

# THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

rooted in faith • open in thought • reaching • out in service

NOVEMBER 2013

## Counting Down to Advent and Christmas

Although I am writing this for November's *Clarion* in the middle of October and Christmas is still nine weeks away, the commercial world is well into the swing of counting down the days until Christmas. Christmas cards have already been on sale for several weeks and the shops are offering Christmas themed display and of course an extended range of Christmas or 'seasonal' presents.

The Church too counts down the days to Christmas but in a different, more measured and thoughtful way. It starts by counting down the four Sundays to the beginning of Advent, which marks the beginning of the Church's new liturgical year. As the calendar falls this year, Sunday 3 November is the fourth Sunday before Advent and the countdown continues until Sunday 1 December, which marks the First Sunday of Advent and the counting begins again until the fourth and final Sunday leads us to Christmas Day.

This double counting – from the four Sundays to the beginning of Advent and the four Sundays of Advent to Christmas – gives us the opportunity to prepare for Advent itself, so that it is not suddenly sprung upon us, catching us unawares, unprepared.

Traditionally the themes of Advent are watching and waiting. In the northern hemisphere our watching and waiting coincide with the days drawing in, the hours of darkness becoming longer while the hours of light seem to struggle to assert themselves. In the poem 'November Sonnet', the poet Elizabeth Jennings calls this month when the days become darker 'the season of right doubt'.

In a commentary on the poem, Janet Morley in her book *haphazard by starlight* (2013, SPCK) writes that this description is both heartening and intriguing, suggesting that there is a deep

rightness in accepting the darkness of doubt and uncertainty in our spiritual journey. There is, Morley writes, an appropriate place for letting ourselves go into what is unknown and unsure and suggests this may be the only way to prepare for the mystery that we celebrate at Christmas, the birth of the Christ child, 'Emmanuel', God with us.

The connection between 'right doubt' and the birth of Christ comes together in the last line of 'November Sonnet'; 'This is the season of right doubt/While the elected child waits to be born'. The church season of Advent helps us to prepare inwardly, in our hearts and minds, for the celebration of the birth of the 'elected child'. This is the preparation that truly matters and I hope you will take the opportunity to prepare your hearts and minds this Advent so that when Christmas Day comes your joy and celebrations are well rooted in a deepening appreciation of the mystery of the incarnation. The countdown has begun!

*Ginny Thomas*

## Advent Course: Expecting Jesus

This year's Advent Course will be a series of three discussions entitled 'Expecting Jesus'. We hope to have a number of small groups held on different days/times so allowing as many people as possible to attend. It is anticipated that the first sessions will be in the week beginning 1 December.

Further details will be available on the web site, in the pew sheet and from the Parish Office from 10 November.

## Responding to God's Generosity: Planned Giving Programme 2013

The dialogue below was part of a sermon on Sunday 20 October in connection with our Planned Giving Programme for 2013.

The dialogue ends with questions from the three participants. Ginny's responses, in brief, are given below.

The response to the Core member's question: A prayerful response is to take time to think about and be thankful for all that God has given us in our own lives and given the world. It means not taking for granted the things we have and the world around us. It also means an ever deepening awareness and appreciation of the mystery of the crucifixion and what God has done for us through the death and resurrection of His son. What we give comes from a sense of gratitude.

The response to the question by the member of the Congregation: Realistic giving depends on how much money you have. The more you have, the more you are able to give, but we are not expected to give all our money away and live in poverty. The Church of England encourages us to tithe, meaning to give 10% of our earnings after tax; 5% to charities of our choice and 5% to the church. It may be that you cannot reach that target immediately, but that is the goal. The New Testament is full of quotes about money. One of my favourites is from Matthew's Gospel: 'where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'. We spend our money on what is important to us.

The response to the Fringe member's question: The simplest answer to why we should give financially is that without financial support St Mary's would have to close. We have to raise all our own funds, and receive nothing from the diocese. Committed financial giving enables us to keep our doors open and to flourish as a church community. We have a regular giving scheme at St Mary's, which makes giving easy. Details are available from the parish office.

**CORE** Hello I'm John.  
**CONG** Hello I'm James.  
**FRINGE** Hello I'm Jan.

**CORE** I stand here to represent what you might call a **core** member of our Church... committed, busy, I might even be on the Church Council.

**CONG** I stand here to represent our regular **congregation**. Not perhaps quite as involved as him, but you'll see me on Sunday, oh and much more than that too.

**FRINGE** Yes, you'll probably see me on Sunday, but I'm standing here to represent what you might call our **fringe**. I may be newer in our church or more occasional. I may come with my kids to church parade or just like them going to Sunday School.

**CORE** We have different perspectives on Christian Faith, the church and such like.

**FRINGE** Though we all know we have to play our part in helping the Vicar run the church.

**CONG** Well, it's more than that. We all are the church and with a part to play.

**CORE** Although it can be necessary to let some Vicars think they run it. I believe in giving to support the church... and that nice Vicar.

**FRINGE** I believe in giving as part of my discipleship, as good stewardship of what God's given me, and as an act of worship.

**CORE** Wow. Wish I'd said that! Er, what does it mean?

**FRINGE** I suppose this Giving in Grace thing will major on tithing will it? It's good to stretch us; we need that here.

**CONG** Tithing? That rather scares me. I've been putting the same on amount in my envelope for the last couple of years. Can't remember the last time I changed it.

**FRINGE** Well, tithing doesn't scare me. I don't know what tithing is.

**CONG** Could we have what we need the money for set out a bit clearer than usual?

**FRINGE** Yes, it isn't always clear what we need. Where does the money go to anyway?

**CORE** It's the Vicar that knows. Making things clear was never her strong

- point. Have you never heard her preach?
- FRINGE** She does her best. She's a nice woman, a very, very nice woman!
- CONG** Could we hear a bit from the Bible? A bit about money I mean – why we should give. There's a lot I don't understand.
- CORE** To inspire me. To challenge me. To take me deeper. There's a lot I don't understand.
- FRINGE** To show me why I should give – there's a lot I don't understand.
- CORE** But please don't tell me it's to keep the doors open every Sunday. I love this church but I'm looking for more than that.
- FRINGE** I want to keep the doors open. It's coming through those doors that's helping me find God... and that nice Vicar.
- CORE** Give me a message about reflecting prayerful, proportionate giving, and an appropriate and sacrificial response to God's love and it'll work for me.
- CONG** Give me a message about realistic giving, perhaps, get me thinking about proportions of income and explain the Bible's patterns and reasoning more and it'll work for me.
- FRINGE** Give me a message about why to give and help me with a regular giving scheme and it'll work for me.

### Will Aid Scheme

Under this arrangement a local solicitor writes your will and instead of paying a fee in return, you are invited to make a donation to WILL AID.

This year is WILL AID's 25th anniversary and some 250,000 people have made a will through the scheme and got the peace of mind that comes from knowing that their loved ones are protected if the worst happens. The scheme has raised more than £13.6 million for the vital work of the charities it supports in the UK and

around the world. The suggested donation is £90 for a basic single will and £135 for a pair of mirror wills.

Do check to see if your solicitor offers this facility or search on WILL AID for more information and to check which charities are being supported this year. The scheme runs throughout the month of November.

**Thursday 5 November**  
**Taizé Service**  
**at 7.30pm**



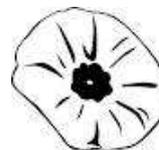
Come, be still, find peace.  
 A time of quiet contemplation with readings, prayer and the beautiful songs of Taizé.

### Thursday 14 November: Thursday Lunch at 12.30

The next Thursday Lunch will be on Thursday 14 November at 12.30pm. The speaker is to Simon de Mare and the title of the talk is Egypt There will be a Eucharist at 11.45am preceding the lunch. If you would like to attend please put your name on the list at the back of the church.

### Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday is on Sunday 10 November. If you would like prayers for people who were killed in action in the wars to be included in the service, please write their names on the list at the back of the church.



### Thank You, Ginny and Patrick

On Sunday 20 October the congregation was presented with a sketch by Katrina and Edward Quinton and Timon Molloy about tithing and that we should think more about giving support to St. Mary's in financial and practical ways.

In Germany, the government and church are closely interlinked. All citizens have to pay a church tax, which is 8% of the income tax. Clergy are paid by the government.

This is not the case in the United Kingdom and the United States, which believe in autonomy of church and government, which I also accept, therefore it is vitally important for us to focus on tithing.

At St. Mary's we are lucky in that we have amazing role models in Ginny and Patrick. Did you know that Ginny is a non-stipendiary vicar, i.e. apart from the accommodation, which the Diocese provides, she takes no salary. Both Ginny and Patrick give the utmost of their time, finances and many talents to our congregation. With the help of God we can follow their example.

*Anne Swift*

### **Dates for your Dairy**

#### **Saturday 6 November**

Confirmation at St Paul's Cathedral

#### **Sunday 17 November**

12noon The Big Leaf Rake

#### **Sunday 8 December**

10.30am All Age Worship with Nativity Play

7pm Carol Service

#### **Tuesday 24 December**

Christmas Eve:

Crib Service 4pm

Midnight Mass 11.30pm

#### **Wednesday 25 December**

Christmas Day

10.30am Sung Eucharist

### **Advent Procession St Paul's Cathedral**

The great Advent Procession takes place on Saturday 30 November at 6.00 p.m.

This is a moving and uplifting service in which the Cathedral Choir moves throughout the building singing music which reflects the Advent themes of light and hope, together with readings from scripture and literature and some of the best-loved of the Advent hymns. The service will last approximately an hour and a quarter and you will need to be seated by 5.30pm at the latest.

If you would like to attend, please let John in the parish office know how many tickets you require by **8 November**.

[john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk](mailto:john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk) or 0207 835 1440.

### **Some recollections from one Pilgrim to the Holy Land**

It was an intense week and too soon to do more than gather a random selection of memories, experiences and reflections. We saw, heard and learnt so much in such a short amount of time that large chunks of the detail will never be remembered. This does not matter; what we bring back to our lives here is what matters.

Our guide... a passionate Arab Christian from Nazareth. We visited his church. It is Greek Catholic (a minority church entirely new to us), and everywhere we went we encountered pilgrims from different churches from all other world. German, Russian, Indian, Chinese, Korean, American, French, Italian to name just some we identified. The world-wide Christian community is strongly and reassuringly visible. Jerusalem... crowded, chaotic, full of conflicts, contradictions and extremes, with tourist coaches everywhere jostling for a parking place. Arabs living peacefully next to Jews. Ultra-orthodox Jews rushing through the Arab section of the Old City on their Sabbath eve to pray at the Western (Wailing) Wall. Mingling with them as they prayed... such a powerful place, everyone united in communicating with God, be it singly or in groups.

...Trying to see beyond the 'modern' Christian church buildings and every change that has taken place since Jesus died, to imagine the city in his time. The Garden of Gethsemane... portrayed as a small, neat garden, but a potent symbol when we viewed it, standing on the Mount of Olives while listening to a reading of the Gospel account of his time, there on the eve of his crucifixion.

Realising that 2000 years later, no one accurately knows where the events of that night took place. Realising that the same is true of nearly every place we visited...

many now owned by foreign churches, frequently the Franciscans. Yet these places are visited by so many because of what they represent. Seeing altars shared as one group after another holds a communion service, both inside churches and in the open air...

Wishing that there were not quite so many people there at the same time as us... Walking along the Via Dolorosa... difficult and steep and with 14 Stations of the Cross. Cinema images of Jesus' journey to Calvary carrying his cross... so different to our walk, but a much better indication of what it was like in Jesus' time and what he must have suffered. Learning that as more and more excavations take place across the country, they uncover increasing archaeological evidence that supports the Gospel accounts.

Celebrating Holy Communion in the desert overlooking distant mountains, a most wonderful experience... Bedouins providing the communion table. Sitting in a stationary boat on a calm and silent Sea of Galilee while we listened to Luke's account of the storm that frightened Jesus' disciples. Hearing a scientific explanation of how and why such storms do occur and without warning, an explanation that in no way detracted from the reading. Finding a place on the edge of the Sea to see it as it was when Jesus lived...

Everywhere we went, the political divide between Israel and Palestine and neighbouring countries as much part of our journey as the story of Christianity we were there to experience... We visited sites in the Occupied Territories without harassment or any sense of fear. There may no longer be the wholesale destruction of religious buildings that has occurred through the centuries, but the country now called Israel is still defined by religions and race...

Marvelling that events that occurred 2000 years ago in a small area of a small country have resulted in millions of people all over the world today calling themselves Christians. Coming back to St. Mary's and saying the Creed with new meaning...

Anthony Williams



### New Hymn Books

We are now using our new version of the Ancient and Modern hymns books. We hope that members of the congregation will

consider sponsoring 'their' hymnal. We will be offering a bookplate so that you can nominate a person to be commemorated in the front of the hymnal. The cost per book will be £15 and if you would like to buy or dedicate a copy, please contact John in the Parish Office on 020 7835 1440 or [john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk](mailto:john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk), who will deal with your requests.

### 'Forgive us our trespasses'. Part I

Everyone will have noticed that two versions of the Lord's Prayer are in general use: one regarded as 'traditional' and the other 'contemporary'. They are helpfully printed one above the other on page 178 of *Common Worship*. The most obvious difference is that the older version uses the words 'thy' and 'thine' whereas the modern one says 'your' and 'yours', which of course mean exactly the same thing. However, there is a distinct difference between the two versions where the one text says: 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us' where the other reads: 'Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us'.

To our ears the word trespass means 'entry without permission', which is the definition given as the principal usage in the *New Oxford Dictionary of English* (1998). (The derivation is given as *transpassare*, being Medieval Latin for 'passing across'). The dictionary also allows a secondary meaning of 'sin', describing this as 'archaic or literary'. Perhaps the difference is more apparent than real. If we dig a bit more deeply, looking at what it says in the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, both in the original Greek text and in successive translations into English, the plot thickens.

**Matthew's Gospel** is the only one to record the Lord's Prayer in full. The verse in question (Matt. 6:12) reads in the Greek 'Forgive us our debts (*opheilemata*) as we forgive our debtors

(*opheiletais*). This introduces a quite different set of ideas. In human terms we think of debts and debtors almost entirely in financial terms. The same is true of Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:23-35, except perhaps in the conclusion, which speaks of forgiving one's brother 'from your heart'. In the Lord's Prayer the debts, which we are asking God to forgive us, must include our debt to him, which has little to do with cash. We owe it to him not only to obey his commandments, but to thank him for our 'creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life... for the means of grace and for the hope of glory' ('General Thanksgiving' in *Common Worship* page 109); and above all to love him with all our hearts, minds and spirits. Perhaps we are praying here not to be discharged of this debt in the sense of being let off it, but asking forgiveness for delivering on it so feebly, and implicitly praying 'help us to do better'.

Both the *King James Bible* (1611) and the *New Standard Revised Version* (1989) follow the Greek in saying 'Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors'. (Note in passing that this assumes we have already done so, before we can pray these words sincerely). Why, then, does the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662), use the word 'trespass'. I believe it is because when Cranmer produced his first version of the Prayer Book in 1549 (which the later versions have all followed), the then authorised version of the bible was the *Great Bible* of 1540. This was a combination of Coverdale for most of the Old Testament and Tyndale for the New Testament. Tyndale chose the words 'trespasses' and 'trespassers' for good reason, because this is the word used by Matthew two verses later (in 6:14), which is Jesus' immediate comment at the end of the Lord's Prayer. This says: 'For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you' (*paraptomata*). The Greek word here translated 'trespass' means a 'fall beside' or metaphorically a 'transgression', for which Tyndale's word 'trespass' is spot on.

It also occurs in one other very relevant place. **Mark's Gospel** shortens the Lord's Prayer down to one single sentence (Mark 11:25): 'Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you

have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses'. Not surprisingly, the King James Bible and the New Standard Revised Version also follow Tyndale here; so does Tom Wright, who is probably the most popular of scholarly Anglican commentators today. In his book *Mark for Everyone* (SPCK, 2001) he offers a translation that is designed to speak 'not just to some people but to everyone' and sticks firmly to 'trespasses' at this point (pp. x and 150).

Where then does the 'contemporary' version given in *Common Worship* come from? Recall that this reads 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.' It first came into general use in 1966, with the authorisation of *Experimental Services, Series III*. It originates in the shortened version of the Lord's Prayer given in **Luke's Gospel**. Chapter 11, Verse 4 reads: 'And forgive us our sins (*hamartia*), for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us'. The Greek word here translated as 'sin' has the same root as the verb meaning 'to miss the mark' and its second meaning is 'to fail, do wrong, err, sin'. In English this word 'sin' carries a clear implication of wrong-doing and the dictionary definition reads: 'an immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law'. (Its derivation is given as Old English *synn* probably related to the Latin word *sons* meaning 'guilty'). This could hardly be clearer. Why then does the second half of this petition revert to the language of forgiving our debtors? Could it be because in Jewish and early Christian eyes the power to forgive sins belonged to God alone, and of course his surrogate on earth, Jesus Christ? Whatever we may think about the human possibility of forgiving those who sin against us, the fact remains that no demand to do so figures anywhere in the Greek texts of the Lord's Prayer.

Is any of this important? It seems to me that the underlying ideas of incurring a debt, of transgressing a boundary and of committing a sin are very different ones. There is nothing intrinsically wrong in debt; indeed our whole economic system is built around it. When people lose confidence in punctual repayment, the whole edifice totters. The 'debt' we owe to God arises not so much from any particular

wrong we have done, as from our human nature as sons and daughters of Adam. By contrast, the modern meaning of 'sin' is very hard-line, with its connotation of a serious fault, offence or omission. (The question of sin is dealt with elsewhere in our liturgies, under the rubric of 'Confession', though not so bleakly in our modern services as in the *Book of Common Prayer* with its emphasis on our being 'miserable sinners' with 'no health in us'). The word 'trespass' is milder and has the merit of long familiarity.

I think it is a pity that we have no official liturgical version of the Lord's Prayer that uses the metaphor of 'debt' and 'debtors'. These are, after all, the only words to figure in the original Greek text of Matthew, which is the only Gospel to give us the Lord's Prayer in full, but heaven forbid that a third form of the prayer now be added to the two existing ones.

Should we worry that the three evangelists offer us versions of the Lord's Prayer – itself the foundation of all Christian praying – that differ both in length and in the choice of words? I think not. Even Mark's Gospel, by common consent the first to be written (perhaps around 65 AD), must have depended on the apostles' memories and decades of oral transmission. No surprise, then, if versions of the same story diverge. As they have rather different meanings, let's celebrate their diversity. (To be continued next month.)

*Hugh Beach*



### **Duke of York Square Sleep-out**

On 4 October, 173 individuals—including two pregnant women, eight local clergy, five former guests and numerous volunteers—chose to spend the night sleeping on the pavement at Duke of York Square to raise funds and awareness for West London Churches Homeless Concern. The weather was warm but wet; a drizzle at 2.0 am was held off by umbrellas kindly donated by Knight Frank. Partridges provided sandwiches, tea and coffee

the next morning. Cadogan Estate provided space, security, and much appreciated portable loos.

Keith Spadafora, one of the volunteer rough sleepers, recounts an interaction he had with a former homeless man. 'While I was concerned he might find our sleep rough campaign patronizing, he conveyed his sincerest appreciation. He told me that he couldn't believe so many people would give up their beds even if it was for only one night to raise money. While he gave me advice on sleeping rough regarding where I should hide my shoes or valuables, he also told me that this organization was fundamental in getting him off the streets and providing shelter when he needed it. He came out to watch over those volunteering through the night with the intent of wanting to make sure nothing happened to those of us sleeping rough.'

Although the final figures have yet to be determined, there is no doubt that the sponsored sleep-out will have made a significant difference to WLCHC's ability to go forward with its second circuit of shelters this winter. More news from WLCHC when the final count is known, but in the meantime many, many thanks from the trustees and staff of the Charity, to all the individuals and companies that volunteered, slept rough, and supported the sponsored sleep-out. Together, they have helped vulnerable people to secure a safe and warm place to sleep in WLCHC's shelters this winter.



### **Messiah for homeless people**

On Saturday 23

November the choir of St Luke's, Chelsea, will sing Handel's great work, 'Messiah', joined by the combined choirs of a number of City institutions and the National Symphony Orchestra. Soloists include bass Gareth Brynmor John (winner of the Thomas Armstrong Award and the Royal Academy of Music Patrons Award). It promises to be an inspiring night.

*Messiah* is an enduring favourite at this time of year and has long been performed to raise funds for good causes. Continuing that tradition, all ticket sales and donations will go to the work of the West London Churches Homeless Concern. WLCHC relieves the hardship of homelessness for London's rough sleeping population by providing winter night shelters and practical help with finding food, showers, clothing, stable accommodation and work.

In *Messiah*, Handel created a sacred oratorio of such power that it gripped audiences of its day and has never lost its popular appeal. Gems such as 'He was despised' and 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' are irresistibly striking melodies, almost as familiar to us as the great 'Hallelujah Chorus.' It seems appropriate that such a stirring and emotional piece be performed to help bring shelter and hope to those who are homeless among us, in whose lives comfort and support are often so sorely lacking.

Tickets are on sale now. For information, go to [www.wlchc.org](http://www.wlchc.org), email [messiah@wlchc.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:messiah@wlchc.eclipse.co.uk) or telephone 07873 453762. If you would like to make a donation, please go to <http://www.justgiving.com/WLCHCMessiahConcert>.



### **Thursday Lunch meeting Report of 10 October**

On Thursday 10 October we enjoyed our usual soup, pâté and cheese and were able to learn about the latest

developments in our former sister church, St.Jude's. This has been converted at a cost of several million pounds into a state of the art teaching and theological college, St.Mellitus. Rev Andy Emerton, who lives at the former St.Jude's vicarage and is the Assistant Dean of the College, explained that the college is focused on helping to train ordinands to become clergy, offering alternatives to the traditional residential three-year courses. In principle, the students at St.Mellitus study three

days a week and are in practical positions for the remainder of the time. This is supplemented by several weekend sessions and a residential week.

There are now over 140 students on the main ordination courses, as well as several on a specialised Youth Worker course, which focuses on 11-18-year olds' needs. In addition to the main theological college there is a school of theology (St. Paul's Theological Centre), which offers a range of courses to full-time students and lay people looking to explore or deepen their faith. There are three main tracks, one on the Bible, one on Faith and one on Living and ethical questions. These courses last for 10 weeks and are either on Saturday mornings (in the Autumn term) or on Thursday evenings in the Spring term, which will begin in January.

St. Mellitus aims to prepare priests for all different approaches to the church from Anglo-Catholic to Charismatic/Evangelical. One of the concerns they have is to make their ordinands aware of the different liturgical traditions in the church and maintain an open mind to other traditions than their own preferred one. Andy made the interesting comment that twenty years ago he would have thought the major obstacle to church unity would be theological differences, but today it is the very different approach to worship that poses the greatest challenge.

As an aside and responding to questions, Andy explained that Bishop Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, was very involved with the college and chose the name, which recalls one of the first missionary bishops sent to bring Christianity to London, and who was credited with founding the first church on the site where St. Paul's Cathedral now stands. He also said that the students are exposed to the key ideas of the other main faiths, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism.

There are several leaflets about the courses offered to lay people at the back of the church. There is an open lecture on 9 November by David Ford, on 'Understanding the Gospel of John Today'. Professor Ford is the Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of

Cambridge. There will be a similar open lecture in February by Michael Ward on C.S. Lewis. Ann Mulcare hosted the lunch in the absence of Ginny, who was en route to the Holy Land, and introduced and proposed a vote of thanks for Andy's most enlightening talk.

*Patrick Thomas*



**Housing  
Justice**

## **Homelessness, Hospitality and Hope**

This event is being organized by Housing Justice, the national voice of Christian action in the field of housing and homelessness.

Christians and churches of all

denominations unite to prevent homelessness and bad housing.

The event takes place on Saturday, 16 November 2013 from 10:30 to 12:30 at St Martin-in-the-Fields. No ticket needed, but you are encouraged to contact the organisers so that they know how many people will be coming. [info@housingjustice.org.uk](mailto:info@housingjustice.org.uk)  
<http://hcubed.eventbrite.co.uk/> and  
020 3544 8094.

## **Money in the New Testament; How much did a Roman soldier earn?**

One of the joys of retirement is being open to serendipity. I was visiting the British Museum on a rainy Monday recently to see the Lewis Chessmen and the Portland Vase, when I became lost in a gallery of Etruscan artefacts and spotted what I thought was the way through to the vase, but instead found myself in a small strong-room showing an exhibition of coins of the Bible.

We have all been brought up with the key stories of the New Testament referring to the 30 pieces of silver, the widow's mite, or the tribute penny, but apart from generally getting the idea that a mite is not very much and 30 pieces of silver are a reasonable bribe, how do we get an idea of what money was worth?

'...a poor widow came and put in two lepta, worth a quadrans' (Mark 12, 42). Mark was writing for a broad audience, certainly including Romans. At the time he was writing (ca. 70 AD), the smallest Roman coin was a quadrans, and so Mark is making the point that the widow

put in her two mites, which together made up a farthing (a quarter of a penny). In the first printed translation of the Bible in 1525, William Tyndale had to make his own adaptation to make sense to his readers. There never was a coin in England called a 'mite', but Tyndale had been in exile in Flanders, where the smallest coin was a 'mijt' and he used this to try to emphasize just how small the value was.

The tribute penny is another famous story, when the authorities were trying to catch Jesus out and asked 'is it right to pay the Imperial Tax to Caesar or not?' (Mark 12, 13). Jesus asked them to bring him a denarius and asked them whose image was on the coin. Caesar's. The denarius was the type of coin needed to pay Roman tax, it was the serious money used in the Roman state's revenue and expenditure. In the wonderful story of the labourers who were hired to work in the vineyard (matthew 20, 1-16), they were each paid a denarius for a day's work (or of course for much less for those hired later, prompting union outrage!)

To try to put this in perspective, the annual salary of the basic Roman Legionary at this time was 225 denarii, paid three times a year in stipends of 75 denarii. When the Good Samaritan pays the innkeeper, he gives him two denarii, which was enough to pay for room and board for the injured traveller for around three days. In today's value, assuming it was a Travelodge and not a more boutique inn, a denarius was probably worth about £65. I am not sure how many of us would be happy to pay around £130 for a stranger on the road who needed help. It makes the gesture of the Good Samaritan all the more impressive.

So to the most infamous transaction in the whole Bible and indeed in the history of the world: Judas' deal with the Temple authorities to hand over Jesus in return for 30 pieces of silver. The exhibition showed the type of coins likely to have been involved. Apparently the Jewish Temple did not deal in common money and therefore did not use Roman coins, but their own denominations, probably based on the old shekel, which was a measure of weight. At the time of Jesus it seems that the Temple had designated the Syrian tetradrachm and all payments had to be made in Tyrian silver (from

the mint at Tyre, which produced the highest purity of silver coinage). The sum of 30 pieces of silver was the Temple equivalent of 120 denarii. Using our £65 per denarius, this comes out at a very impressive £7,800. You can see why Judas, who thought that in the worst case scenario, Jesus would get a flogging and be released, was tempted. As this was special money for religious purposes, when Judas returned to throw the money in their faces, it was deemed blood money, and not able to be used for the normal business of the Temple. Hence it was used to buy the potter's field to bury non-Jews who had died in Jerusalem. Land used to be a lot cheaper than it is today.

There were all sorts of other interesting facts, including a story from Matthew that I must have overlooked in my Bible reading, when collectors of the Temple tax, payable by all adult Jewish males, turned up asking if Jesus had paid his tax. After a few ironic remarks about whether he was exempt, he told Peter to go down to the lake and fish. 'Take the first fish you catch, open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma piece (tetradrachm). Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.' (Matthew 17, 24-27). The more you look carefully and read with understanding, the more relevant and interesting the references become. Now you will be able to work out for yourselves what the jar of perfume must have been worth, that could have been sold for 300 denarii, to how much it would have cost to buy food to feed the 5,000.

At the British Museum bookshop I was able to unearth the book *Coins and the Bible* by Richard Abdy and Amelia Dowler. If anyone is interested, I would be happy to lend them this book, which can be read in less than two hours. It also covers topics of how to date the Nativity from the references and the coins in circulation at the time. It is amazing where a wrong turn in the British Museum can lead you...

*Patrick Thomas*



### **Big Leaf Rake**

Our annual leaf rake will take place after the Sunday service on 17 November. Please do stay to help!

### **Ethan's Apple cake**

My 11 year old nephew, Ethan makes this cake with the glut of apples from the tree in his garden. This is simple and delicious cake to make, so please give it a go.

*375g (12oz) self-raising flour*

*2tsp mixed spice*

*175g (6oz) butter*

*300g (10oz) cooking apples peeled, cored and chopped*

*250g (8oz) sultanas*

*150 ml or half pint of milk*

*175g (6oz) light muscovado sugar*

*1 egg lightly beaten*

*2 tbs honey*

*½ tbs granulated sugar*

1. Preheat oven to 170C or 325F or gas 3
2. Sift flour and mixed spice into a bowl and rub in the butter, using your finger tips
3. Combine the apples, sultanas, milk and muscavdao sugar, and stir into the flour mixture. Stir in the beaten egg.
4. Line a 20cm (8in) round cake tin. Spoon the mixture into the tin. Bake in the preheated oven for 1 hour. Remove, leave in the tin for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool.
5. Melt the honey in a small pan and use to brush the top of the cake, then sprinkle with the granulated sugar. Store in air-tight container.

*John Mc Veigh*



### **Sponsor a bench**

The benches in the gardens are looking sad and tired and need refurbishment. If you would like to sponsor the restoration of the benches please contact the Parish Office.

### **Passes for St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey**

We have four free passes to get FREE entry into St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

If you would like to pick up the tickets please call or e-mail John at the parish office.

## **Autumn Education Programme at St Martin-in-the-Fields: Faith on the Frontiers.**

The programme (7.30pm – 8.30pm) examines what it means to be a Christian in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through a number of different perspectives and voices. The programme is free and open to all, with a retiring collection to cover the cost of the programme.

Monday 7 November: *On the Frontiers of a Male Church*. Speaker: June Osborne

Monday 21 November: *Faith on the Frontiers*. Speakers: Stanley Hauerwas in conversation with Sam Wells

Monday 4 November: *On the Frontiers: Violence, Nonviolence and the Earth*. Speaker: Alastair McIntosh

Monday 11 November: *On the Frontiers of Modern China*. Speaker: Lord Christopher Patten

Monday 18 November: *Faith on the Frontiers of Atheism*. Speaker Richard Kearney

More information is available on the website [www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org](http://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org) and there are flyers available at the back of the church.

## **Novembers Year's mind**

Catherine Barclay

Clifford Gregory

Roderick Cooling

Lidia Griggs

Barbara Pratchett

Harry Davson

Neale Stainton

Windsor Richardson

Frederick Greenland

Mary Taylor

Ken Slater

Dorothy Coleman

James Murray

Malcolm Gregory

Archibald Murray

Tony Thomas

Enid Channing

Dorothy Shuckburgh

John Bassett

Pamela Greig

## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

8.00am Eucharist, 10.30am Sung Eucharist  
4.30pm Evening Prayer.

*The meeting room at the back of the church is available for people with pre-school children.*

*There is a baby changing facility in the wheelchair accessible toilet in the hall.*

## **WEEKDAY SERVICES**

Usually Morning Prayer is said daily at 8.30am (Eucharist on Feastdays); Evening Prayer is usually said at 5.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday except Public Holidays.  
Wednesday 7.00pm Eucharist

## **Readings in November 2013**

### **Sunday 3**

Readings at 10.30am

### **All Saints**

*Daniel 7. 1-3, 15-18;  
Ephesians 1. 11-end;  
Luke 6. 20-31*

Readings at 5.30pm

Service for All Souls' Day  
*Ecclesiastes 3. 1-8;  
Revelation 21. 1-4*

Wednesday 6 Eucharist with prayers  
for healing

Readings at 7.00pm

*Romans 13. 8-10;  
Luke 14. 25-33*

### **Sunday 10**

Readings at 10.30am

### **Remembrance Sunday**

*2 Thessalonians  
2. 1-5, 13-17;  
Luke 20. 27-38*

Wednesday 13

Readings at 7.00pm

Charles Simeon  
*Malachi 2.5-7;  
Luke 8. 4-8*

### **Sunday 17**

Readings at 10.30am

### **Second Sunday before Advent**

*Malachi 4. 1-2a;  
2 Thessalonians 3. 6-13;  
Luke 21. 5-19*

Wednesday 20

Readings at 7.00pm

Edmund King of the East  
Angles, Martyr  
*Revelation 12. 10-12a;  
Matthew 10. 34-39*

### **Sunday 24**

Readings at 10.30am

### **Christ the King**

*Jeremiah 23. 1-6;  
Colossians 1. 11-20;  
Luke 23. 33-43*

Wednesday 27

Readings at 7.00pm

Eucharist  
*Daniel 2. 1-6, 13-14, 16-17;  
Luke 21. 12-19*

### **Sunday 1 December First Sunday of Advent**

Readings at 10.30am

*Isaiah 2. 1-5;  
Romans 13. 11-end;  
Matthew 24. 36-44*

## Upcoming in November 2013

Sunday	3	Parish Lunch
Monday	4	7.00pm Bible Study
Wednesday	6	10.30am Bible Study 7.45pm Marriage Preparation
Thursday	7	7.30pm Taize Service
Sunday	10	3.30pm Baptism of Samuel Avery
Thursday	14	12.30pm Thursday Lunch
Saturday	16	5.00pm Confirmation at St Pauls Cathedral
Sunday	17	12 noon Big Leaf Rake 2.00pm Baptism of Marla Black
Monday	18	7.00pm Bible Study
Wednesday	20	10.30am Bible Study 11.00am Home communion St Teresa's
Thursday	21	7.45pm PCC meeting

## Parish Office

St Mary's Church House, The Boltons, London  
SW10 9TB Tel 020 7835 1440

[www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk](http://www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk)

**Vicar** The Revd Ginny Thomas  
020 7835 1440, mobile 07590074951.

Day off: Tuesday

[gabby@stmarytheboltons.org.uk](mailto:gabby@stmarytheboltons.org.uk)

**Director of Music** John Ward  
07853 406050 (mobile)

[boltonsmusic@gmail.com](mailto:boltonsmusic@gmail.com)

### Parish Administrator

John McVeigh 020 7835 1440 (church office)

Mon to Fri 9.15am-2.15pm

[john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk](mailto:john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk)

**Verger / Caretaker** David Ireton

020 7244 8998 / 07881 865386

Day off: Tuesday

### Churchwardens

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie 020 7384 3246

Ann Mulcare 020 7937 2005

### Members of the Parochial

#### Church Council

Revd Ginny Thomas (Chair)

Mr Philip Bedford-Smith

Mr Craig Drake

Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie

Miss Margarete Geier

(Deanery Synod Representative),

Mrs Mary Godwin

Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary)

Mr Timon Molloy

Mrs Ann Mulcare (Deanery Synod  
representative)

Mr David Parsons

Mrs Katrina Quinton

Mrs Judy Rydell

Mrs Ann Tait

### Safeguarding Officer

The St Mary The Boltons' Safeguarding Officer is Timon Molloy. His role is to help us to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. He is the first point of contact for children, adults at risk and other members of the congregation regarding suspicions of abuse and other safeguarding concerns. If you have any concerns, please contact Timon on: [07816 184207](tel:07816184207)

### Children's' Champion

The St Mary The Boltons' Children's Champions are Chris and Katie Fowkes. Their role is to ensure that the voices and needs of the children and young people are heard and reflected in parish life. They can be contacted via: [Katie.Fowkes@talktalk.net](mailto:Katie.Fowkes@talktalk.net) / [07810 831505](tel:07810831505)

**Treasurer** Carolyn Stubbs 020 7835 0074

### Assistant Treasurer

Bill Gallagher 020 7384 3246.

**Electoral Roll Officer** Fiona Parsons

### Gift Aid Secretary

John Barker 020 8571 0737

### Co-ordinators:

#### Monday Bible Study Group

Pat Schleger 020 7589 2359

#### Wednesday Bible Study Group

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

#### Clarion Editor

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

**Flowers** Margarete Geier & Katrina Quinton

#### Prayer Network

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

#### Readers & Intercessors Rota

Mary Meeson (call Parish Office)

#### Reading at St Cuthbert's

#### and St Matthias School

Sheila Gibbs 020 8788 9744

#### Thursday monthly lunch

Ann Tait 020 7352 5127

#### Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

#### Sunday School Parish Office

### Contributions for the December/January

**Clarion should be sent in to the church  
office by 22 November 2013**

*The PCC of St. Mary with St Peter & St. Jude, West Brompton is a  
Registered Charity, No 1133073*