



All Saints Parish Paper

7, MARGARET STREET, LONDON W1W 8JG

www.allsaintsmargaretstreet.co.uk

APRIL 2016

£1.00

VICAR'S LETTER

“Discover everything you need for a perfect Easter”

This is not taken from an invitation to Easter services at All Saints, Margaret Street, but from an advertisement in a well-known department store not far from the church.

When I saw it, I wondered if John Lewis was expanding into the religion business. Have they spotted a marketing opportunity that the churches are failing to meet?

When I went to discover everything I might need for a perfect Easter, I soon discovered that everything that we might need to celebrate the greatest feast of the Christian year was nowhere to be found. To be sure, there were masses of chocolate eggs — the sacramental food of the secular Easter, and cards featuring its iconic figures, chickens and bunny rabbits. The food hall would furnish me with hot cross buns, but I've been able to buy them since shortly after Christmas.

So what do we need to celebrate a “perfect Easter” and where will we find it? The simple answer is that we will find what is required not in the shops but in church. Of course, we will have sparkling wine after the Easter Vigil and small chocolate eggs for children of all ages on Easter morning (I know that because our Events Committee has organized one and my wife has already bought the other).



The East end of the Church exterior from Wells Street, a rare view which it is possible to see now that Tasman House has been demolished.

(Photo: Andrew Prior)

The things a community of Christian people needs to celebrate Easter properly if not perfectly are, the scriptures and the sacraments, enhanced and enriched by music and bells, fire and candles, incense and holy water, flowers and vestments.

The symbols we use to celebrate Easter are powerful not sentimental. Our celebration begins with the Great Vigil on Saturday

evening when we gather outside church in the darkness to await the kindling of the New Fire. From this blaze we light the great Easter Candle which represents the light of the risen Christ. We follow it into church like the Israelites following the pillar of fire through the wilderness to the Promised Land. The light from the great candle is spread through the church by the smaller candles we carry. When the Paschal candle has been placed in its stand by the pulpit, the deacon sings the Exsultet, the Paschal proclamation. Then, by its light, we set out on a journey through the scriptures; a long series of readings from the Old Testament, each followed by silent reflection, psalmody and prayers. After these are finished, the celebrant proclaims the resurrection and the Gloria is intoned. Bells and organ, silent since Maundy Thursday, peel out. Members of the congregation are encouraged to bring their own hand bells to join in the joyful noise. Altar candles and lamps are lit, statues and candles unveiled. Epistle, Alleluia (not heard since the beginning of Lent) and Gospel follow. The Easter sermon attributed to St John Chrysostom, the “golden-mouthed” preacher of ancient Constantinople, calling all to celebrate, both those who have kept the Lenten fast and those who have not, is read.

Then the centre of our attention shifts from pulpit and scripture to font and sacrament. We move to the baptistry for the blessing of the font and the baptismal liturgy. In the fullest version of this people are baptized and confirmed, but even when there are no candidates, we all take part in the reaffirmation of our baptismal covenant. As the ministers return from the baptistry, the people are sprinkled with water from the font.

All share the Easter greeting of Peace:

“Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!” Then our attention is directed to the altar as we celebrate the Eucharist in which the risen Christ makes himself known and present to us in the breaking of bread and we anticipate the banquet of heaven. At the end of Holy Communion, the blessed sacrament is placed in the tabernacle, empty since the eve of Maundy Thursday. Those prevented by sickness or age from coming to church will receive their Easter communion from it in the following days. The lamp burns again to remind us of Christ’s promise at the end of Matthew’s Gospel: **“I am with you always, even to the end of the ages.”** After singing **“Ye choirs of new Jerusalem, your sweetest notes employ, the Paschal victory to hymn, in strains of holy joy,”** we are blessed and dismissed with double alleluias.

On Easter morning our celebrations continue. During the procession which begins the High Mass of the day, with its hymn, **“Hail, Festal Day!”** we bless the Easter Garden with its empty tomb and folded grave clothes, and figures of the risen Christ, Mary Magdalene, Peter and John (taken from John’s account of the resurrection which is read as the Gospel on Easter Day). This year we have an infant baptism and the congregation shares in the renewal of baptismal promises and is sprinkled with water from the font. Again, the risen Christ makes himself known to us in the breaking of the bread. At the end of Mass, instead of the Angelus, we sing the Regina Caeli: **“Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven,”** in honour of Our Lady. If we are not too exhausted by all this, and perhaps even if we are, we are back for a festal Evensong.

Oxford Street, which has been selling its Easter necessities for weeks, will strip them

from the shelves overnight to make way for the next marketing opportunity. The Church will keep on celebrating the resurrection for fifty days of Eastertide, through Ascension to Pentecost. And thereafter, every Sunday is a feast of the resurrection. The Paschal Candle will burn at services, alleluias will be sung and the Easter Garden stays in place.

For the Church, Easter is not one day in isolation. We prepare for it in the season of Lent and Holy Week and especially in the services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Eve. We can only begin to appreciate something of the significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the context of his passion and death. We use the language of the transition from winter to spring, of new growth in nature, to speak and sing of Easter: **“Love is come again, like wheat that springeth green,”** but we are celebrating something infinitely greater than the turning of the year or a natural process. The old creation helps us speak of a new one which is also the work of God and because of this is able to give life and hope to us all, not just in the next world but in this one, as we take hold of the possibility of new life.

So everything we need for a perfect Easter is here to be discovered. Like the women who went to the tomb to mourn, we can know that it is empty because he has been raised. Like the two downcast disciples on the road to Emmaus, we can feel our hearts burn within us as he opens the scriptures to us and know him in the breaking of the bread. Like the fearful disciples gathered in the upper room, we can know his presence and receive his spirit. Like Peter on the lakeshore, we can know forgiveness for our denials and compromises and find ourselves recalled to our love of Christ and restored to our mission.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!
Alleluia!

Yours in the risen Christ,

Alan Moses

“THIS IS LONDON: LIFE AND DEATH IN A WORLD CITY”

by Ben Judah

The origins of the saying that ‘there are lies, damned lies and statistics’ often attributed to Disraeli are uncertain, but ours is an age which produces statistics on a vast scale. We are also aware that they can be abused. So we have a national office which tries to prevent government ministers putting a partisan spin on them. The Church of England publishes annual attendance statistics and these generate a certain amount of interest in the press: they seem to support the argument that the church is on a relentlessly downward trend.

Amid such alarm and despondency about church attendance figures, London seems to have been bucking the statistical trend. Judah embarks on a journey through today’s London, armed with a tape recorder and a notepad. He visits 25 areas, he writes about the ‘new Londoners’ — the foreign immigrants who are flocking to the city in search of opportunity, only to find a harsh reality.

At least 55% of Londoners today are not British-born, and illegal immigrants make up 5% of the population says Judah. “I was born in London but I no longer recognise this city. I don’t know if I love the new London or if it frightens me... I have no idea who these new Londoners are, or even what their London really is.”

Judah describes the Dickensian conditions and exploitation.

FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

at St Mary le Strand, London WC2

Bishop Rowan Williams

Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge

and former Archbishop of Canterbury

will launch a new series of conversations around the theme

Faith in the Public Square

on

Tuesday 5 April at 1pm

at St Mary le Strand, London WC2

*All welcome, but please reserve a place (free)
via the church website, www.stmarylestrand.org*

VICAR ON PILGRIMAGE

As part of his sabbatical leave this year, Fr Alan is undertaking another walking pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. This time, he will be following the Camino de Plata (the Silver Road) from Seville in Andalusia, through Estremadura and Castile to Galicia, covering a distance of 1,000km.

Apart from the spiritual and physical benefits of all that walking, the principal reason for undertaking the pilgrimage is to raise money from people across the Diocese of London for its projects to support refugees.

An on-line sponsorship site is being established and details will be available on the Parish Website and in the weekly email letter. Old-fashioned paper sponsorship forms will also be available.

LIGHT AND SOUND

After some adjustments, we are getting used to operating the new lighting scheme with its variety of settings for different services and times of the day. Extra lighting is being

installed in the baptistry shortly. The sound system which will help us when we are having lectures and meetings in church is due to be installed early in April.

WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE

There will be an opportunity at the APCM on Sunday 10 April for parishioners to discuss the possible decisions to be taken by the PCC under the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests.

The Vicar and Churchwardens will also write to all members of the Electoral Roll asking for their comments.

AM

BOOKS

Music has always played a major rôle in the life and mission of All Saints, as it does in a variety of styles in the churches of our deanery, so many of our people might be interested to read Andrew Gant's *O Sing Unto the Lord — A History of English Church Music* (Profile Books).

Gant, who teaches music at Oxford, was

formerly the director of music of the Chapel Royal. An earlier book of his traces the history of Christmas carols. His new one is a mine of information about how Church music in England has developed from pre-Reformation days until now. As one would expect from a former director of music of the Chapel Royal, there is much about the choral tradition: its survival of puritan hostility followed by long years of neglect. Devotees of Choral Evensong might be surprised to learn that Archbishop Cranmer did not have much time for cathedral choral establishments. The survival of the English choral tradition owes far more to Elizabeth I.

As well as much about psalm-singing — metrical, plainsong and Anglican chant, canticles, anthems and Mass settings, their composers and singers, Gant does not neglect the history of hymn-writing and singing in churches of different traditions. I found the sections on the influence of the Tractarians and later High Church Anglicans on raising the standards both of choral music and of hymn-singing, through Hymns Ancient and Modern and later the English Hymnal, particularly interesting. In a time when a good deal of “contemporary” church music is pretty banal, that’s a cause which needs to be supported again.

As he concludes, the author points out that English cathedrals now sing a much wider variety of music than ever before and to higher professional standards. The expansion of their repertoire far beyond that written for Anglican Matins and Evensong owes much to churches like ours which led the way in this.

Eminent Tractarians John Neville Greaves, Book Guild Publishing £17.99. The history of the Oxford Movement is often told through the lives of clergy. It tends

to be seen as a very clerical movement; something which many find off-putting. Canon John Greaves has written a book which examines its influence on four lay people, including the architect of All Saints, William Butterfield. The others are a merchant William Gibbs, a banker Thomas Heywood, and Lilian Baylis, the theatre entrepreneur. He explores how they integrated their faith with their professional and personal conduct. They lived in different times but the moral challenges of our age are not so far removed from the ones they faced. ‘The overarching theme of honourableness in business and personal life is as relevant now as it ever was.’ In the aftermath of the banking crisis and the widespread mis-conduct and sheer greed it revealed, who could deny that?

William Butterfield has now been included among those commemorated in the Diocese of London’s Calendar.

POETRY TEA AT PAMELA’S

— Saturday 27 February

Mary Rowe writes:

This was a celebration of St David’s day on 1 March. He was a 6th century abbot and bishop, and is of course the patron saint of Wales. Five poems honouring the day were brought, including *Ring out the bells of St David*, an anonymous poem read by Christine Levy with an attractive refrain. The ebullient work of Dylan Thomas often appeared. Nigel Toft read the opening part of *Under Milk Wood* with great feeling. The poet’s protest when his father was dying, *Do not go gentle into that dark night*, was chosen by Mary Swan.

R.S. Thomas’s poems present another aspect of Wales. John Cragg gave us *A Peasant*, about the unregarded worker who

labours on the bare hills. Dudley Green brought *The Country Clergy* who work, perhaps in a similar way, on unresponsive human souls. Neither may seem successful, but in due course there is a reward.

George Herbert's *Love* was read by Stephen Green. Its perfect shape and expression contrasted with the more severe style of R.S. Thomas, but both had the same inspiration. Jean Fairweather brought the familiar, much-loved *Leisure* by W.H. Davies, born in Newport, Monmouthshire. As a complete change, George Brown read the humorous *Nice warm socks* by Wendy Cope.

All the poets so far mentioned wrote in English, which of course has superseded Welsh to a great extent. But Mary Rowe read *The Seagull* and *The Wind*, translations of poems by Dafydd ap Gwilym, the Welsh 14th century poet. He celebrated the world of nature, and asked the birds and the wind to take messages to Morfudd, the woman he loved.

Pamela Botsford, to whom we were again grateful for hospitality and a welcome tea, gave us a delightful little picture of her Welsh childhood, quoting poems by R.S. Thomas and Idris Davies. *The Shop*, by Davies, had a homely, down-to-earth humour.

Wales has come into the modern world now, but perhaps, in our gathering that afternoon, there were hints of the old Celtic legends of the Mabinogion, and the song of the birds of Rhiannon.

The St David's day themed Poetry Tea raised £130 (with applicable Gift Aid) for the All Saints Restoration Appeal.

MORE VISITORS to ALL SAINTS

Since the start of 2016 and with the completion of the last phase of the restoration of the Church, which is now so much better illuminated by the new lighting scheme, there has been an increase in the numbers and diversity of booked groups of visitors wanting to see the Church compared with recent years. This is either because they had to be deterred when we were closed for restoration or because they particularly wish to see it now that the building itself can be more readily viewed in all its glorious decorative detail. Professor Andrew Saint brought a dozen of his Bartlett students to visit in January. The same month 40 students visited from Queen Mary University of London and 24 people visited with a former Blue Guide who has brought guides on training here frequently in the past. We have had parties of students for some weeks now from the Royal School of Drawing, sketching the interior from many different angles. They have made a donation in recognition of the facility provided to them. A group of Christianity students from UCL visited over a fortnight with a questionnaire set by their tutor to complete. A party of History of Art students came with their tutor from Radley College, Oxford. Another group called Dilettanti visited on a Saturday. Some 80 people came over two consecutive afternoons in mid-March to hear Dr Ayla Lepine, an expert on the Victorian Gothic, lecture about the building on behalf of the Art Fund. They subsequently enjoyed a fine tea provided by Church volunteers. After all costs these events have raised some £800 (with Gift Aid as applicable) for Church funds. Future booked groups include one from

the Mothers' Union attending on the 106th anniversary of the Union and celebrating the occasion at the lunchtime Mass.

RESTORATION OF THE LADY ALTAR

While most of the interior of the church has now been restored, a number of items remain to be dealt with. Among them is the Lady Altar. This was not part of Butterfield's original design: he believed, with the Orthodox, that churches should have only one altar. The altar was designed by Ninian Comper and the gift of Mrs Friederica Frances Swinburne, the centenary of whose death we celebrate this month. *See Colin Podmore's introduction to that occasion in an article on page 8.* Mrs Swinburne also gave the parish No 6 Margaret Street. For some reason, historically her name was not included in the list of benefactors commemorated on All Souls Day. This omission has been rectified.

The trustees of the All Saints Foundation have agreed to a proposal from the PCC to fund the restoration of the Lady Altar in memory of **Bishop Ambrose Weekes** who celebrated the early Mass on weekdays there for many years. He left generous bequests to both the Foundation and the Choir and Music Trust.

Fr Mackay established the altar for both practical and spiritual reasons. He cited the difficulty of making himself heard from the high altar; he seemed to suffer from recurring throat problems.

The altar was also to be the focus of the Guild of Prayer for London, which he established. The central figure in an altar dedicated to Our Lady is of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus. The two

large figures are St Augustine of Hippo (with the burning heart of love) and St Mary Magdalene carrying her box of ointment. One of the problems long associated with this part of town was prostitution. St Mary Magdalene was identified mistakenly in mediæval devotion and iconography with the sinful woman who anoints the feet of Jesus. Before his conversion, Augustine lived with a concubine who bore him a son. As she was of a lower social class, the conventions of the time meant that he could not marry her!

The theme of the Church's ministry to those who are on the margins is developed further in other saints:

St Margaret of Cortona was a 13th century Franciscan Tertiary. She is the patron saint of the falsely accused, the homeless and tramps, the insane, orphaned, mentally ill, midwives, penitents, single mothers, reformed prostitutes, stepchildren.

St Mary of Egypt, portrayed as covered only by her long hair and accompanied by a lion, was born in Egypt around 344, had lived a dissolute life until converted in Jerusalem. After this, she withdrew to the desert to live as a hermit.

St Catherine of Siena was a Dominican Tertiary, who devoted much of her time to the care of the poor, as well as working for the unity of the Church, at a time of schism, and teaching on prayer.

St Vincent de Paul was a French priest who lived from 1581 to 1660. At the start of his ministry he was very much a careerist cleric in pursuit of a good income. A conversion led him to devote himself to works of charity: working for the relief of galley slaves, victims of war, convicts and many other needy groups. With Louise de Marillac, he founded the Sisters of Charity

who worked with the poor and sick. They were the model for the All Saints Sisters of the Poor, which explains his presence here.

The themes of prayer and the religious life are represented by:

St Bruno, who was the founder of the Carthusians, perhaps the most austere of the contemplative orders; said never to have needed to be reformed.

St Teresa of Avila, the great Spanish mystic and reformer of the Carmelite Order.

St David of Wales, identified by the dove on his shoulder, seems to be there because of Mrs Swinburne's fondness for West Wales. Fr Mackay recorded that his last holiday with her was to St David's and the coast of

West Wales.

The Restoration work will be in two parts:

- ❖ A conservation clean of the reredos and a lighter clean of the tester. This will mean that the altar will be out of use for some time.
- ❖ The remaking of the Comper altar frontal and dossal (the hanging behind and above the altar) with their hand embroidery. This work is likely to take a year to complete.

We anticipate that the cost of the restoration will be around £20,000 and when it is completed we hope that the altar will continue to remind us of our vocation to prayer for the city in which we are set and to care for those most in need.

COLIN PODMORE introduces a DAY at ALL SAINTS COMMEMORATING BENEFACTOR FRIEDERICA FRANCES SWINBURNE on SATURDAY 9 APRIL 2016

Ninian Comper's Lady Altar, one of the jewels of All Saints, is visible from much of the church. Yet it is almost 'hidden in plain sight'. In a church whose every wall is a riot of colour, it doesn't stand out, and since its last 'conservation clean' over 35 years ago it may have lost its shine. On Sundays its lighting is subdued, to avoid distracting from the preacher's sermon. Set back behind the pulpit, at the end of an aisle leading nowhere, one rarely passes it. Only when it is approached and contemplated does the beauty of the alabaster statues and sumptuous gilding become apparent.

Installed in 1911, the Lady Altar was the anonymous gift of Mrs Friederica Frances Swinburne. The total bill was just under £1,500 (almost £160,000 today). In 1909 she had contributed £500 for Comper's east wall paintings — one-fifth of the cost. And

in 1914, again anonymously, she gave No 6 Margaret Street, the leasehold of which cost her £2,900 (£302,000). Together, these three gifts amounted to the equivalent of over half a million pounds today. Yet if the Lady Altar is almost 'hidden in plain sight', its donor has long been completely out of sight, even her (usually misspelled) name unknown to most worshippers. The centenary of her death offers an opportunity to bring her out of the shadows and recall her generosity with gratitude.

The little that is known about Mrs Swinburne's life suggests that it was not uncomplicated. She was born Friederica Frances Entwisle on 24 September 1842, in her family's substantial villa south of central Manchester, whose grounds now form Whitworth Park. Her father was called to the bar and became an MP in 1844, but

in 1848 joined his wife's family bank. For a girl of her class, school and a career were out of the question. In 1863 she married a Manchester solicitor. Did anticipation of her father's death (which occurred four months later) prompt her marriage, not yet 21, to a man thirteen years her senior? The couple moved to London, living in Swiss Cottage and then St John's Wood. They had no children and the marriage eventually failed. By 1891 Mrs Swinburne was living off Portland Place with a younger widow, Dame Mary Lucia Holker. Lady Holker re-married, but the friendship continued: she eventually became Mrs Swinburne's executrix and residuary legatee. At the time of the 1911 census another younger friend, Miss Eleanor Marcon, a fellow-worshipper at All Saints, was staying with her. Mr Swinburne, who had been called to the bar in 1884, had retired by 1900 to a villa on the edge of Andover in which he displayed his collection of 94 watercolours and etchings. He died in 1904, leaving a will which made no mention of his wife's existence — and the bulk of his estate to the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital in Margate.

Mrs Swinburne had long been associated with All Saints, but it was only during George Holden's incumbency (1905 - 08) that she became more closely involved. That this was just after she finally attained the 'respectable' status of widow may not be coincidental. An admirer of Holden, she became a close friend of his successor, Fr Mackay, with whom she holidayed in his native Pembrokeshire in the September before she died. In an obituary in the *Parish Paper*, Fr Mackay praised her devotion. While living in an apartment in Sloane Square, she travelled to All Saints on the underground most mornings for the 7am Mass, having engaged in lengthy preparation and intercession beforehand. At

some point after 1912 she moved to Portland Place — doubtless in order to be closer to All Saints. She was generous not only to the church but also to those in need. Though her health was increasingly poor, 'she retained her youthful spirit and love of adventure to the end', enjoyed fun and banter and was at the centre of 'a family circle friendship'. An accomplished pianist, she enjoyed concerts at the Queen's Hall, as well as novels and the theatre. 'She kept herself informed on all topics of interest, and was an uncommonly shrewd critic. She had a power of estimating personalities which was really remarkable. She could be severe at times, but she was incapable of being ill-natured.' She hated Palestrina, saying with a twinkle that her final illness had one advantage: 'it saved her from the duty of enduring Palestrina'. But otherwise she loved the music at All Saints (which from 1907 was under the direction of Walter Vale).

Mrs Swinburne died on 14 April 1916. After a requiem at All Saints, she was buried in Lytham next to the grave of Lady Holker's first husband (in which the ashes of Lady Holker and her second husband were later buried). Her will, written in 1910, evidenced her commitment to the Church of England and to Anglo-Catholicism. Legacies went not only to diocesan funds (£500 each for the Bishop of London's fund and the East and South London funds) and the SPG (£200), but also to the (political) English Church Union (£1,000) and the (devotional) Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (£500), branches of which George Holden had established at All Saints, and the Universities Mission to Central Africa (£500). She was a member of the Guild of All Souls when she died, but probably joined only when its All Saints branch was established in 1913 — hence the lack of a bequest. There were four annuities, doubtless to present or former servants,

and legacies to thirteen female friends and relations. The largest personal bequest, of £1,000 (over £100,000 today), went to Fr Mackay.

These were far exceeded, individual and collectively, by a bequest of £25,000 to found and endow the Cleaver Ordination Candidates Fund — probably named after Fr W. H. Cleaver, a noted Anglo-Catholic preacher who had earlier lived quite close to Mrs Swinburne in St John's Wood and died in 1909. She was giving financial assistance to Anglo-Catholic ordinands, and the purpose of the fund was to continue this work after her death. Among the twelve Trustees she appointed were four members of the All Saints Church Council, including Fr Mackay and the Duke of Newcastle.

The Fund was thus very much a creation of All Saints, devised if not at Fr Mackay's instigation then certainly on his advice. Other founding Trustees included the Principal of Pusey House and the Secretary of the English Church Union. When vacancies arose, appointments were to be made during his lifetime by the ECU's President, Lord Halifax. The first Chairman, Donaldson Rawlins (Chairman of the ECU's Legal Committee) was a member of the All Saints Church Council; with my own chairmanship of the Trustees a century later, while a member of the All Saints PCC, things have come full circle. All Saints and the Cleaver Ordination Candidates Fund will jointly mark the centenary of Mrs Swinburne's death and the Fund's foundation on Saturday 9 April.

HUGH PRICE HUGHES LECTURES 2016

This series will invite you to reflect on how other ways of knowing and seeing — “faith” commitments for some — relate to their Christian faith.

at Hinde Street Methodist Church at 7.30pm.

Admission is free and all are welcome!

www.hindestreet.org.uk/hph-lectures.html

12 April — *Revd Ric Stott*

Artist and Methodist Pioneer minister

Identity, Modernity and Faith

10 May — *Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Journalist*

**Living as Christians in Multi-faith Britain and
the Importance of Religious Literacy**

14 June — *Michael Wakelin, Religion and Media Consultant*

FORMER CHORISTERS EVENSONG:

Saturday 16 April, 3.30pm

Old boys from the All Saints Choir School will be coming to All Saints for their annual reunion on Saturday 16 April. They will sing Evensong at 3.30pm, under the direction of Louis Halsey (one of their number). We hope there will be a good turnout by members of the current congregation to support them. The service will be followed by tea and lots of cake. *All welcome.*

SERMON PREACHED BY FR ALAN MOSES, VICAR at HIGH MASS ON Sunday 13 March, Lent 5 (Passiontide)

Readings: Isaiah 43: 16 - 21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3: 4b - 14; John 12: 1 - 8

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

In both Old and New Testaments, places associated with God and with Jesus, with major figures and events in the history of the people, take on an enduring significance.

Abraham at the oaks of Mamre where he entertained the mysterious strangers. Bethel **‘the house of God,’** where Jacob had his vision of the ladder reaching up to heaven.

The mountain of God, Sinai or Horeb, where Moses encounters God in the burning bush and later receives the law. The Red Sea and the wilderness which God leads the people through when he has rescued them from slavery in Egypt: which Isaiah reminds the people of when they are in exile in Babylon.

There are too, places with negative reputations: Egypt and Babylon, Sodom and Gomorrah.

In the New Testament, we find a series of places associated with Jesus and the people he gathers around him: Bethlehem where he is born; Nazareth where he grows up; the Jordan where he is baptised; the wilderness where he fasts and is tempted; the Sea of Galilee where he calls his disciples and stills the storm. There are the places associated with his passion and death: the holy city of Jerusalem and its temple; the upper room where he eats the last supper with his disciples; the Garden of Gethesmane, the hill of Calvary; the garden tomb where he is buried and raised; and Bethany, the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus.

Ours is a tradition which has a high regard for holy places: for church buildings and pilgrimage sites. So it is rather surprising that we do not often name them after biblical places. Our churches tend to be named after divine mysteries like the Trinity or in honour of saints, people associated with Christ.

If we want to find Christians who name their houses of worship after biblical places, we must look, ironically, to people who have a very low theology of places and buildings: to Wales and its non-Conformist chapels: all those Ararats and Ebenezers, Bethels and Bethanies in the Valleys. Alas, like the Bethel in my brother's village, many of them are now closed.

These biblical places are not just places locked in the past, to be read about in scriptures or visited on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Many of them, and the events and people associated with them, have a powerful symbolic meaning which continues to speak to us today, to show us things which remain true for the church and believers; if we care to look and listen.

So we turn our attention to Bethany, the people who live there and what happened there six days before the Passover which would be Jesus' last; and his Passover from death to life.

The home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, is a place of welcome and hospitality, friendship and gratitude. In St Luke, it is, you will recall, the place where Mary listens to the teaching of Jesus and Martha who is getting hot and bothered

doing all the work in the kitchen, complains to Jesus, who tells her that Mary has **‘chosen the better part’**.

In John, Jesus is there in the interval between his raising of Lazarus and the events of his passion which are played out in Jerusalem. The scene may begin peacefully enough, but the shadow of the cross soon falls over it; the harsh reality of the passion intrudes.

Mary does something extraordinary: she anoints the feet of Jesus with precious ointment; pure nard — something very expensive — the quantity mentioned would cost almost a year’s wages for an ordinary working man. Even without the expense, such a gesture on the part of a woman would have created shock waves. Not the kind of thing you would expect in All Saints, Margaret Street.

John chooses his words carefully as he tells of Mary’s actions. The verb **‘to wipe’** is the same one he uses to describe Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet at the last supper. Mary’s action points towards that foot-washing at the farewell meal. Like the raising of Lazarus and the Sanhedrin’s decision to kill Jesus, which immediately precedes this episode, this story prefigures critical events in Jesus’ “hour”: the word he uses in John for the climax of his life and ministry.

The perfume’s all-pervading fragrance signals the extravagance of Mary’s act, but may have an extra significance. Earlier, Martha had tried to stop Jesus when he ordered the stone to be rolled away from the tomb of Lazarus, because of the stench that would come out if it was opened. Through Mary’s act, the stench of death which had once lingered over the household has been replaced by the fragrance of love and

devotion.

In Mark’s version of this anointing story, an unnamed group protests the woman’s waste of the perfume, but in John it is Judas who does so. His major rôle here is another hint that John wants us to link Mary’s anointing with the events of the Last Supper.

The description of Judas makes this connection with Jesus’ death explicit, and, at the same time, robs Judas’ protest of its legitimacy. What might sound like a reasonable complaint is shown to be unworthy of trust.

Greed was one of the early Church’s explanations for Judas’ treachery. Yet the details of this description seem to suggest something else as well. Judas is labelled a **‘thief’**, *kleptes*. This is the same word used in the Good Shepherd passage in John 10 to describe the one who threatens the flock. **‘Not because he cared about the poor’** echoes the description of the hireling’s lack of care for the sheep (10: 13). When Judas betrays Jesus, he also betrays the sheep.

So John is giving us two distinct responses to the arrival of Jesus’ hour:

- ❖ Mary is the model of faithful discipleship,
- ❖ Judas of the unfaithful.

Jesus’ words **“Let her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial”**, affirm Mary’s action and link it with his death. Mary’s act anticipates that other anointing in John’s Gospel, at the burial of Jesus (19: 38 - 42), and confirms the impending arrival of his **‘hour’**.

Jesus goes on, **“You always have the poor with you, you will not always have me”**. He alludes to the commandment in the Jewish Law to care for the poor

(Deuteronomy 15: 11). In Matthew and Mark, these words clearly rebuff the protest about money and waste. But John gives them another twist, to remind the disciples of the limited time of Jesus' presence among them and the urgency to respond to Jesus while he is still there. Mary has recognized that time limit and responded to it.

So John sees the anointing by Mary as anticipating two events in Jesus' hour:

- ❖ His washing of the disciples' feet; and
- ❖ His burial.

It is in the link between them that we can see the evangelist's distinctive understanding most clearly.

On Maundy Thursday, Jesus will wash his disciples' feet to express his love for them and draw them into his life with God. He will ask them to repeat this act of service for one another. What Jesus will do for his disciples and will ask them to do for one another, Mary has already done for him here. So in Mary, we are given a picture of the fullness of the life of discipleship. Her act shows the love that will be the hallmark of discipleship and the recognition of Jesus' identity, as the one to be worshipped, that is the decisive mark of Christian life.

Mary's act of discipleship is highlighted in the contrast with Judas. He does not respond to the coming of Jesus' '**hour**' with an act of love, but with cynical and self-centred disdain. Judas' response leads to the break-up of the flock of Jesus, whereas Mary's models the life of love that should characterize it.

Mary seems to know how to respond to Jesus without being told. She fulfils his command of love before he teaches it to the disciples after he washes their feet. She recognizes Jesus' '**hour**', his

impending departure, before he has taught his followers about its true meaning. In the story of the raising of Lazarus, she had responded to Jesus' calling for her, showing that she was one of his own, a disciple. In the anointing she shows what it means to be one: she gives boldly of herself in love, just as Jesus will give boldly of himself in love at his hour.

Jesus' words about discipleship in the Farewell Discourse will spell out what that story shows about discipleship: it is defined by our acts of love and our response to Jesus.

So what does Bethany, the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus and what happened there have to say to us in this place?

I have been pondering this all week as I have gone about my daily tasks, so here are some thoughts.

1. There is that attention to Jesus which we find in Luke's Gospel: that '**better part**'; that vital learning of him and from him. That is focused in our worship and prayer. When we are criticized for its extravagance, its music and ceremony and vestments, we sometimes cite those words of Jesus. And we are right to do so as long as what we do has two vital elements: that is it filled with prayer and loving devotion to our Lord, (worship, however beautiful, which exists only to keep God and others at a safe distance, is no worship at all); and that it issues in care for the poor.
2. There is hospitality, being a place of welcome and kindness. We are seeing a huge upsurge of rough sleeping in London. Some churches across the diocese open their buildings as "night shelters" for the homeless. We have found ourselves becoming a "day

shelter". Sometimes, this building is filled not with the fragrance of incense but with the stench of poverty. Most of our guests are very little trouble, but this is not always the case. Over this past week or more one of them, who is not an immigrant from Eastern Europe or Africa but a Brit, has been climbing over the gates at night and using the courtyard, where you will be having your coffee after Mass, as a urinal.

Yesterday morning, he was doing this when my daughter and I got back to the house. When I remonstrated with him, we were treated to a tirade of abuse and threats of violence. Fr Michael and I are 'paedophiles', (the stock insult directed at the clergy these days). I won't repeat what he said to and about my wife and daughter. Later in the day, my wife went into Martha and Mary mode, bought the cleaning equivalent of pure nard and washed down the polluted areas so that you would not have to endure the stench this morning.

But life here is not all like that; there are lovely and poignant moments too. On Friday lunchtime, we had in the congregation at Mass one of our Friends, Elaine Bullock. She had come up from her home in Southsea because it was the 30th anniversary of her daughter Rosie's death. Rosie had been a member of the congregation here, and Elaine remains eternally grateful for all that was done for her here. There was also a man whom I had not met before. He told me at the door that he was on his way to hospital to have a brain tumour removed. He was so glad to be able to come to Mass on his way there.

That evening, as Area Dean, I was at St Paul's, Rossmore Road, in North Marylebone, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the re-opening of the church

as a building adapted to serve the needs of a community with many problems. The space in which we celebrated the Mass that evening is the same one which is used for all sorts of community gatherings during the week and as a night shelter for the homeless during the winter: another Bethany. The church has a chapel, where the sacrament is reserved, set aside for both public and private prayer, day by day.

So my prayer for this place is that it will always be a Bethany: a place where Jesus is heard and met, where he is responded to with love; and where the poor are never forgotten.

100 YEARS AGO

In his Notes, the Vicar wrote:

"From the time this Paper is issued our thoughts will be turned towards Passiontide.

"I have no doubt at all that much of our failure in devotion and in life arises out of our failure to appreciate the revelation of the Cross. It is only as penitents who have found pardon through the Precious Blood that mankind can pray and worship God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We must be careful that the interest, beauty and pathos of the story of the Passion does not tempt us to fasten on them and neglect the meaning and value of the Passion. The Passion and Death are the Divine transaction which was necessary before the new and better life in Jesus Christ could arise in the world, and they are accepted as power and reproduced in sacrifice in every truly Christian life. Our Lord cannot be our Pattern and our Friend until we have accepted him as our Saviour, and forgetfulness of this is the secret of many well-meant attempts after

the Christian life which end in failure.

“We are setting aside a portion of our church for the constant contemplation of the mystery of the Redemption. The crucifix which is now being placed on the north wall of the Baptistry is the gift of the Duke of Newcastle. It was carved in Belgium before the war. In front of it are placed three prayer desks, on two of them will lie two volumes, one containing the names of the soldiers, sailors and airmen who ask our prayers, and the other the names of the departed who have died on the field of honour... We are hoping that the names of those for whom we have been asked to pray may thus be kept in more constant remembrance.”

NB. The crucifix was removed a good many years ago and is now in the chapel of Wandsworth Prison.

SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES MUSIC AND READINGS

● SUNDAY 3 APRIL THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 104
Introit: *Quasimodo geniti infantes*
Setting: Collegium Regale — Howells
Psalm: 118: 14 - end
Lessons: Acts 5: 27 - 32
Revelation 1: 4 - 8
Hymn: 125 (omit *)
— Walford Davies version

Gospel: John 20: 19 - end
Preacher: Fr Julian Browning
Creed: Howells
Motet: Most glorious Lord of life
— Armstrong Gibbs
Hymns: 121, 257, 173
Voluntary: Toccata — Dubois

CHORAL EVENSONG & BENEDICTION at 6pm (First Evening Prayer of the Annunciation)

Psalm: 85
Lessons: Genesis 3: 8 - 15
Galatians 4: 1 - 5
Office Hymn: 180
Canticles: Truro Service — Jackson
Anthem: Ave Maria — Mendelssohn
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 161
O Salutaris: Schumann
Hymn: 187
Tantum ergo: Bruckner
Voluntary: Adagio, BWV 564
— J.S. Bach

SATURDAY 9 APRIL — Centenary of the Death of Friederica Frances Swinburne, donor of the Lady Altar and No 6 Margaret Street and Foundress of the Cleaver Ordination Candidates Fund

Solemn High Mass of Requiem at 11.30am

Preacher: The Venerable Luke Miller,
Archdeacon of London
Mass Setting: Requiem Mass in D flat
— Walter Vale

**The 2016 Roy Porter Lecture
at 2.30pm**

Speaker: The Revd Dr Robert Beaken:
*A Snapshot of Anglo-
Catholicism in 1916*

**Solemn Evensong & Benediction
at 4.30pm**

**● SUNDAY 10 APRIL
THE THIRD SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

HIGH MASS at 11am

Hymn: 351 (Descant: Hutchings)
Introit: *Iubilate Deo, omnis terra*
Setting: Missa Brevis in D
— Mozart

Psalm: 30
Lessons: Acts 9: 1 - 20
Revelation 5: 11 - end
Hymn: 349
Gospel: John 21: 1 - 19
Preacher: Fr Michael Bowie
Creed: Mozart
Motet: Love, which thou to me hast
given — Cornelius
Hymns: 73 (i), 349, 113
Voluntary: March on a theme of Handel
— Guilmant

**MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
and ANNUAL PAROCHIAL
CHURCH MEETING, 12.45pm**

All those on the Church Electoral Roll and residents of the Parish entered on a register of local government electors are eligible to attend the first meeting. Only Church Electoral Roll members may attend the APCM which follows immediately.

**CHORAL EVENSONG
& BENEDICTION at 6pm**

Psalm: 86
Lessons: Isaiah 38: 9 - 20
John 11: 27 - 44
Office Hymn: 101
Canticles: Blair in B minor
Anthem: Light of the world — Elgar
Preacher: The Vicar,
Prebendary Alan Moses
Hymn: 112
O Salutaris: Elgar (No 1)
Hymn: 255
Tantum ergo: de Séverac
Voluntary: Pastorale, No 2, Op. 59
— Reger

SATURDAY 16 APRIL

**All Saints Ex-Choristers'
Association Reunion
& Evensong at 3.30pm**

Music before: Dolcezza — Whitlock
Psalm: 84
Reading: Deuteronomy Ch 8
Office hymn: 124 — Ye Choirs of
New Jerusalem
Canticles: Specially composed by
Martin Bruce (ex-Chorister)
Reading: Ephesians 3: 14 - end
Anthem: Never weather-beaten sail
— Campion
Hymn: 197 — For all the Saints
Officiant: Fr Michael Bowie
Voluntary: Paz Vobiscum — Karg-Elert

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.

Please contact **Dee Prior** in the Parish Office in relation to Friends' matters.

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 and 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 Weekly Parish E-mail

This gives weekly news of events, people to pray for, and a short letter from the Vicar or Assistant Priest. You can subscribe through the All Saints website — see News and Events/Weekly Newsletter for directions about signing up.

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

Vicar:

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Assistant Priest:

The Revd Dr Michael Bowie

020 3632 4309

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Honorary Assistant Priests:

The Revd Gerald Beauchamp

020 7258 0724

The Revd Julian Browning

020 7286 6034

Parish Administrator:

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Chris Self 020 7723 2938

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Patrick Hartley 020 7607 0060

Director of Music:

Timothy Byram-Wigfield

c/o 020 7636 1788

Associate Director of Music:

Charles Andrews c/o 020 7636 1788

Electoral Roll Officer:

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

(Except bank holidays — 12 noon Mass only)

Saturdays:

Morning Prayer at 7.30am

Low Mass at **12 noon** and 6.30pm*

(* First Mass of Sunday)

Confessions 5.30pm.

Evening Prayer 6pm.

On major weekday feasts, High Mass is sung at 6.30pm

CALENDAR AND INTENTIONS FOR APRIL 2016

1	Friday of Easter Week	Those in need
2	Saturday of Easter Week	Thanksgiving for the resurrection
3	✠ SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER	Our Parish and People
4	THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD	
		Annunciation, Marble Arch
5		Local businesses
6		University of Westminster
7		Unity
8		Those in need
9	<i>Dietrich Bonhoeffer</i>	Persecuted Christians
10	✠ THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER	Our Parish and People
11	George Augustus Selwyn, 1 st Bishop of New Zealand	
		Church in Aotearoa — New Zealand
12		St Marylebone, Healing and Counselling Centre
13		Friends of All Saints
14		Unity
15		Those in need
16	<i>Isabella Gilmore, Deaconess, 1923</i>	Deacons
17	✠ FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	Our Parish and People
18		PCC
19	Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury and Martyr, 1012	
		The Archbishop of Canterbury Hospitals
20		
21	Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher, 1109	
		The Queen (90 th birthday)
22		Those in need
23	George, Martyr, Patron of England, 304	
		The Church and People of England
24	FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	Our Parish and People
25	Mark the Evangelist	Thanksgiving for the Gospel
26		Church schools
27	<i>Christina Rosetti, Poet, 1894</i>	Writers
28	<i>Peter Chanel, Missionary and Martyr</i>	Unity
29	Catherine of Siena, Teacher, 1380	Those in need
30	<i>Pandita Mary Ramabai, translator of the Scriptures</i>	
		Church in India



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