

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

rooted in faith

open in thought

reaching out in service

JUNE 2013

The Power of Quiet

The power of quiet is an unlikely hot topic for a highly acclaimed *New York Times* leadership and management bestseller, but Susan Cain's book *Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that cannot stop talking* is just that. She argues that a world that listens first and foremost to the fastest, loudest, charismatic, imposing voices, is not a healthy, happy or wise one. We would do well, she suggests, to establish 'a greater balance of power' between those who rush to speak and do and those who sit back and think. She is an introvert who has worked hard to flourish in an extroverted business world, and her book does much to support and encourage introverts to understand and be content with this disposition. She also makes the point that people who are naturally extrovert – quick to speak, engage, respond – would do well to learn not to plunge in but to listen first to the contributions of others, and especially introverts. She suggests that it is invaluable for extroverts too, to learn to take time themselves to be silent, think and reflect.

One of the greatest gifts the Church has to offer people in a busy and noisy world is a quiet oasis: somewhere simply to be, to reflect and to pray. During the week a surprising number of people pop in to St Mary's simply to sit, reflect and pray, while others walk through or sit in the beautiful garden. We are delighted that St Mary's is now a member of the Quiet Garden Trust, which encourages people to take time to sit and be still in gardens open to them (see page 9). At our Sunday and weekday services there are times of silence, but also the active experience of singing hymns and praying aloud together develops a kind of inner quiet. We have two groups meeting monthly in people's homes for times of silent prayer.

For some people, the experience of being quiet, whether alone or in company, comes very naturally; others need help finding a 'way in'. For some, the very thought of being in silence, having a time devoid of words, music or activity, is terrifying. For many people, the urgency of daily life of work, home, family and friends, means that time for silence is pushed to the edges, or that it is simply so hard to be still – physically and mentally – that the settling necessary to allow silence to grow is almost impossible.

Yet taking time to be still – even for 5 or 10 minutes a day – can be incredibly powerful and have an impact on the rest of the day. For some that is simply taking time to pray – the words and habits of prayer cultivate that inner quietness – but for others it is about simply being still. Being still allows us to be in touch with our inner thoughts and feelings, and can be a source of deep and profound creativity and energy. It is also time and space where we can find hints, intuitions and experience of the presence of God within us. Cultivating the Christian habit of regular silent prayer is not so much a chore that Christians should do, but more about dipping into the deep wells of life within, which feed our daily life. Without these deeper roots, daily life can become stressful hustle and bustle and if we are not careful, meaningless activity. Sometimes silence can be disturbing, throwing up awkward questions about ourselves, others and our lives, that we would rather avoid, but we avoid these questions at our peril.

Silence is a hot topic at the moment, and we do well to speak up for it, even better to practice it!

Ruth Lampard

**Thursday 6 June
Taizé Service
at 7.30pm**



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

Parish Lunch

The next Parish Lunch will take place on Sunday 2 June. If you would like to attend, please put your name on the list at the back of the church.

Thursday Lunch

The next Thursday Lunch will be on Thursday 13 June at 12.30pm. The speaker is Patrick Thomas 'Living on the Edge; life in Outer Hebrides'.

The lunch will be preceded by a Eucharist at 11.45am.

St Mary The Boltons Summer Fair

**Saturday, 15 June
12.30 noon - 4.30pm**

Please tell all your families, neighbours!

The Summer Fair is nearly here. We hope

that people will want to join us for lunch and then stay and enjoy themselves to get their appetite up for tea and strawberries, perhaps mingled with a glass of Pimms to continue the fun and help our 2013 Charities. The charities chosen by the PCC for this year are Pump Aid, St Luke's Redcliffe Gardens Food bank, Medic Malawi, St Nicholas Fund at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, and Alex, the child we sponsor through Compassion.

Super things are coming in for the Splendid Hampers, and it is such fun to see how people think around the subject and what makes them unique. The Really Splendid Hampers will be full of wonderful things that will be worth far more than the £10 ticket price and with only 25 on

sale for each hamper, the odds are a lot better than the lottery! Please let your minds wander around the themes, and all contributions are gratefully received. The Really Splendid Hampers are more than food and drink, books, films, CDs of music, ceramics and glassware, textiles etc. Humour and plays on words are always welcome and we are hoping that the baskets will then be attractive to lots of people who will be able to use and enjoy the contents without feeling inundated with quantities of foods they will never eat. To remind you, our themes for this year are: Harmony, Courage, Grace, Wisdom, Love, Trust and Hope.

Please leave any offerings at the and we will pick them up to put things together. Or please give me a call and I can arrange to come and collect at a time convenient to you.

We also need raffle prizes, so why not ask your favourite restaurant or shop to see if they might consider donating something. The fact that all the money raised at the Summer Fair goes to charity, and not to us, is often a selling point.

Contributions to the stalls are also important, the children's books and toys are inspiration for a clear out, as is the bric-à-brac stall and maybe even the book stall. Have a look through your bookshelf and see if there is anything that can be moved on. Unfortunately we are not allowed to accept electrical items or clothes. If you could bring these in to church from Sunday 9 June that would be much appreciated. If you need the space sooner, please call me and I'll collect and work out somewhere to store it! For the Produce stall we need cakes and savouries too, such as quiche, sausage rolls, cheese scones, cheese straws or fresh bread. Jams, marmalades, pickles and chutneys are always popular and quick sellers so the more the merrier.

The bottle tombola needs bottles! Everything and anything in a bottle, not just alcohol, soft drinks and mixers:, bubble bath, olive oil, ketchup, hand cream, oven cleaner, nail polish, makeup remover, perfume, mouthwash - if it's in a bottle, we'd love to put a ticket on it and throw its partner in the drum!

The wonderful Richard Pinner is returning with his Magic Show. There will be two during the afternoon and the Fire Brigade and the Police Horses are hoping to come along too. We'll also have live music to entertain us all. Chris Fowkes is bending his balloon skills again and glider racing this year too.

The Barbecue will be fired up and extra sausages have been ordered with Ketchup and Mustard on the Saturday morning shopping list!

Tea will be served and we are hatching plans to do creative things with the area outside the church hall so come along to see what is on offer.

As with every event, it takes time and muscle power to create it and dismantle it and offers of help on Saturday morning to construct the gazebos and shelters is always helpful, along with the carrying of stuff to stalls. The end of the day is tiring and those of you who can help afterwards are angels in disguise. Equally, manning the stalls during the day is essential and we need a team of relief stall holders. There will be time for everyone to have a look at what is on offer and to have a sit down and something to eat and drink.

Organising the Summer Fair is one of those things when you feel highly aware that all you seem to do is ask for favours, but then you get the complete thrill when people say yes. I seem to come up with the problems and everyone else with the answers, which is truly wonderful and thank you all so much for helping to make it a happy and successful day. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Katrina

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Chaplain to the Mayor



On Wednesday 22 May Ginny Thomas, vicar of St Mary The Boltons, was appointed Chaplain to the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Ginny was invested with the Chaplain's Badge by the newly appointed Mayor, Charles Williams. Ginny will serve as Chaplain for the mayoral term, which will last for one year.

The Chaplain's duties for the coming year will include spiritual guidance to the Mayor, taking part in the annual Civic Service, taking prayers before the Council meetings and helping to organise the Christmas Carol Concert in December 2013.

We congratulate Ginny and wish her well in her new appointment.

Ann Mulcare

An exciting new opportunity for Ruth

After nearly five years at St Mary's, I am pleased to report that Ruth Lampard has accepted the position of chaplain to *Chapter 1*, an organisation dedicated to providing accommodation and support to vulnerable young people. The charity is based at Waterloo and is a national organisation, working with homelessness projects, family contact centres and refuges.

Chapter 1 has its roots in the Christian Alliance of Women and Girls Trust Corporation Ltd, founded in 1920. Ruth will be working as the chaplain for this organisation. As we have seen at St Mary's, Ruth has a strong commitment to social justice and the problems of housing, so

this is a fitting appointment that will make full use of her skills and talents.

Ruth's last day at St Mary's will be Sunday 14 July, when she will celebrate and preach at the 10.30am service. We will host a farewell reception following the service. We will be presenting Ruth with a gift to mark her time at St Mary's and if you would like to make a contribution, please send it to the parish office marked 'for Ruth Lampard'.

Ginny Thomas



Thank you to Joanna Hackett for organising the Quiz evening on 18 May. Thank you to all who attended the Quiz, and all who gave money in the retiring collection. We raised £564.60

Saturday 8 June Enough Food IF Campaign

The Diocese of London Global Development Group is inviting us to join them in representing the Diocese of London at this national event, drawing attention to the two million children who die from malnutrition each year. The world produces enough food for everyone, but not everyone has enough food. This national campaign is supported by major charities, including Christian Aid and the Fairtrade Foundation, the Church of England and other Churches and faith communities. In 2013, the government promised to provide 0.7% of national income for aid and to host a Hunger Summit. The aim now is to raise the profile of this promise and show just how much people care that world leaders take action, as the UK hosts the G8 summit in June. For more information see: <http://enoughfoodif.org/home>

Programme:

11:30 12:30 Interdenominational Service, Central Hall Westminster

This is the main event of the day for Christians who will be joining together in prayer and worship with many of their church leaders and includes a message from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

13:00 - 14:00 Walk of Witness, Westminster to Hyde Park

Following the service we are invited to walk together under the Diocese of London's Global Development Group banner to the main Hyde Park event.

14:00 16:00 Hyde Park event

Here we will join together with thousands of other IF campaign supporters. The day will include inspiring speakers and performances from famous artists, music, comedy, political action, family areas, pop-up stalls and much, much more.

If you would like to go with others, please speak to Ruth.

Dates for your diary

Saturday 22 June

Pilgrimage to St Albans Abbey

We are joining the National Pilgrimage to St Alban's Abbey, the shrine of the first British martyr. We hope to go as a group by public transport and the day will involve a lot of walking and lots of the day will be on foot. Details to follow.

Thursday 11 July

Trip to Ham House

Our summer outing this year will be to Ham House, the 17th Century gem on the river Thames, home of Elizabeth Murray, Countess of Dysart, who was deeply embroiled in the politics of the English Civil war. We hope to offer lifts by car as well as access via public transport.

Sunday 7 July Parish Feast

This will be a Summer Parish Lunch, like the Big Jubilee Lunch, with activities for children. Put the date in your diary now. If you would like to attend, please put your name on the sign-up sheet at the back of church

St Mary's new website is up and running! New logo needed...

We all know that Pentecost is an exciting time, the birthday of the church and the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world to inspire us. Well, this Pentecost was even more special as

the new St Mary's website went live. If you have not yet had a look at this, just enter St. Mary The Boltons into your search engine and have a look at the result.

Thanks to Camila Ruz and Will Mayes, the new site is modern, clean looking and easy to navigate. You will be able to find a lot of answers to frequently asked questions, as well as an archive of Clarions, and we will build up news items that can be referenced. We have listed some of the charities we support and you can click on the links to see what they do.

If you want to find out about organising a wedding or baptism, or hiring the hall, and want to check how big it is, it is all available on the website. We will continue to add content as we go through this year and if you want to have something added, please initially contact John McVeigh in the Parish Office with your request.

One area that we have changed is the small sketch of St Mary's, which we have had on the website in the past. It has been retired and we currently have no logo for the church. If anyone wants to have a shot at designing a new logo to reflect St Mary's please go ahead and let John know, or send a copy of a design for consideration.

We have also implemented some changes to our church email system and will have more flexibility in mailings in the future. We hope that anyone who has email gets a copy of the weekly bulletin that John sends out usually on a Friday, with details of the Sunday services and the notices of up-coming events. If you are not receiving this and would like to, please send John an email so he can add your address to the email database. If you are receiving it and would prefer not to, there is a simple way to unsubscribe as well.

If you have any comments on the new site or think something is missing or unclear please contact John McVeigh or one of the Communications Committee, Timon Molloy, Katrin Roskelly, and Patrick Thomas.

Choir open day: Sunday 23 June

You have always wanted to give St Mary's choir a try, but are not sure you could commit to all the practices... You don't have to! You would like to join the group but don't fancy being the only new person... you won't be! You like to sing but you don't want to be put on the spot to sing a solo... you won't be. Our open day is an ideal time to come and give it a whirl, whether you are totally new to singing in church or a seasoned chorister. There will be other new people like you and this really is a no-obligation taster day: there will be no subsequent badgering. If it is not your bag, you won't be emailed, called or otherwise pestered to join up over coffee. Promise.

So do come and join us on 23 June.
Coffee from 9.15. Practice at 9.30.

John Ward

Introducing a broader choice of hymns at St Mary's

The world's most famous hymn book has undergone a complete revision. It now offers a broader than ever range of traditional hymns, combined with the best from today's composers and hymn writers. This is the new Ancient & Modern hymnal, which the PCC has agreed to introduce at St Mary's at our patronal festival on Sunday 8 September. As Director of Music, I am enthusiastic about this expanded repertoire, which brings us more options for both new and well known tunes and inclusive words.

We are offering members of the congregation, present and past, the opportunity to donate one or more hymn books either on their own behalf or in memory of family or friends. We will offer book plates for the dedication if requested, which will include the donor's name and/or the person being remembered.

The cost per hymn book will be £15 and the books will be ordered centrally from the parish office. I hope that many of you will take this opportunity to contribute to the musical life of St Mary's.

Please contact the parish office to let us know if you would like to take part in this exciting new venture.

John Ward

A thank you letter

The following letter arrived in the parish office:

Dear Reverend Thomas,
My husband and I would like to express our gratitude for the warm welcome and meaningful worship at St Mary the Boltons on Easter Sunday.

We are Americans, visiting my nephew and his wife who live in Creswell, for two weeks and missing our home church during the special days of Holy Week. But you and your associate, along with your congregation, turned our missing our home church into the joy of awareness that Christian community is world-wide. Indeed, we felt very much at home and are most grateful for your 'open door'.

On leaving we were given a copy of *Clarion*, which I have read from cover to cover with great interest. Most interesting are the sections written by members of the congregation, as well as the short features highlighting special projects and upcoming events. I must add that the long articles bear reading more than once, which I intend to do at a later date.

With all best wishes throughout this Eastertide,
Martha Cushman

We are grateful for this kind acknowledgement. When you go on holiday, do visit the local Anglican church and make contact. You can always take a copy of the *Clarion* with you, too.

Forum of Faiths for RBKC

The Forum of Faiths in the Borough was started about 15 years ago. On Wednesday 29 May, the Forum called a special meeting for prayers for peace on an inter-faith and interdenominational basis, following the murder in Woolwich. The meeting was held at the Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, 244 Acklam Road W10 5YG.

About 20 people were present, probably slightly more Christians of various

denominations. The meeting was led by James Mather, Chair of the Forum. We sat round a square of tables, but the meeting had the feel of a Quaker meeting: people were speaking when they had something to say; some people used free or written prayers, others made some comment or statement. A Muslim man who is an Imam somewhere else and occasionally helps out at the Muslim Centre sang a prayer for peace very movingly. During the meeting some of the people from the Centre served warm, sweet mint tea and sweetmeats – plenty of both – and although nobody mentioned it as such, this had a strong sense of communion bread and wine. Sharing food and drink creates bonds beyond the obvious, and in the circumstances, this was especially symbolized with this gesture of hospitality.

The comments and contributions made were all on the concern for peace. One Muslim man spoke very elegantly on the need for English-speaking Imams, in particular to help the local congregations to understand the teaching given in the Mosques.

The Forum is open to anyone, and all parishes in the Borough are sent notices of meetings of the Forum, which can be passed on. Speak to Ginny or Ruth if you would like more information.

Verena Tschudin

Subject : Illicit Email Jam



Spam email and worse plagues most of our email in boxes. When I received an email with the heading 'Illicit Email Jam' I knew caution was required, but what was

it about? How very irritating that there was no punctuation to clarify the meaning. You can block an illegal email, but not surely just an illicit one. Or just imagine – a traffic jam of illicit emails in the blogosphere. How good that would be, if all the spam got blocked before clogging up our email. It was too clumsy for a coded message, even from those countries from which emails originate offers to share in the fortune of a long lost relative. Send Jam. Indeed! What type of jam, and anyhow ridiculous to send it by email.

Then for some reason the nonsensical idea of sending jam by email brought to mind the letters I used to receive from my grandfather while at school, the smudges on letter or envelope ringed and proudly marked: Butter, Fat, or Jam! Sometimes even raspberry jam (his favourite), but more often than not it was an ingredient he had been learning to cook with. I remember one envelope stained with chocolate (Terry's Bitter). Never try Chocolate (even Terry's Bitter) and Double Century Sherry in shortbread. Even hungry eight-year old boys home on holiday did not appreciate that one, which I think we ended up tipping over the wall into the sea with the rest of the rubbish. Food for the sea gulls. What a change fifty years brings, now that we recycle most of our household rubbish and are bombarded with reminders about not wasting food.

Yet some things do not change; home made strawberry jam is still better, by far, than factory made stuff. That, it turns out, was what the email concerned. It was a request for the recipe for the jam I made last year from the left-over strawberries from some parish event. So here it is.

You will need: 1 kg of strawberries (washed, hulled and cut into smallish pieces, if they are big berries), plus 450g Tate and Lyle Jam Sugar (or ordinary sugar supplemented by an envelope of pectin in powder form, also available from Tate and Lyle), the juice of one lemon and a few drops of vanilla essence.

Place the strawberries in a large heavy-bottomed saucepan. Cook very gently over a low heat for 15 minutes until the strawberries have softened and the juices run freely.

1. Add the Tate & Lyle Jam Sugar and continue heating very gently until the sugar has dissolved. Then add the lemon juice and vanilla essence and bring to the boil. Boil rapidly until the setting point is reached, about 10 minutes.
2. When the jam has reached setting point, take the pan off the heat and remove any scum from the surface. Leave to cool for 30 minutes, stir gently, then spoon into clean warm jam jars. Cover and seal while hot. Label when cold.

Topical tips from the above

Testing for the setting point can be a mystery for inexperienced jam

makers. Rather than rely on watching for the bubbles to change, or for the last drip on the end of the spoon, try this simple method. Before you start making the jam, put a couple of saucers in the deep freeze. When testing, remove one of the plates from the deep freeze and take the jam off the heat. Spoon a little jam on to the saucer and leave to cool for a few minutes. Push the jam with your finger and if the surface wrinkles, the jam is ready. If it is still too runny, boil for a further 5 minutes and test again.

- 1 In the Oxford Dictionary of English Usage, 'illicit' tends to encompass things that are forbidden or disapproved of by society (such as an illicit love affair) rather than illegal, which is simply contrary to or forbidden by law, esp. criminal law.
- 2 Don't forget to write to the grandparents/grandchildren when on holiday this year, snail mail not email, for longer lasting memories.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie

How to be a better believer (3)

In this third article I explore the subject of prayer, focussing not on the ways in which people pray, but the attitude of mind in which they approach it, where I think I can distinguish three main strands.

The first concentrates on the person of Jesus, the details of his life and his saving grace. Everything hinges on a personal relationship: 'do you know the Lord'? The same theme recurs in both public and private prayer. It is primarily an evangelical preoccupation, but it seems to me that devotion to the Stations of the Cross appeals to exactly the same cast of mind as does the whole Ignatian system (1), and the Benedictine practice of *Lectio Divina* (2); immersing oneself and, as it were, participating in the tangible events of Jesus' life on earth. It is not just to know, but even more to **love** the Lord Jesus. With this can go a sense of happiness and excitement like that of earthly love.

We all know that this attitude of mind actually works. For some people it can bring an overwhelming sense of release from sin, and be a great fount of energy. It goes with a strong disposition to read the bible as literally as possible as a source of historical truth: although of course one has to be a bit selective, as in women keeping silent in church (I Corinthians 14:34). It seems to me that a simple personal attachment to the person of Jesus, and to the bible story as told, is the driving force behind many of the people I most admire in the church, for their commitment to social action as 'good Samaritans', and their solid support for the church in all its activities (including financial). Alongside this goes a faith in the power of intercessory prayer: 'where two or three are gathered together in my name I will grant their request'. (Matthew 18:20 and Prayer of St Chrysostom). I would like to call this a touching faith – not meaning to be in any way pejorative or snooty – if only because it must be so frequently disappointed. It is among people who think like this that the church seems to be growing most strongly, both in England and all over the Anglican Communion. As I explained in the April issue of *Clarion* this does not work for me. I have never felt any sense of personal love or even affection towards the person of Jesus, nor have I thought it sensible to try and manufacture it.

The next approach is very different. Dom David Knowles (1896-1974), Benedictine monk and Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, in his book *The English Mystical Tradition* (Burns & Oates, 1961), says that we can have knowledge of God by three means. The first is natural theology (i.e. by reasoning), and the second is revelation (through the inspired writers of scripture). Beyond these two there is a third, by which God and the truths of Christianity can not only be believed and acted upon but can be directly known and experienced. As the *Cloud of Unknowing* (3) explains 'A man may know completely and ponder thoroughly every created thing and its works, yes, and God's works too, but not God himself. Thought cannot comprehend God. And so, I prefer to abandon all I can know, choosing rather to love him whom I cannot know. Of course we do well at times to ponder God's

majesty or kindness for the insights these meditations may bring. But in the real contemplative work you must set all this aside and cover it over with a *cloud of forgetting*. Then let your loving desire, gracious and devout, step bravely and joyfully beyond it and reach out to pierce the darkness above. Yes, beat upon that thick *cloud of unknowing* with the dart of your loving desire and do not cease come what may... If you want to gather all your desire into one simple word that the mind can easily retain, choose a short word rather than a long one. A one-syllable word such as 'God' or 'Love' is best. Use it to beat upon the cloud of darkness above you and to subdue all distractions, consigning them to the *cloud of forgetting* below you. If your mind begins to intellectualize over the meaning and connotations of this little word, remind yourself that its value lies in its simplicity'. This is wonderfully straightforward, practical and down-to-earth.

Another book that had a great effect on me was *The Perennial Philosophy* by Aldous Huxley (1894-1963) (Chatto and Windus, 1946). It is a compendium of mystical writings by exponents from all the great religions: Taoists, Brahmins, Sufis, Jews and Christians. This is informed, Huxley says, by 'the *metaphysic* that recognises a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the *psychology* that finds in the soul something similar to or even identical with divine Reality; the *ethic* that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being'. Huxley regards this 'philosophy' to be the Highest Common Factor in all religions. He adds that 'the nature of this one Reality is such that it cannot be directly and immediately apprehended except by those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart and pure in spirit. Why should this be so? We do not know.'

From this teaching two points stand out. First, that mystical contemplation is not a task for a few lofty souls only, because God is apparently willing that all should embrace it. The life of mystical contemplation is the proper and normal development of the interior life for all souls. Secondly, if this 'perennial philosophy' is the highest common factor in all religions, then

it is much more important than the particular theologies, creeds and structures of any one of them. Indeed these can be a hindrance. We need to look above and beyond all religions to the unitive pathway towards which they all (at their best) beckon.

I am not at all sure that this approach has worked for me either. Certainly the 'Highest Common Factor' argument, with its consequent downgrading of the importance of any particular religion, while not affecting my faithfulness to Mother Church, has served to undermine any disposition I might have had to take her scriptures and creeds too seriously. So far as my practice of mental prayer is concerned, this has never gone very well. Nothing ever seems to happen. Boredom sets in, so that the time allotted tends to get whittled away. And then there is the problem of dozing off, which tends to make a bit of a mockery of the whole exercise. More importantly, I had assumed that there was general agreement that contemplation was the highest mode of acquiring the knowledge of God, but I have discovered that this is untrue. Some of my friends have pointed out that since this sort of prayer simply does not work for them, it cannot be the highest aim of the whole religious project. I have also seen it condemned on the grounds that the underlying concept of a divine reality transcending all else is philosophically incoherent. Perhaps my easy assumption that contemplative prayer was right for me was simply a cop-out, when I ought to have been trying something much more down-to-earth.

Is there a third way? If there is, it certainly involves more use of the intellect. As one of my friends, a Canon of Windsor, put it, 'I cannot follow a route in prayer that involves setting my critical faculties aside; for instance in using a passage from the bible in a literal way that allows no room for going back to what the original author really meant'. There is no reason why, in the meditative phase that follows the devotional use of scripture, one should not let the discursive reason play its part, before moving on to apply what one has read and thought to the problems of the day. Equally profitably, one can read books other

than scripture, as part of one's prayer life, without in any way suppressing the normal faculty of judgement. Indeed it could be seen as treating the whole exercise disdainfully if one failed to do so. This is the point at which I am trying to make progress. I meet regularly with a Franciscan Group called 'Study and Prayer'. The name speaks for itself. *Hugh Beach*

1) Ignatian spirituality is characterized by examination of one's life, discerning the will of God, and living the Resurrection.

2) *Lectio Divina* is a Benedictine practice based on praying with the Word of God. *Lectio Divina* has four "moments": *Lectio* (Reading Scripture), *Meditatio* (Reflection on the Word), *Oratio* (Praying), and *Contemplatio* (Silently listening to God).

3) *The Cloud of Unknowing*. This book, by an author whose name is unknown, was written in the middle of the fourteenth century, probably in the East Midlands, and has been described by David Knowles as one of the earliest examples of great English prose. A modern edition is William Johnston, *the Cloud of Unknowing*, Doubleday, 2005.

Quiet Garden



I recently had the pleasure of a visit to see the garden at St Mary's church. It was one of those precious sunlit days, and what a delight it was, the garden tastefully laid out and many of the flowers in bloom!

St Mary's is affiliated with the Quiet Garden Movement. From small scale beginnings in 1992, this Movement has today become an international organisation. There are now over 300 provisional places of stillness, prayer and spiritual refreshment in Quiet Gardens across several continents. The inspiration for this Garden Movement was the example of Jesus who, at times of transition and challenge, regularly withdrew to pray in places of rugged natural beauty. This is a comparatively simple ministry of hospitality and prayer, both low cost and local in expression. It can therefore be geared to needs in a particular locality, just as the garden at St Mary's is open to the wide spectrum of people who live or work in the neighbourhood.

Natural surroundings are calming and it is increasingly recognised that time spent in nature is very beneficial to mental health.

Our Gardens provide opportunity for rest and reflection. They do not have to be especially neat and tidy, nor large. At first it was individuals who generously made available their home and garden for others to visit and take time out for a few hours. This concept is now additionally spreading to churches, schools and other more institutional settings, including hospitals and prisons.

The possibilities for a Quiet Garden are endless. One church reclaimed derelict land with the help of prisoners, another has created a garden with sensory devices for blind people, others want to encourage wildlife, many run Quiet days. All are places of sanctuary for anyone.

Mollie Robinson, Quiet Garden Coordinator
www.quietgarden.org

Out in the Garden...

The summer has not quite arrived yet and many of the spring flowers, especially the pansies, are still going strong. Also flowering in the garden are allium, forget-me-nots, aubrietia, wisteria, osteospermum, iris, columbine, poppies, roses, and wallflowers. Hopefully soon there will be a display of all kinds of flowers grown from seed, and bedding plants will also have arrived. Enjoy the garden!

Verena Tschudin



Thursday Lunch meeting Report: 9 May

The talk at this lunch meeting, attended by 20 people, was by Ron Howard, on his subject 'Trees'. Ron is an engineer who has the

study of trees as one of his interests. As a volunteer, he with his wife Jean prepared a self-guided walk leaflet, featuring fifty of the species of trees in Brompton Cemetery, and this leaflet was handed to all those at the lunch (copies also available from me on request).

After a few general comments about trees, Ron focussed his remarks on the Common Ash *Fraxinus Excelsior*. There are 140 million in

Britain, about 5% of the total tree population. You never have far to go to see one. They are in Holland Park and Brompton Cemetery, and in the garden by St Mary's. Native deciduous trees, they are now carefully selected for new plantings, important for biodiversity. Some years ago the RBKC biodiversity action plan identified the Common Ash as very important for wildlife.

The Common Ash was even more important in earlier days. For many centuries they were coppiced for firewood and tree fodder. Other uses came from their hardwood strength and elasticity in many farm implements, ladders, carts, veneers, flooring, cradle rockers, and weapons. Recently, their wood has featured on the Morris Minor car, aircraft frames and guitars.

They are also strong in folklore (has any reader 'touched wood' recently?). The Common Ash was sacred to Druids, featured in psychic dreams, myths about Irish shadow crops, Cheshire warts and rickets. Evil creatures have a great dread of it and if you were troubled by serpents you could take comfort from the belief that a serpent would rather cross fire than cross over ash leaves. It was known as the Sussex widow-maker because of a supposed history of falling branches killing men. The ash was said to be used by Cupid to make his arrows.

Ron closed his talk with the sad news that recently there has arisen nationally in government, and locally, real concern about Cholera Fraxines, a fungal disease affecting the Common Ash, potentially as severe as the devastating Elm disease. Ninety percent of Denmark's trees are affected, and more than four hundred sites in Britain. Much work is in hand to try to avert a major catastrophe.

Arthur Tait

From the PCC

The Parochial Church Council met just a few days before Pentecost.

The Vicar opened the meeting with the prayer sometimes attributed to Sir Francis Drake 'Disturb us Lord when we are too pleased with ourselves, when our dreams have come true

because we dreamed too little, when we have arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore'. We also shared our thoughts on the Pentecost reading from Acts 2 that describes the coming of the Holy Spirit, a time that will be recognised because young men will see visions and old men will dream dreams. With that introduction, the PCC dealt with the following matters.

We reviewed the financial results for the first four months of the year. These show a loss of some £14,000, which is bigger than at the same time last year, but costs have increased and income has fallen slightly. This loss also needs to be considered in the light of the fact that in 2012 our income was boosted by several legacies. While very welcome, legacies cannot be relied on to fill the deficit in this year's budget, and other income or savings will have to be found.

The freehold of 11 Redcliffe Gardens has finally been sold as a result of enfranchisement under the Leasehold Reform Acts. However, as the property is held in trust, the money can only be used for the purposes specified in the trust deed. In the discussion of this item, the PCC was reminded that the church was restored to its current condition in 2000 by using funds from the trust that was originally set up in 1910. The view was expressed that we should look ahead to the two-hundredth anniversary of St Mary's in 2050 and invest the proceeds from the enfranchisement to help a future generation to ensure that the church is as well cared for then as it is now. No specific or firm decisions were taken, but it is encouraging to report that the PCC is considering how best to invest the trust assets for the very long term. Many of the green hymn books that we currently use are reaching the end of their useful life. The PCC made another bold decision to replace them with the latest hymnal from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, which has recently been published with the sub-title *Hymns and Songs for Refreshing Worship*. By placing an order early, the PCC has been able to obtain a discount worth 30% of the full price for single copies. Several ideas for financing the cost were also discussed and copies of the large print editions will also be purchased.

The PCC offered congratulations to the Vicar on her appointment as Chaplain to the new Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea. This is to be formalised at the mayor-making in May. The PCC heard a report on Safeguarding. The PCC is now required to have a Safeguarding Policy in place to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. The PCC adopted the standard Diocesan policy and appointed Chris and Katie Fowkes as our Children's Champions and Timon Molloy as the Safeguarding Officer.

Junior Joy is the overarching name for our ministry to children in Little Lambs (age 1-5) and Sunday School (age 5-11). The PCC agreed to make an appointment to a paid, part time post (8-10 hours per week). The purpose of this post is to lead and develop our work with children and to support the existing team of volunteers, rather than replace their work. The new design for our website, which was previewed at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, has now gone live. Visit it at www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk and add it to your favourites.

This was the first meeting of the PCC since the elections at the APCM in April. There is much work to be done in the next 12 months to bring about successful outcomes and to finance these bold initiatives; or to put it another way, to turn our dreams into reality, but there is no better time to start than at Pentecost, renewed and strengthened by the celebrations of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie

New Members of the PCC: Craig Drake

I was born in England but moved to Cairo at a couple of months old. I lived there until I was four, followed by a spell back in England before a few years of living in Cyprus.

Once I had been dragged kicking and screaming through school, I moved to France with a bicycle and a suitcase at 17 to try my hand at making a living as a racing cyclist. I raced for a few teams in France and Belgium, competing around continental Europe and further afield.

I had started studying law at a university in France during the off season. Then I woke up one morning and decided that I could no longer stand the sight of my bicycle. Instead I focused on those studies, followed by a further stint at university in the UK.

I now work as a financial journalist, having become an unintentional member of the Fourth Estate.

Raised loosely in the CofE, I had been of intermittent faith, like 3G mobile phone reception outside the M25. I largely owe much of the strength of my faith to Richard Dawkins. Had it not been for his church of dogmatic atheism, I would not have put my own Christian beliefs under such scrutiny and found them solidified, as well as finding a reassuring robustness in scripture that could withstand questions thrown at it.

I have been a member of the congregation of St Mary the Boltons for about 18 months. It is often difficult to find a church and a congregation in which to feel comfortable and at home, and I have found St Mary's to be exactly that.

I and Thou

The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber (1878-1965) published the small book *I and Thou* in 1923, with the first English translation in 1937. Several translations now exist, the best one perhaps by Ronald Gregor Smith (1958). The idea of *I and Thou* can be taken as an interesting concept, or it can become a way of being and praying.

Although I had read *I and Thou* several times over the years, a silent retreat led me to understand the concept deeply, rather than only intellectually. It was a single small yellow crocus in an expanse of lawn that became an important *Thou* at that time.

Buber's main proposition is that we can address existence in two ways: 'I and *It*' and 'I and *Thou*'. The world of *It* is concerned with objects that are separate from us, that we use and do not consider further. The world of *Thou* finds its meaningfulness in relation. Whoever says *Thou* is in relation. Buber explains that a tree can be

an *It* if we see it as an object of beauty, colour, usefulness etc. It can also become a *Thou* when we recognize it as a living partner of creation with us. This puts the tree in relation with us and gives it and us meaning. Trees have always had strong associations with creation and worship, but all our relationships bring us ultimately in relation with God, the eternal *Thou*.

Anything can be and remain *It* or become *Thou*. A piece of paper, an insect, a person, can all be an object and used. When we say *Thou* we are in relation with the piece of paper, flower, animal or person. There is a recognition of deep respect, even reverence. Any *Thou* becomes precious and valuable. When we say *Thou* we meet what is there. We meet *Thou* – the Other – not other as in the unknown stranger, but in the relationship that creates and has the potential to increase into the Eternal.

All attributes we give to God are essentially made in our own image. When we say *Thou* we need no image; we simply address *Thou* and in return are addressed as *Thou*; we are 'heard'. It is not simply an echo across the universe, but 'being' is created. *Thou* does not change if or when we are happy or sad and troubled. Simply saying *Thou* creates relationship. By saying *Thou* we need no further explanation or adjective or image. We address what is, not ourselves and our own needs.

We often talk about listening to God, but how do we do that? In saying *Thou* we are in relation, and in turn are addressed as *Thou*. Our *I* is addressed with the same care, reverence and respect. That may be a very new experience. We 'hear' ourselves in a new and possibly unexpected way. When we open our *I* to a *Thou* we meet God, most often in other people, but in any *Thou* we address.

Every age, community and individual has tried to express its understanding of God. Hence we have an 'omnipotent' and 'omnipresent' God, The Holy, The Beloved, the 'Milieu Divin' and others. In today's world, where individualism and competition are driving forces, the relational attitude and actions of *Thou* present a strong counter-balance.

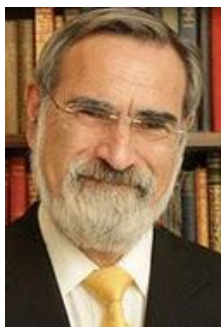
As individualism and autonomy pull us ever further into independence and self-possession, the idea of being in relation through *Thou* creates an important spiritual balance.

Buber is clear that the 'word' matters as it is what makes (creates) us as human beings. The Word is what becomes flesh and says 'let there be...'. To use the word *Thou* is creative in every direction. *Thou* has a similar primordial meaning by placing ourselves in the situation of giving-being. In saying *Thou* we also become more familiar with the *I* at every level.

St Francis addressed wind and sun, fire, people, green grass and death as Brothers and Sisters. Buber's *Thou* is not dissimilar. Whatever word we use, a relationship is created that takes us beyond the incomplete world of our own *I* and ego.

Verena Tschudin

What I have learned



As well as the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the UK's Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, is also retiring this year. His book *To heal a fractured world. The ethics of responsibility* (Schocken Books, 2005, pp272-3) ends with these

words:

'I have spent much of my life thinking about life, observing people, reading books, searching for teachers and exemplars, trying to distinguish between what ultimately matters and what merely seems to matter at the time. I make no claims to wisdom, but this is what I have learned:

- that each of us is here for a purpose;
- that discerning that purpose takes time and honesty, knowledge of ourselves and knowledge of the world, but it is here to be discovered. Each of us has a unique constellation of gifts, an unreplicated radius of influence, and within that radius, be it as small as a family or as large as a state, we can be a transformative presence;

- that where *what we want to do* meets *what needs to be done*, that is where God wants us to be;
- that even the smallest good deed can change someone's life;
- that it is not the honours we receive that matter, but the honour we give;
- that what counts is not how much wealth we make but how much of what we have, we share;
- that those who spend at least part of their lives in service of others are the most fulfilled and happiest people I know;
- that there is no greater gift we can give our children than to let them see us sacrifice something for the sake of an ideal;
- that religions reach their highest levels when they stop worrying about other people's souls and care, instead, for the needs of their bodies;
- that no religion that persecutes other is worthy of respect, nor one that condemns others, entitled to admiration;
- that we honour the world God created and called good by searching for and praising the good in others and the world;
- that nothing is gained by less-than-ethical conduct. We may gain in the short term but we will lose in the long, and it is the long term that counts;
- that moral health is no less important to the quality of life than physical health;
- that a word of praise can give meaning to someone's life;
- that putting others down, we diminish ourselves; lifting others, we lift ourselves;
- that the world is a book in which our life is a chapter, and the question is whether others, reading it, will be inspired;
- that each day is a question asked by God to us;
- that each situation in which we find ourselves did not happen by accident: we are here, now, in this place, among these people, in these circumstances, so that we can do the act or say the word

that will heal one of the fractures of the world;

- that few are the days when we cannot make some difference to the lives of others;
- that virtue does not have to be conspicuous to win respect;
- that the best do good without thought of reward, understanding that to help others is a privilege even more than it is an opportunity;
- that cynicism diminishes those who practise it;
- that self-interest is simply uninteresting;
- that it is not the most wealthy or powerful or successful of self-important who make the greatest difference or engender the greatest love;
- that pain and loneliness are forms of energy that can be transformed if we turn them outward, using them to recognize and redeem someone else's pain or loneliness;
- that the people who are most missed are those who brought hope into our lives;
- that the ability to give to others is itself a gift;
- that we can make a difference, and it is *only* by making a difference that we redeem a life, lifting it from mere existence and endowing it with glory;
- that those who give to others are the closest we come to meeting the divine presence in this short life on earth;
- that the best way of *receiving* a blessing is to *be* a blessing;
- and that if we listen carefully enough – and listening is an art that requires long training and much humility – we will hear the voice of God in the human heart telling us that there is work to do and that he needs us.'

Sustainability Top Tip



Listen out for the screech of swifts overhead!

Whether you are on holiday in Europe, or staying here in the UK, the sound of swifts

screeching overhead as they zoom improbably

around the skies or through narrow streets, is one of the most glorious sounds of summer. They are holidaymakers over here, travelling north as far as Lapland and the Arctic Circle and east across to China. They come to breed, and are happy to nest in cities on tall buildings, as well as in cliffs and trees. They return again and again to the same nesting site, and unfortunately the passion for modernising and tidying buildings has led to a loss of nesting sites. They are most at risk if they return when building work is in progress, as demolitions takes place regardless of nesting chicks. Swifts nest mostly in pre-1944 buildings; modern and refurbished building techniques and materials deny swifts the opportunity to nest. Between 1995 and 2011 we have lost a third of swifts breeding in the UK, and the demolition and refurbishment of old properties are thought to play an important part in this, along with the use of insecticides that kill the insects and moths the swifts eat.

There are 25 million swifts worldwide: that may sound like a lot, but is the equivalent of the population of Yemen (estimate based on US Bureau of the Census, Source: CIA Factbook, 2012). The UK population of swifts is estimated to be about 40,000, one for every 1750 people in the UK.

The Swift Conservation Society is encouraging people to take action now, and especially to put up swift nesting boxes to provide alternative nesting sites. My husband's church in Southfields has just put up five boxes, and we are playing a CD of swift sound out of the window to tempt visitors to come and look at the des res on offer. Lambeth Hospital, Gospel Oak Overground Station, London Zoo and an office block plant room high above Oxford Street have all put up boxes recently. Unusually, London can do a lot to support this precious part of our wildlife.

Normally swifts arrive in the UK en mass early in May, travelling 14,000 miles from Equatorial Southern Africa, via France or Spain (although much of their migration is still a mystery), but this year, while a few came in early, the first real wave of arrivals began on 15 May. They will continue to arrive until mid-June and stay only long enough to breed. Autumn migration begins

in late July or early August. They are not here for long, so look out for them!

Source: Source: Swift Conservation Society, BTO Bird Migration Blog.

Ruth Lampard

Confirmation Classes

It is the practice at St Mary's to prepare candidates for confirmation in the autumn, with confirmation taking place at St Paul's Cathedral on the first Saturday in November. This year the service will be on Saturday 2 November in the afternoon.

If you are considering confirmation for yourself or your child, or want to know more about confirmation in general, please speak to Ginny or Ruth, who will be happy to answer any questions. We consider 11 to be the minimum age for children to be confirmed. Over the past few years we have held separate classes for children and adults; there are about eight sessions in all, beginning in early September.

June Year's Mind

Joan Palin
Pamela Shaw
Gary Davies
Britta Osbahr
Leonard Berry
David Dixon
Evelyn Davson
Madge Terry
Hugo Phil
Marjorie Cooling
Kenrick Prescott
Gisela Osbahr
Doreen Allen

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 June 2013

Sunday 2 June

Readings at 10.30am

Wednesday 5

Readings at 7.00pm

Sunday 9 June

Readings at 10.30

Wednesday 12

Readings at 7.00pm

Thursday 13

Readings 11.45am

Sunday 16 June

Readings at 10.30am

Wednesday 19

Readings at 7.00pm

Sunday 23 June

Readings at 10.30am

Wednesday 26 June

Readings at 7.00pm

Sunday 30 June

Readings at 10.30am

Wednesday 3 July

Readings at 7.00pm

First Sunday after Trinity

1 Kings 18.20-40;
Galatians 1.1-12;
Luke 7.1-10

Boniface of Crediton

Acts 20.24-28;
Matthew 10.16-22

Second Sunday after Trinity

1 Kings 17. 8- 16;
Galatians 1. 11-end;
Luke 7. 11-17

Eucharist

2 Corinthians 3. 4-11;
Matthew 5. 17-19

Eucharist

2 Corinthians 3. 15-4.1, 3-6;
Matthew 5. 20-26

Third Sunday after Trinity

1 Kings 21. 1-10 15-21a;
Galatians 2. 15-end;
Luke 7. 36-8.3

Sunday Singh of India

2 Corinthians 9. 6-11;
Matthew 6. 1-6, 16-18

Fourth Sunday after Trinity

1 Kings 19. 1-4, 8-15a;
Galatians 3. 23-end;
Luke 8. 26-39

Eucharist

Genesis 15. 1-12, 17-18;
Matthew 7. 15-20

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

2 Kings 2. 1-2, 6-14;
Galatians 5. 1, 13-25;
Luke 9. 51-end

Thomas the Apostle

Ephesians 2. 19-end;
John 20. 24-29

Sunday 7 July

Readings at 10.30am

**Sixth Sunday
after Trinity***2 Kings 5. 1-14;
Galatians 6. 7-16;
Luke 10. 1-11, 16-20***Upcoming in June 2013**

Sunday 2 Parish Lunch
 Wednesday 5 10.30am Wednesday Bible group
 7.45 Baptism Preparation
 Thursday 6 7.30pm Taizé Service
 Saturday 8 12 noon Baptism of
 Maxwell Nelson
 Sunday 9 2.00pm Baptism of Jack Lawson
 3.30pm Baptism of Jack Marlow
 Monday 10 7.00pm Monday Bible Study group
 Wednesday 12 7.45 Wedding Preparation
 Thursday 13 1.45am Eucharist
 12.30pm Thursday Lunch
 Saturday 15 12.30 Summer Fair
 Wednesday 19 10.30am Wednesday Bible group
 7.45 Wedding Preparation
 Thursday 20 Home Communion St Teresa's
 Saturday 22 St Albans Pilgrimage
 Sunday 23 1.30pm Baptism of Rose Guard
 Monday 24 7.00pm Bible study group
 Wednesday 26 2.30pm Home communion
 Ellesmere House
 7.45 Wedding Preparation
 Thursday 27 2.30-4.00pm Time for Tea
 Sunday 30 3.00pm Baptism of
 Antionette Van Kusseler

Parish OfficeSt Mary's Church House, The Boltons, London
SW10 9TB Tel 020 7835 1440www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk**Vicar** The Revd Ginny Thomas
020 7835 1440, mobile 07590074951.

Day off: Tuesday

ginny@stmarytheboltons.org.uk**Associate Vicar** The Revd Ruth Lampard
mobile 07870 651240

Days off Friday & Saturday

ruth@stmarytheboltons.org.uk**Director of Music** John Ward
07853 406050 (mobile)boltonsmusic@gmail.com**Parish Administrator**

John McVeigh 020 7835 1440 (church office)

Mon to Fri 9.15am-2.15pm

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 Raymond Kyle

Revd Ruth Lampard

Mr Timon Molloy

Mrs Ann Mulcare

(Deanery Synod Representative),

Mr David Parsons

Mrs Katrina Quinton

Mrs Judy Rydell

Mrs Ann Tait

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

Children's Advocate

Parish Office 0207 835 1440

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 Boo Simpson 020 8878 9898**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 Jane Dass 020 7370 5309*The PCC of St. Mary with St Peter & St. Jude, West Brompton is a
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