church was filled with family, friends, colleagues from the world of teaching, and a good many people from St Clement's, Dulwich and Farnborough Parish Church, where he had been organist in recent years.

The Dean of Chichester, an old friend, preached, only days before his own retirement. We are grateful that his excellent sermon appears in this issue. The Deans of Southwark Cathedral (where Nick had also played) and Westminster (whose organist Nick had also been when he was parish priest in Southwark) were also present in choir. The Revd Matthew Hughes from Farnborough read the Gospel and the Intercessions were led by the Revd Maria Reeves from St Clements. Mother Maria also conducted the committal at the crematorium the next day. Dr Bramma conducted the choir for Bainton's anthem, "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth*".

Nick's partner Chris Cain writes:

Dear Fr Alan,

"I wanted to express my sincere thanks for all that has been done for Nick over the years, and of course for the work in respect of his funeral.

After a fragile start to the day, I was worried about how I would cope. As soon as I walked into the church my worries dissipated and I felt calm. The service was uplifting in every sense and I'm so grateful for your guidance, reassurance and help from beginning to end. I've had so many comments about the wonderful service from so many friends from so many different walks of life.

It was so moving to have so much support from the regular congregation at All Saints. Nick would have been very touched by it and it was a great help to me, to his sister Carol, family and friends."

FUNERAL MASS FOR NICHOLAS LUFF — ADDRESS BY THE VERY REVEREND NICHOLAS FRAYLING, DEAN OF CHICHESTER, 30 JANUARY 2014

This is a very difficult occasion — for Chris and Carol and those nearest and dearest to Nick, of course, but for all of us whose lives he touched in some particular way.

Whatever the state of our Christian belief in the Resurrection, there is the cruel reality of Nick's prolonged decline and final mortal illness. The task of the preacher in this Eucharist, which holds together both tragedy and promise, must be to try to answer the question: Where are our hopes in all this?

The fact that God intervenes at the point where everything is at an end from a human point of view is the true miracle of the Resurrection — the miracle of the beginning of a new life out of death (*Hans Kung*). That was the heart of Nick Luff's personal faith.

But I am getting ahead of myself... What of Nick himself — exceptional musician, gifted teacher, generous friend and loving partner?

After Trinity College of Music, Nick taught briefly at Prior Weston School in the Barbican; then, successively at Archbishop Sumner in Lambeth, Christ Church, Clapham, and St Bartholomew, Sydenham, from which he took early retirement in 2001.

In 1979, Southwark Cathedral, whose music was in the hands of Harry Bramma and John Scott, needed an additional pair of hands. Harry and John admired Nick's playing, and it was John's idea to create the post of Deputy Organist, which Nick became, serving with Harry and John, and then with Andy Lumsden and Stephen

Layton.

Harry was appointed Director of the Royal School of Church Music, and at the same time agreed to come to this church as Organist, to tide them over for three or four months: in fact, that became 15 years, which, though remarkable, was not quite the equal of Widor, who went to St Sulpice as acting Organist and stayed for 64 years!

At any rate, help was needed, and Nick followed Harry to this Church as Assistant Organist, where he often directed the choir when the Organist was abroad on RSCM business. During those years, after 1989, Nick became practically indispensable here, with the practical assistance of Mhairi Ellis, and the unflinching and affectionate support of Norman Caplin and Michael Fleming, both now — as the Salvation Army would say — 'promoted to glory'.

It was entirely appropriate that Nick should have been designated Associate Director of Music (a title which, I can reveal, was cribbed from All Souls', Langham Place, down the road...). Nick was greatly loved in this church, as he had been by the children he taught in successive schools, and by everyone with whom he worked.

Nick was an excellent Organist, but more than that, he was — in the words of Rex Stevens — 'One of the best choral accompanists I have ever heard'. Nick *listened*; he was acutely sensitive, and he had that rare gift, a profound liturgical sense: he knew how to interpret a festival or a season, how to create atmosphere with sensitive extemporisation; and that ability

was borne, not just of innate musicianship, but of his own real, if understated, Christian faith. Some of his accompaniments have been captured on the recordings made by the All Saints' Choir at that period.

Nick left All Saints in the year 2000 on what were tactfully known as 'health grounds', but went on to hold further part-time Organist posts at St Clement's, Dulwich, and Farnborough Parish Church, where, in spite of increasing infirmity, he was again much loved and respected, as much for his gentle personality as for his musicianship.

Nick undertook a good deal of freelance work, and was accompanist for many years to the Ealing Choral Society, working with James Gaddam, who had spotted his talent at Trinity. In later years he has been Administrator-Organist at South London Crematorium, where the private service of committal will be held tomorrow.

Nick was generous, almost to a fault, and I guess the size of this congregation bears witness to that generosity. He was a wonderful friend who would tackle almost any task for anybody. It may not be generally known that he was extremely practical and a brilliant mechanic — as at home under a bonnet as behind a console. This proved very useful when he came as accompanist with the choir of All Saints', Tooting Graveney to Truro Cathedral in the late 1970s; we travelled in my ancient mini-bus, which had previously got no further than Tooting Bec Common. For Nick, nothing was ever too much trouble.

Nick has shared his home and his life with Chris since 1979, first in Chestnut Grove, then Byrne Road and latterly in their lovely house in Elsinore Road. Theirs has been a

wonderful partnership, and our hearts go out to Chris in his loss.

Harry and I were privileged to be the witnesses of their Civil Partnership in 2009. A West Indian couple were having their Civil Marriage Ceremony in Lewisham Registry Office on the same morning. Afterwards, the genial Best Man said, 'Come with us in the photos... by the way, where's the Bride?' We beat a tactful retreat!

Nick seemed to have everything going for him, but it is one of those impenetrable mysteries that he found it very difficult to think well of himself. This had nothing to do with what we might describe as his nature, with which he was entirely at ease; but he had what I suppose psychologists would call a very poor self-image. He found it almost impossible to acknowledge his own ability, or to receive praise or applause.

In spite of his great gifts, his wide circle of friends and the love at the heart of his life, Nick sought comfort in alcohol from his early 30s. At first, this was just social, and then habitual; but it became addictive, and ultimately disabling, with a brief respite following a liver transplant operation in 2001. In all this, Chris was an unfailingly patient support, wonderfully assisted by Nick's former colleague, Brenda.

I have spoken of Nick's generosity. There are friends here from far and wide, including overseas, who have come to give thanks for him today. Very many of us have benefited from his kindness, his sympathy and his loyal friendship. This congregation speaks volumes...

A few minutes ago I posed the question 'Where are our hopes in all this?' Well, the Liturgy we are sharing, embellished by some wonderful words of Scripture, gives at least

a part of the answer. The purple vestments speak of sadness — tragedy even. They remind us that death is no joke; but then we have heard the ancient wisdom of the sage, who spoke of God’s grace and mercy, which is upon the souls of the righteous; and the imperishable hope expressed in those verses from the First Letter of Peter, written to a Church facing cruel persecution, about the hope which endures, ‘even if now for a little while you have to suffer various trials’. And we heard the blessed assurance in St John’s Gospel of the welcome that awaits those who have come to the Lord:

‘This is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.’

That is the essence of the Christian hope, and it is expressed even more explicitly in the 21st chapter of the Book of Revelation, set to music by Edgar Bainton, in what must be his most inspired composition:

‘...And God himself shall be with them and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.’

That is where our hopes are in all this — hopes which, even in dark days, remained very precious to Nick, as was his regular reception of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

This Funeral Mass is being celebrated here for the very good reason that this is what Nick wanted to happen, in this church which had come to mean so much to him, and in which he had come to mean so much to so many.

The heart of the matter is this. If our hope

in the Resurrection is to have real meaning, it must have consequences. Nowhere do I know of that truth being more profoundly expressed than in these simple words of Bishop George Appleton. Let him have the last word, as we think about Nick, and about our own continuing lives here on earth:

‘So we can begin to live the resurrection life now. We shall not be automatically guarded against temptation or preserved from failure, but there will be within us a new force of grace and love on which we can draw, and a Companion with us on every step of the journey. If and when we fail, we can go to God and ask his forgiveness, and Christ who expects us to forgive others 70 times 7 will go beyond that in his own forgiveness. With forgiveness, and grace on God’s part, we shall be able to grow in holiness and love, and so train for the new and eternal order of being which God has prepared for them that love him, and also for those who do not yet do so.’

THE PSALMS

Bishop Tom Wright, the biblical scholar and professor at St Andrew’s University, has produced a massive two volume work on St Paul; so intimidating in size that I wonder how many people will ever read it. On a more popular and manageable scale, he has also published a book on the Psalms.

In it he expresses his concern that contemporary Christian music, the “worship songs” popular in churches of the charismatic movement do not use the Psalms in their weekly and daily worship. Some worship songs use phrases from the Psalter, but many do not. For thousands of regular and enthusiastic worshippers, “these songs

have replaced the steady rhythm and deep-soul searching of the Psalms themselves to their impoverishment.” Bishop Wright believes that “to worship without the Psalms is to risk planting seeds that will never take root”. He finds it impossible to imagine “a growing and maturing Church without the Psalms”.

When Jeremy Tayler, one of our ordinands, spent a day at the College of St Mellitus last year, he reported to me that he had heard a lecture on the psalms. The tutor told the class that monks used to sing

them every day. Being somewhat better informed than students from predominantly charismatic parishes, Jeremy was able to point out that they still did, and the clergy of the Church of England are supposed to recite parts of the Psalter every day in the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer. If you worship at All Saints, you cannot but notice that the Psalter features in every service.

By coincidence or inspiration, Fr Julian preached a sermon on the Psalms at Evensong recently and we reproduce it here.

**SERMON PREACHED BY FR JULIAN BROWNING
AT CHORAL EVENSONG ON THE THIRD SUNDAY
BEFORE LENT, 16 FEBRUARY 2014**

Psalm 13: ‘How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever: how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?’

A psalm is worth a dozen sermons. A sermon is one train of thought aimed at many people. A psalm becomes your own. The Psalter, as we call the Book of Psalms in the Bible, is one of the most valuable resources you have. People often say these days, I can’t pray, I can’t meditate, I can’t switch off and go into the silence I need. This is because whatever you have been thinking about before prayer inevitably comes back to us through the memory. So we need a period of quietening down, as our predecessors did. As John Cassian wrote in the fourth century “...we must prepare ourselves before the time of prayer to be the prayerful persons that we wish to be”. A psalm, because each psalm is so personal in its composition and in its emotional content, can capture our attention, and so prepare us to enter the

silence as a prayerful person. The psalms are the achievement of prayerful persons. Tonight’s Psalm 13 is striking in its use of the appeal ‘How long’ four times. **‘How long shall I seek counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart?’** What we read there is an example to follow, the life of a prayerful person, an attitude to the world which we might have forgotten, needs and desires simplified, so that nothing distracts us from the Divine, from our relationship with a living God. Then, from that intensely personal appeal, ‘How long?’ we move, in verse 5, to a confident trust and joy. ‘But my trust is in thy mercy: and my heart is joyful in thy salvation.’ We don’t know the circumstances in which the psalm was composed. But we can see ourselves in every verse. The outpouring of prayer in itself, talking truthfully to God, has led to an unexpected calm. Maybe nothing’s changed, maybe no problem has been solved, but we can see emerging the

signs of a mature belief: reconciliation, forgiveness and healing.

This isn't psychology, nor is it the power of poetry, although many of the images in the psalms are of sublime beauty. One of Thomas Merton's early books was called *Bread in the Wilderness*, about the Psalms, and he emphasised this point which might pass us by. The desire for God, your religion, has nothing essential to do with art. The desire for God is not satisfied by poetry, nor by philosophy, music, ceremonial, nor intellectual speculation. All these things are wonderful and helpful, but they are not faith, which is God's free gift to us. The Psalms are not just inspiring poetry, they are theology, that is to say they put us into eye contact with God as Saviour and Creator, and our life and our view of the world are changed as a result.

Christians can't do without the psalms. Jesus read and lived the psalms. In the Gospels Jesus applies metaphors to himself which only make sense if we hear an echo in the Psalter, such as when He describes himself as "the stone which the builders rejected", which is from Psalm 118. Knowing the Psalter shows us where we've come from, the traditions of spiritual understanding which have matured down the centuries, generation calling to generation, all there in a book, waiting for us to release the words, to use them in our day with understanding and reverence. Here is an authentic conversation, in words of great beauty, between God and those who long to know Him. It's all there, the desire, the frustration, the sense of exile, the loneliness, the happiness, the exhaustion, the hope, the fear and the love. Here is the conflict we know within ourselves, the conflict between the grace of

God and our own will. We're not the first generation to feel that way, to find, along the path of religion, a way home which is not extraordinary, but entirely natural: **'the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young'**: even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Even the bloodthirsty bits about slaughter and destruction and so on have their place in the whole, bringing before us the less pleasant times, places and thoughts of our own lives. Of course the psalms need a bit of work. There's a lot in the psalms about Sheol, the netherworld, because at this point in Old Testament history there was no clear belief in an afterlife. Sheol was a sort of shadowy existence after death, a forbidding place, where you were separated from the power of God's love, because God only saved those on earth. It gets a bit gloomy. But deep prayer can integrate even those images which are foreign to us.

Any psalm or canticle, read or sung with imagination and an open heart, becomes a prayer. It's formation, rather than information. Through our prayerful psalmody, Christ comes back into our lives, and our lives are transformed. As St John of the Cross wrote: **'The dogmas of the faith are like the shining surfaces of the ocean'**. They point to the mystery that lies beneath, but they cannot provide the experience of that mystery. The Psalms, like many other books of the Bible, are that experience, the experience of the mystery, now offered to us in our turn, to refresh and deepen our relationship with God.

The Psalms are our lifeline to a classical spirituality which we thought was beyond us. Because of the decline in religious belief, because of the decline of

institutional religion which began long before our time, we are used to interpreting our religion now solely in personal terms — my faith, what I believe, and so on. It is as if we have relegated God to the last secret safe place we know, within our hearts, the inward life. We learn less about God there than we do about ourselves, so we go on and on about ourselves, how we feel, where we are, and so on. It's cosy, but it's very claustrophobic, and we see its adverse effects today in inward looking congregations, and in the uptight, rather threatened clericalism of the Church. It's as if we guard Christianity in our hearts; everyone else somehow manages without. The Psalms do not recognise this distinction of outer and inner worlds. The Psalms are concerned with the whole person in his or her worldliness and our relationship with God and the rest of his Creation. They cut through our subterfuges, and our artificial divisions between secular and religious, they link us with a world in which what matters is the whole good, the goodness of God and all he has made.

At every service in this church we say or sing a canticle or a psalm or two. It's easy to see the psalms in particular as musical interludes between readings or liturgical acts of greater importance. Let's try to read them or pray them in a new, or rather the old way. Singing these songs is much more than just serenading God. It is a discovery that we can be a prayerful people, enjoying a relationship with God which will last for ever.

100 YEARS AGO

Fr Mackay wrote at some length about the observance of Lent. After discussing the history of fasting in the Church, he says:

The food restrictions of the modern Lent seem very lenient in comparison with the heroic Lents of the past. In our own diocese we are enjoined to abstain from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays and to restrict its use on other days. We also abstain from meat on the last four days of Holy Week. Meat and fish are not taken at the same meal in Lent.

If we are to make a good Lent it is with these simple things that we must begin, obedience to the Church's rule and bodily self-discipline. I can assure those who consider attention to such matters "unspiritual" that however greatly they may exceed all holy virgins, confessors, martyrs, evangelists and apostles in spirituality, it is not through the avoidance of a mode of subjecting the flesh to the spirit which our Lord enjoined on his followers and to which he set them so awful an example in the first Christian Lent.

First of all, then, let us do what our health permits and our spiritual adviser sanctions towards keeping the rule of the bodily fast. Secondly, let us see to it that this mortification extends to all our little pleasant luxuries, our pet self-indulgences. Let us part for a time from amusements, let us regulate our reading, cease from dawdling over newspapers, and waste hours over trifling novels. We are all familiar with the systems of training for the Territorial Army, for athletics, for the boats. Lent invites us to spend a period in training our characters in a hundred ways for a higher and holier service of God and our fellow men. It reminds us that between the creation of man and the realisation of God's purpose in that creation as a fall and consequent judgement, it bids us live

on the light of these two awful facts. It is these two facts which explain the note of urgency and severity which runs through the Bible...

Let us have these considerations in mind as we frame our Lent rule. If England were in imminent danger of invasion, or if it were in the grip of a great pestilence, we should see a wonderfully kept Lent. The Fall and the Judgement are much more tremendous incentives to a good Lent than an invasion or pestilence: we may realise the fact this year.

It is strange reading Fr Mackay's words about invasion because we know what he could not: that within a few months the country would be plunged into war on a scale he and his contemporaries could not have imagined. That conflict would have consequences for both world and Church with which we still live.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 2 MARCH SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT

HIGH MASS AT 11am

Prelude: Chorale — Lloyd Webber
Hymn: 440 (omit *; v 6 Descant — Brent-Smith)
Introit: *Illuxerunt*
Setting: Missa Sanctæ Mariæ
 Magdalenæ — Lloyd Webber
Psalm: 99

Lessons: Exodus 24: 12 - end
 2 Peter 1: 16 - end
Hymn: 176 (T 493)
Gospel: Matthew 17: 1 - 9
Preacher: The Vicar
 Prebendary Alan Moses
Creed: Credo III
Anthem: Love Divine, all loves
 excelling — Lloyd Webber
Hymns: 416 (ii), 177, 487 (T 447)
Voluntary: Finale — Lloyd Webber

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm: 84
Lessons: 2 Kings 2: 1 - 12
 Matthew 17: 1 - 23
Office Hymn: 54
Canticles: Service in E minor
 —Lloyd Webber
Anthem: O Love, I give myself to
 thee — Lloyd Webber
Preacher: Fr Gerald Beauchamp
Hymn: 410
O Salutaris: Lloyd Webber
Hymn: 308
Tantum ergo: Lloyd Webber
Voluntary: Vesper Hymn
 — Lloyd Webber

WEDNESDAY 5 MARCH ASH WEDNESDAY

HIGH MASS AND IMPOSITION OF ASHES AT 6.30pm

Hymn: 507
Introit: *Misereris omnium*
Setting: Mass for four voices — Byrd
Psalm: 51: 1 - 13
Lessons: Joel 2: 1 - 2, 12 - 17
 2 Corinthians 5: 20b - 6: 10
Hymn: 59 (T 238)

Gospel: Matthew 6: 1 - 6, 16 - 21
Preacher: The Vicar
 Prebendary Alan Moses
During the Imposition of Ashes:
 Salvator mundi I — Tallis
 Psalm 103
Anthem: In ieiunio et fletu — Tallis
Hymns: 70 (i), 72, 445

● **SUNDAY 9 MARCH**
FIRST SUNDAY
OF LENT

LITANY IN PROCESSION
AND HIGH MASS at 11am

Litany in Procession: Loosemore
Introit: *Invocabit me*
Setting: Missa 'Emendemus in melius' — Palestrina
Psalm: 32
Lessons: Genesis 2: 15 - 17; 3: 1 - 7
 Romans 5: 12 - 19
Hymn: 67 (T A&M 91)
Gospel: Matthew 4: 1 - 11
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning
Creed: Credo II
Anthem: Emendemus in melius — Byrd
Hymns: 507, 64, 65

CHORAL EVENSONG &
BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm: 50: 1 - 15
Lessons: Deuteronomy 6: 4 - 9, 16 - end
 Luke 15: 1 - 10
Office Hymn: 59
Canticles: Service in the Dorian mode — Tallis
Anthem: Salvator mundi II — Tallis

Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 418
O Salutaris: 95
Hymn: 62
Tantum ergo: 202

● **SUNDAY 16 MARCH**
SECOND SUNDAY
OF LENT

HIGH MASS AT 11am

Entrance Hymn: 507
Introit: *Reminiscere*
Setting: Missa Octava — Hassler
Psalm: 121
Lessons: Genesis 12: 1 - 4a
 Romans 4: 1 - 5, 13 - 17
Hymn: 60 (T 238)
Gospel: John 3: 1 - 17
Preacher: The Vicar,
 Prebendary Alan Moses
Creed: Credo III
Anthem: Remember not, Lord, our offences — Purcell
Hymns: 63, 73 (i), 434

CHORAL EVENSONG &
BENEDICTION at 6pm

Psalm: 135
Lessons: Numbers 21: 4 - 9
 Luke 14: 27 - 33
Office Hymn: 59
Canticles: The Short Service — Weelkes
Anthem: Call to remembrance, O Lord — Farrant
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning
Hymn: 76
O Salutaris: 94
Hymn: 276 (ii)
Tantum ergo: 295

● **SUNDAY 23 MARCH**
THIRD SUNDAY
OF LENT

HIGH MASS AT 11am

Entrance Hymn: 507

Introit: *Oculi mei*

Setting: Missa Brevis
— Rodney Bennett

Psalm: 95

Lessons: Exodus 17: 1 - 7
Romans 5: 1 - 11

Hymn: 362

Gospel: John 4: 5 - 42

Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses

Creed: Credo II

Anthem: A Hymne to God the Father
— John McCabe

Hymns: 69, 376, 368

**CHORAL EVENSONG &
BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalm: 40

Lessons: Joshua 1: 1 - 9
Ephesians 6: 10 - 20

Office Hymn: 59

Canticles: The Short Service
— Morley

Anthem: Nolo mortem peccatoris
— Morley

Preacher: Fr Neil Bunker

Hymn: 434

O Salutaris: 493

Hymn: 70 (i)

Tantum Ergo: 470

● **SUNDAY 30 MARCH**
FOURTH SUNDAY
OF LENT

HIGH MASS AT 11am

Entrance Hymn: 415 (ii)

Introit: *Lætare*

Setting: Mass in C — Schubert

Psalm: 23

Lessons: 1 Samuel 16: 1 - 13
Ephesians 5: 8 - 14

Hymn: 456

Gospel: John 9: 1 - end

Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses

Creed: Schubert

Anthem: Otche nash — Arensky

Hymns: 507, 282, 413

Voluntary: Variations on 'Est-ce Mars'
— Sweelinck

**CHORAL EVENSONG &
BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalm: 31: 1 - 16

Lessons: Prayer of Manasseh
James 5

Office Hymn: 60

Canticles: Service in C — Stanford

Anthem: Ave Maria — Bruckner

Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses

Hymn: 66 (T 63)

O Salutaris: Laloux

Hymn: 392

Tantum Ergo: Laloux

Voluntary: Herzlich thut mich
verlangen, Op 122
— Brahms

ALL SAINTS FOUNDATION

The Foundation's Purpose is to assist the parish in the maintenance and restoration of our Grade 1 listed building. The trustees are able to expend both capital and income to this end.

The Administrator of the Foundation is **Damon Brash**. He can be contacted through the Parish Office if you would like more information about making a donation or a bequest.

The Foundation's Charity Number is: 273390.

CHOIR AND MUSIC TRUST

The Trust's purpose is to support the music of All Saints. It makes grants to the PCC to assist with the costs of the choir. At the moment, these meet just over half of the music budget each year.

The Trust's capital cannot be spent, only the income.

The Administrator of the Trust is **Geoffrey Woodcock**. He can be contacted through the Parish Office if you would like further information about how to make a donation or bequest.

The Choir and Music Trust's Charity Number is: 802994.

FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS

The Friends of All Saints is a fellowship of people who have some connection with All Saints: former or occasional worshippers. It enables them to support our work through prayer and giving. The Friends are prayed for on a rota each day at Morning Prayer, and on the second Wednesday of the month the Friends' Candle burns in church and they are prayed for at Mass.

Our Friends' Secretary is **Juliet Windham**, who can be contacted through the Parish Office.

MISSION PROJECTS

We support:

The work of **US** (formerly **USPG**) with the Church in Zimbabwe among people affected by HIV-AIDS;

The Church Army hostels and programmes for homeless women in Marylebone;

The West London Day Centre for the homeless.

Janet Drake chairs our Mission Committee. She can be contacted through the Parish Office.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

As well as the monthly **Parish Paper**, you can keep in touch with life at All Saints through:

The All Saints Website

www.allsaintsmargaretstreet.org.uk

The Parish Email

This gives weekly news of events, people to pray for, and a short letter from the Vicar. You can subscribe through the All Saints website, or by contacting the Parish Administrator, Email: astsmgtst@aol.com

The Weekly Notices included in the Sunday service booklet, which worshippers are encouraged to take away with them.

Vicar:

Prebendary Alan Moses

020 7636 1788

Mobile: 07973 878040

Email: alanmoses111@gmail.com.

Assistant Priest: Vacant

Honorary Assistant Priests:

The Revd Gerald Beauchamp

020 7258 0724

The Revd Julian Browning

020 7286 6034

The Revd Neil Bunker

Mental Health Liaison Chaplain
for Westminster.

Parish Administrator:

Mrs Dee Prior 020 7636 1788

Email: astsmgtst@aol.com

Parish Officials

Churchwardens:

Mr John Forde 020 7592 9855

Mr Chris Self 020 8858 6370

PCC Secretary:

Dr Dilys Thomas 020 7794 3626

Hon Treasurer:

Mr Patrick Hartley 020 7607 0060

Director of Music:

Mr Tim Byram-Wigfield

c/o 020 7636 1788

Associate Director of Music:

Mr Charles Andrews 01580 240575

Electoral Roll Officer:

Miss Catherine Burling

c/o 020 7636 1788

Service Times

Sundays:

Low Mass at 6.30pm (Sat)

8am and 5.15pm

Morning Prayer 10.20am

HIGH MASS and SERMON at 11am

CHORAL EVENSONG, SERMON and
BENEDICTION at 6pm.

Monday to Friday:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am

Low Mass at 8am, 1.10pm and 6.30pm

Confessions 12.30 - 1pm and 5.30pm

Evening Prayer at 6pm

Saturdays:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am

Low Mass at 8am and 6.30pm*

(* First Mass of Sunday)

Confessions 5.30pm.

Evening Prayer 6pm.

CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR MARCH 2014

1	David, bishop, patron of Wales, 601	Wales
2	✠ SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
3		Emergency services
4		Penitents
5	ASH WEDNESDAY	Observance of Lent
6		Lent Groups
7	Perpetua, Felicity & companions, martyrs, 203	Those in need
8	Edward King, bishop, 1910	Bishops
9	✠ 1st SUNDAY OF LENT	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
10		St Marylebone Counselling Centre
11		St Paul's, North Marylebone
12	Ember Day	Vocations
13		Unity
14	Ember Day	Ordinands
15	Ember Day	College of St Mellitus
16	✠ 2nd SUNDAY OF LENT	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
17	Patrick, bishop, missionary, patron of Ireland, 460	Ireland
18	<i>Cyril, bishop, teacher of the faith, 386</i>	Jerusalem
19	JOSEPH OF NAZARETH	Family Court
20	Cuthbert, bishop, missionary, 687	Durham Cathedral
21	Thomas Cranmer, archbishop, Reformation martyr, 1556	Those in need
22		Preparation for Holy Week
23	✠ 3rd SUNDAY OF LENT	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
24	Oscar Romero, archbishop, martyr, 1980	Peace and justice
25	ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD TO THE BVM	The Annunciation, Marble Arch
26	<i>Harriet Monsell, religious, 1883</i>	Religious Communities
27		Unity
28		Those in need
29		Local workers
30	✠ 4th SUNDAY OF LENT	OUR PARISH AND PEOPLE
	Mothering Sunday	
31	<i>John Donne, priest, poet, 1631</i>	St Paul's Cathedral

