

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

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

March 2015

Canon David Tann reflects on the purpose of Holy Week

Towards the end of our journey through Lent we arrive with Jesus and his followers at the gates of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Then a series of new journeys begins.

After his protest in the Temple, Jesus returns across the Kidron Valley and up the Mount of Olives to stay with his friends Mary and Martha at Bethpage, just over the brow of the hill. For the next three nights he will make that same journey after a day of teaching in the Temple precincts, facing challenges and opposition from various quarters.

On the Thursday evening, after the Passover Supper, it is the custom to remain within the environs of Jerusalem, which includes the Mount of Olives; so Jesus takes his disciples there to a familiar place amid the olive trees, the Garden of Gethsemane (The garden of the oil press). From there he will be taken under guard back to Jerusalem, first to the High Priest's House for questioning, then to Pilate's Praetorium, where he is condemned to death. So begins his final journey to a place outside the city where crucifixions are a familiar sight under the repressive Roman rule. All the hopes that had been placed on Jesus seem to have disintegrated as he is taken down from the cross and buried in a nearby tomb.

On pilgrimage I have followed those journeys seven times over the years, and always with new insights and moments of deep awareness. That experience is open to all of us as we make our Holy Week pilgrimage and enter more deeply into all that happens. It is a personal

journey and one which enables these events to speak to our own situation and to our deeper selves. But is also a journey taken with others, so that the experiences of the followers of Jesus can speak to our own experiences. It speaks to the community of the church.

Finally, it speaks to the world we live in and our own response to it. There are still miscarriages of justice, summary executions, and countless refugees fleeing persecution or the destruction of their towns and villages; there are those without hope who give all they have and risk their own lives to cross 120 miles of water from North Africa to the Italian island of Lampedusa in the hope of freedom. There are personal problems and tragedies closer to home.

That is the context in which we keep Holy Week, and it is only by facing the darkness that we shall be able to glimpse the promise of the Christmas Gospel, that *the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it*. Jesus compared it to the experience of childbirth:

Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labour she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born she no longer remembers the anguish, because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

John 16: 20-22

Prayer for the interregnum

God of love and joy and peace,
strengthen our rootedness in faith,
kindle our openness in thought
and renew our reaching out in service
as we discern the future leadership of the
parish, and guide us individually and together
in the decisions to be made,
through Jesus Christ. Amen

Interregnum Update

The Parish Representatives (Ann Mulcare and Leo Fraser-Mackenzie) are continuing to represent the Parish in the ongoing search for a new vicar. To date they have interviewed the four candidates proposed by the Patrons. As no appointment has been made, the advertisement will be repeated in March or April.

Congratulations

It has been announced that Bishop Paul Williams, Bishop of Kensington, will be leaving in April. He will be taking up a new post as Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham.

Parish Lunch

The next parish lunch takes place on Sunday 1 March. If you would like to join us, please put your name on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church.

Next Thursday Lunch

The next Thursday Lunch will be on Thursday 12 at 12.30pm. This month's speaker is Rachel Tait and the Title for talk is 'Helping university students become community volunteers.'
"Rachel Tait, community action manager for the Charity Student Hub will talk about the changing role of young people in volunteering. Rachel as a granddaughter of Arthur and Ann Tait . She won the volunteer of the year award when studying at Exeter University." If you would like to attend, please put your name on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church or call the Parish Office.



Fairtrade Fortnight 2015

We need your support
for Fairtrade Fortnight

23 February - 8 March 2015.

The first Fairtrade Fortnight was held in 1995, educating the public on why to choose Fairtrade and increasing sales on Fairtrade terms for marginalised producers. Over the past 20 years, the Fairtrade mark has become the biggest and best known ethical label in the UK; 78% of the UK public recognise the FAIRTRADE Mark. From UK sales alone, £26m of Fairtrade Premium was invested by producers in 2013, but there is still a long way to go to make all trade fair – just 1.2% of cocoa and less than 10% of tea globally is traded on Fairtrade terms.

This year the focus is on cocoa, sugar, and tea. St Mary's has been a Fairtrade Parish for many years – we use only fairly traded sugar, coffee and tea – and the cakes sold on 8 March in aid of Fairtrade will ensure that these ingredient are used in the cakes sold.



Women's World Day of Prayer, 6 March

The Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP) is an interdenominational

worldwide movement of Christian women and in spite of its name, men are also included, who come together to observe a shared Day of Prayer on the first Friday of March each year since 1919.

The Day of Prayer begins on the International Date Line in Tonga and as the world rotates, so the prayers and praises of the International Order of Service rise from east to west in more than 170 countries around the world until it ends some 36 hours later in Samoa.

You are cordially invited to join in this year's international Women's World Day of Prayer on Friday 6 March at 11 a.m. at the Kensington United Reformed Church, Allen Street, W8, which is South of Kensington High Street.

The 2015 service has been prepared by Christian women of The Bahamas. They have chosen the theme 'Jesus said to them: Do you know what I have done to you?' The service lasts for approximately one hour and is followed by light refreshments.

The mayor of Kensington and Chelsea will be in attendance and also The High Commissioner of The Bahamas. This year for the first time two men from our congregation are playing a role in the service. I will not tell you who is portraying Jesus and Peter but you will soon find out when you come to the service.

Anne Swift



Upcoming Dates for your Diary

March

Sunday 1, 12.30, Parish Lunch
Thursday 12 12.30pm, Thursday Lunch
Sunday 15, Mothering Sunday, All Age Worship
Sunday 29, Palm Sunday

Holy Week

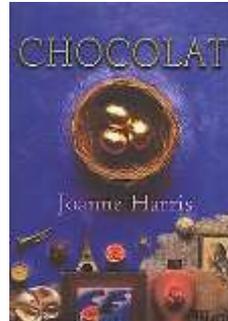
Monday 30, Eucharist 7.30pm,
Tuesday 31, Eucharist, 12 noon

April

Wednesday 1, Eucharist, 7.00pm
Thursday 2, Maundy Thursday
10.30am, Blessing of oils at St Paul's Cathedral
7.30pm, Sung Eucharist followed by Vigil
Friday 3, Good Friday
10.30am Children's Service
12-3pm Three hour Vigil
Saturday 4, Easter Eve
8.00pm, Vigil Service, 8.00pm

Sunday 5, Easter Day

8.00am, Said Eucharist
Sunday 12, 12.30pm, Parish Lunch,
Saturday 20 June, Summer Fair



Lent Chocolat

This year our traditional Shrove Tuesday celebration of wine and pancake tossing was replaced by 'Chocolat'. This film, which is set in rural France in the late

fifties, gives a meaningful insight into community life and how people of divergent faith and background overcome their differences. The film was shown as an introduction to Lent, and forms the basis for the Lent groups, in conjunction with the course booklet *Christ and the Chocolaterie* by Hilard Brand.

In keeping with the spirit of the film we began the evening with a glass of wine, a delicious selection of sandwiches and a large platter laden with chocolate of all shapes, sizes and flavours: a traditional celebration of the indulgence, which can precede the austerity of Lent. The film that followed was projected on the side wall near the nave, lending a rustic and informal atmosphere in keeping with the subject matter of *Chocolat*.

This course, with reference to the bible and the film, will provide the opportunity to explore the deeper meaning of faith, acceptance and change. If you were unable to be with us on Shrove Tuesday and are interested in the Lent course, please do join us (details via the Parish Office). We will be returning to the film and showing relevant excerpts. In addition, if you haven't given up chocolate for Lent, there are still many delicious treats remaining on the platter.

Ann Mulcare

Think you are busy?

Ask the Mayoress!

At the Thursday lunch meeting on 12 February June Williams gave a fascinating insight into her life as May oress of Kensington and Chelsea in 2013- 2014. She explained that when her husband, Charles Williams, was elected Mayor in 2013 he had – in addition to choosing his charity – to persuade three people to support him. One was a Chaplain. Charles is a Roman Catholic, but as a Redcliffe ward councillor he knew Ginny Thomas well and he was delighted when she accepted this role. A second was a Deputy Mayor, Sam Mackover. The third was a Mayoress/Consort, and he chose his wife! In the next thirteen months they attended 630 events, the Deputy Mayor also helping with 69 of them.

June paid tribute to the ways in which St Mary's had helped, including a service and a concert for the Mayor's charity: Trinity Hospice.

She commented on the six questions that she was asked most often as Mayoress. One was how the Mayor is chosen and appointed: the ruling party selects its choice, and the full Council chooses the Mayor at its annual meeting in May. Unlike some other boroughs, the Deputy Mayor is not automatically promoted to Mayor.

Second, did they live at the Town Hall? The answer is a firm NO, although at times it felt as though they did.

Third, what help do they receive? June was full of praise for Jim Babbington and his small team in the Mayor's office in the Town Hall, and the drivers of their cars: a Bentley for the Mayor, and a Daimler for the Deputy Mayor. One young boy wanted to know 'how many exhaust pipes does your car have?' Sometimes for as many as five very different events in one day the briefing they received from the office was first-class, and the drivers provided wonderful support while out on the road, knowing every

venue and timing. The chains of office, one worn when they were in Chelsea and another when in Kensington, sometimes required the driver to find a quiet spot to effect the change! Also the uncertainty about travel times meant they aimed to be early, and if successful to 'hide' in a nearby place until the appointed hour was reached.

The drivers act as Mace Bearers and Master of Ceremonies – and provide mint sweets or Polos for coughs. June showed us a photo book of pictures, many of which were discreetly taken by the drivers.

Advice was given on appropriate attire for the various events. Good advice was given on appointment from past Mayors and Mayoresses under the headings of Protocol, Alcohol and Cholesterol! Beware the need to stand for hours at events. June emphasised how important it is to recognise people's achievements; the Mayor's visit is often seen as putting a seal of approval on their work.

The fourth question was about the Chains of Office: were they made of gold, and how much did they weigh? They are made of gold and the Chelsea Chain, given to the former Borough of Chelsea by the present Lord Cadogan's grandfather, is the more valuable. 'What a lovely garland you are wearing' was one child's comment. It also emerged that the name for a group of Mayors was 'The Chain Gang'.

Fifth, what clothing allowance is provided? No dress allowance was offered and June did not expect one. She said she spent time early on sorting out her wardrobe for the varying occasions they would attend and had a couple of things made for her. Four different pairs of court shoes were necessary, black and navy blue for daily use, patent leather for evening receptions, and silk satin for the Buckingham Palace Diplomatic Reception. She regularly wore gloves where appropriate for 'Infection

Control', bearing in mind the huge number of hands to be shaken. The stability of her hats for different occasions was tested when gardening! Lead weighted hems were recommended.

Finally, which events were the best? June outlined the huge variety of events, all of which were wonderful, ranging from the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree lights to a Diplomatic Reception, to an encounter with the SAS, to St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and to garden squares. A highlight came when a young boy saw them leaving his school and cried out 'The Emperor is going'.

June ended her entrancing talk by saying simply how wonderful it had been to serve the community in this way. The lunch group thanked her profusely for sharing her experiences with us so entertainingly.

Arthur Tait

Francis and the Sultan



The *New York Times*, in its issue of 29 November 2014, carried a despatch that included the following item:

'During meetings on 28 November 2014 in Ankara with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey the Pope repeated his call for interreligious dialogue, rather than military action alone, to resolve conflicts in the Middle East, especially in Iraq and Syria, where the Islamic State has been gaining ground.'

The news that President Erdoğan, the very conservative ruler of a Muslim country, had

given audience to a refreshingly forward-looking Christian leader called Francis suggested a parallel with the meeting some 800 years earlier between Melek-al-Kamil, Sultan of Egypt, and St Francis of Assisi.

This took place during the Fourth Crusade. The leaders of the Crusade had decided to attack the Sultan on his home ground and besieged Damietta, a heavily fortified town on the Eastern limb of the Nile Delta. Francis arrived a year later as the siege was reaching its climax. On 29 August 1219, with their commanders at odds over strategy, the common soldiers, sick of waiting, made a more or less spontaneous attack. Francis had a presentiment that this assault would fail (as well he might) and tried to warn the soldiers off. But their own commanders could not restrain them and the result was near disaster. Over 3,400 crusaders were killed. Francis could not bear to watch and sent a companion to observe and report back. Less than a week later, on 5 November, Damietta fell. Of its 80,000 inhabitants less than 3000 survived the siege and sack, of whom only 100 were healthy. There was a winter truce. Next summer the Crusader army marched towards Cairo and encamped in the flood plain of the Nile. Kamil breached the flood barriers and the crusaders were engulfed. The Sultan was generous. He told the wreck of the Crusade that they could have a five-year truce, their prisoners back, and the True Cross, if they would only go away. The crusade ended in failure and when Kamil sent for the True Cross, no one could find it!

It seems likely that Francis sailed from Egypt to Acre by the spring crossing of 1220 and from Acre to Venice in the autumn. What he did in the meantime no-one knows. Visiting Jerusalem would have been pointless;— the place was virtually a ghost town, while sporadic fighting was going on all over Galilee. At some point he managed to get an audience with the Sultan. This might have been during the winter truce or the spring of 1220. Francis set out for the

Sultan's camp accompanied only by a brother called Illuminatio, After some rough handling by the sentries they were finally brought into Kamil's presence. The Sultan thought at first that they were would-be deserters from the Christian army. There was a steady flow of such renegade Christians who were always well treated by the Sultan. Francis announced bluntly that neither he nor Illuminatio would ever become Muslims. They were messengers sent from God to save the Sultan's soul. What was Francis really up to? He can hardly have taken seriously the thought that he would convert the Sultan. To go seeking martyrdom would have been regarded in those days as highly meritorious. One cannot believe that Francis would have been so discourteous as to seek audience of the Sultan only to have the man commit a deadly sin by killing him. A group of Franciscan friars who had been sent to Morocco did in the end achieve martyrdom but only by shouting in public that Mohammed was an impostor and that the Koran was a pack of lies. There is no indication that Francis ever did or would behave like that. It is tempting to see Francis' programme in our own terms as part of a 'Peace Process', but Kamil had already offered peace.

There are various accounts in the biographies. One follows a familiar story line that crops up again and again during the Middle Ages. A Christian envoy to a Muslim court tries to forge an alliance on condition that the Muslim ruler converts with his whole people. The envoy, in turn, is tempted by rich gifts to betray his fellow Christians, which he sometimes agrees to, sometimes refuses. The Franciscan historians Thomas of Celano, Julian of Speyer and Henry of Avranches all choose variants of this theme. There is the story of Kamil testing Francis by inviting him to walk over a carpet decorated with crosses, which Francis agreed to on the grounds that thieves were also crucified and it was only the True Cross that counted. He did not mind treading on the

symbol of brigands. His sense of humour was plainly intact. There is the story that Francis proposed to the Sultan a trial by fire. The Qadi (legal expert) and the Ulema (body of religious scholars) refused, we may suppose not through cowardice but simply because it was against Islamic Law. Then Francis is said to have proposed undergoing trial by fire by himself alone. This was extremely rash. One Peter Bartholomew, discoverer of the Holy Lance during the first crusade, tried exactly that, came out horribly burned and died twelve days later. If Francis had done the same, not only would he have incurred a hideous death but there was the awful possibility that, to the Muslims at least, the truth of Islam would have been confirmed. Kamil did not want to be responsible, even indirectly, for Francis' immolation and tactfully refused, saying he feared a revolt among his own people.

Melek-al-Kamil was a notably civilised person. A nephew of Saladin, he had been knighted as a boy by the English King Richard the Lion Heart and was now aged 40, almost the same as Francis. He was on excellent terms with the Venetians and allowed some 3000 Europeans to trade in Egypt. He loved the poetry of the great Sufi mystic Omar-ibn-al-Farid. He had welcomed Francis to his camp, enjoyed a series of amicable discussions and sent him back unharmed. Sister Ilia Delio OSF, a director of catholic Studies at Georgetown University, writes of this episode: 'When Francis finally met the Sultan he did not meet a religious adversary but a brother. For he and al-Kamil shared common ground: the centrality of God in their lives, the primacy of prayer, and the conscious choice to remain "in the world" and live simple lives for the sake of God.' (Ilia Delio, *The Humility of God: a Franciscan Perspective*. Franciscan Media. 2005. p. 120)

After his return from Egypt, Francis set about writing a new Rule for the Franciscan Order. Chapter 16 deals with 'Those going among the

Saracens'. It says that one way of conducting oneself is 'to avoid quarrels or disputes and be subject to every human creature for God's sake, so bearing witness to the fact that they are Christians'. Perhaps in the summer of 1220 Francis was living quietly in Syria, trying to do exactly that and seeking an understanding between Christianity and Islam that still eludes us.

Pope Francis' meeting with today's Sultan no doubt had the same motive. Afterwards, in the Sultan Ahmet Mosque, the Pope bowed his head and clasped his hands alongside the city's senior cleric for a two-minute silent prayer, both facing the direction of Mecca. 'May Allah accept it,' said Rahmi Yaran, the grand mufti of Istanbul, as the two finished their prayers.

Amen to that.

Hugh Beach

(With due acknowledgement to Anthony Mockler, *Francis of Assisi: the Wandering Years*, Phaidon, 1976, pp 229-248.)



Advent Discussion Groups 2014

The Adult Formation Group had devised the idea of using St Mary's three aims *Rooted in Faith; Open in Thought; Reaching out in Service* as inspiration for the 2014

Advent Discussion Groups. One aim was addressed per meeting, each time from the point of what the aim means for us personally, for St Mary's in particular, and for the wider church. Three separate groups met, on Monday evenings, Wednesday mornings and Sunday lunchtimes in November (ahead of Advent). At each group notes were taken that might in time be useful for further discussion or study. A full set of these notes is available from the Parish Office. What is presented here is a summary of the notes.

Rooted in faith

This means living in hope, receiving support and belonging; stability in having firm roots.

God has faith in us; faith is an awareness of spiritual awakening that we can be open about the way we live our lives despite difficulties encountered about changing attitudes to faith and faith itself changing. Being rooted in faith gives a trust that is a difficult concept because we must 'learn to let go', and share our faith and space with other people.

The Kingdom of God is practical: share what Christian living means to us; we would like to see more interaction between denominations; share at St Mary's through quiet days, pilgrimages, volunteering, hospitality; through the impact on the arts, music, groups; have regular questions presented to people after a sermon or over lunch, to discuss.

But: If any faith takes its Holy Book literally it stumbles.

Open in thought

People generally are increasingly open to other religions and change. Openness in thought can make us vulnerable. Open people can get hurt, e.g. Aid workers in Syria. We cannot judge others: 'There is no longer Jew or Greek'.

Change is happening quickly through technology, the ethnic mix and that we are tolerant to 'others'. Language can discriminate by labelling people, but will the Anglican church accept *real* equality for gay people? Openness is particularly relevant now and forgiveness is the key. Openness is more challenging than initially thought; our actions speak for us.

There is a certain conceit in regarding oneself as being 'open in thought' and there are always consequences when one declares oneself to be non-judgmental. Concepts such as equality and free speech are difficult to define.

We are a doubting church, prepared to be challenged and look to constructive change, always curious and learning. We should offer communion to *all*: the parish should be more inclusive. Openness is essential but we should not be afraid to stand up for Christianity.

Reaching out in service

Love comes before service: making friends, giving and taking. 'They also serve who only stand and stare' [John Milton, but his ending is 'stand and wait']. Everyone contributes and gives personal service. Treat people with respect and value everyone as equals.

The church building itself is outreach. The garden is for people to enjoy, a thing of beauty, local builders and road sweepers use it a lot. We could be more oriented to social justice issues. Plenty of opportunities for reaching out exist, such as talks in the church, lectures after the service, to stimulate us. Educating parishioners could itself be outreach, making us theologically more literate.

Ideas for practical reaching out include: sharing computer skills, baby sitting, church social outings, make a list of what people are able to give. What are the unique selling points as a church? We could focus on art or visual images as well as words. We need to refresh and engage ourselves, be joyful, encourage responses and greater participation during our services. Reaching out is a 'flowering' of our faith. We would like to do more for and to attract teenagers; young people reach out to young people.

There are many more answers to the parish's three aims. If you can and want to contribute in any way, please speak to John in the Parish Office or write about your ideas in *The Clarion*, c/o the Parish Office.

Verena Tschudin

Mother's Day or Mothering Sunday?

The old English Mothering Sunday has its roots in pre-Christian times, but modern-day Mother's Day - the cards, flowers, chocolates etc. - was started in the United States



by Anna Jarvis. She was the ninth of 11 children and made it her life's work to commemorate every mother after her own mother died. The idea of Mothering Sunday was for families to get together in church to recognise the real value of motherhood.

She got her local church involved and after tirelessly campaigning for almost a decade, US President Woodrow Wilson officially dedicated a day to mothers in 1914: the second Sunday in May.

Within years it had become commercialised. Ms Jarvis was horrified. She tried to take action, incorporating herself as the Mother's Day International Association and claiming copyright on the date. Along with her sister Ellsinore, Anna spent the entire family inheritance on trying to undo the damage done to Mother's Day. One of her protests even got her arrested for disturbing the peace. She died in 1948, in poverty and without success.

In one respect what Ms Jarvis wanted from the day lives on; it has taken on huge significance and is a celebration of motherhood. However, how most people chose to celebrate it would make her turn in her grave.

There are several suggestions how to change or make Mother's Day better:

It could be re-launched without commercial sponsors.

It could be made into a weekday public holiday. People could focus on what the day is about and not just grab a card and a bunch of flowers

from a petrol station on the way over to their mum's house.

Most mothers would be happier with a homemade card because it shows some thought and effort has been put into it. Selling cakes on Mother's Day to raise money for HIV mothers in Africa. It costs just £7 to buy the medicine to make sure they don't pass HIV onto their children. Ms Jarvis would approve of this type of action, especially as she hated Mother's Day cards, considering them 'a poor excuse for the letter you are too lazy to write'.

Based on Victoria Bone and Denise Winterman 'The fight to copyright Mother's Day', BBC News, accessed 24.2.15



Bishops' Pastoral Letter

The House of Bishops published a Letter on 17 February concerning the

General election, which caused much concern in the media. Below is the introduction given on the Church of England website.

The House of Bishops of the Church of England have today expressed the hope for political parties to discern "a fresh moral vision of the kind of country we want to be" ahead of the General Election in May of this year.

In a pastoral letter from the House of Bishops to the people and parishes of the Church of England, the Bishops urge Christians to consider the question how can we "build the kind of society which many people say they want but which is not yet being expressed in the vision of any of the parties?"

The letter also encourages church members to engage in the political process ahead of the General Election and to put aside self-interest and vote for 'the common good': "The privileges of living in a democracy mean that we

should use our votes thoughtfully, prayerfully and with the good of others in mind, not just our own interests."

The letter also states that: "In Britain, we have become so used to believing that self-interest drives every decision, that it takes a leap of imagination to argue that there should be stronger institutions for those we disagree with as well as for those 'on our side.' Breaking free of self-interest and welcoming our opponents as well as our supporters into a messy, noisy, yet rich and creative community of communities is, perhaps, the only way we will enrich our almost-moribund political culture."

The letter defends the right of the Church to enter into the political arena: "It is not possible to separate the way a person perceives his or her place in the created order from their beliefs, religious or otherwise, about how the world's affairs ought to be arranged. The claim that religion and political life must be kept separate is, in any case, frequently disingenuous - most politicians and pundits are happy enough for the churches to speak on political issues so long as the church agrees with their particular line."

The pastoral letter draws on the experience of the Church of England as a Christian presence in every community to warn of the disengagement between politicians and the people. They note that "with few exceptions, politicians are not driven merely by cynicism or self-interest" but nevertheless, "the different parties have failed to offer attractive visions of the kind of society and culture they wish to see.... There is no idealism in this prospectus".

The letter encourages political parties across the spectrum to seek bold new visions of hope and idealism rather than "sterile arguments about who might manage the existing system best."

The bishops also argue Britain is in need of a stronger politics of community to boost solidarity between people and reverse a drift towards social isolation: "The extent of loneliness in society today, with the attendant problems of mental and physical health, is one indication of how far we have drifted into a society of strangers. But that drift is far from complete - and few people, if asked, would say that a society of strangers represents a vision of society which they desire."

The letter specifically avoids advocacy for one any political party but instead encourages those in the Church to seek from political candidates a commitment to building a society of common bonds over individual consumerism. The bishops say Britain is hungry for a new approach to political life which reaffirms our ties at a national, regional, community and neighbourhood level. There is a need for a strong corrective to halt the move towards increasing social isolation, they say, through strengthening the idea that that Britain is still a "community of communities." This, they say, is a theme which has roots in the historic traditions of different parties: "We are seeking, not a string of policy offers, but a way of conceiving and ordering our political and economic life which can be pursued in a conservative idiom, a socialist idiom, a liberal idiom - and by others not aligned to party."

The pastoral letter argues that the Church of England finds its voice through being a presence in every community with churches remaining one of the primary agents of social action and social care in parishes across the country. The letter argues that Intermediate institutions such as housing associations, credit unions and churches are needed for their role in building stronger communities. A thriving society needs many intermediate institutions, they say, including those who disagree with each other.

The letter also recognises the inherent danger in the current situation where people are disengaging from politics, arguing that restoring faith in both politicians and the political process requires a new politics that engages at both a deeper more local level within a wider, broader vision for the country as a whole.

In the letter, the bishops warn against despair and urge people to vote in the General Election: "Unless we exercise the democratic rights that our ancestors struggled for, we will share responsibility for the failures of the political classes. It is the duty of every Christian adult to vote, even though it may have to be a vote for something less than a vision that inspires us."

The full text of the Pastoral Letter is available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2015/02/house-of-bishops'-pastoral-letter-on-the-2015-general-election.aspx>



Out in the Garden Shed

Despite the interregnum, St Mary's is managing to perform miracles – in the plural. The two garden sheds at the back of the church have been there for decades, and it was beginning to show. The larger one of the two sheds had lost its gable construction, and then the roofing felt was blown away a few weeks ago. When it rained outside, it also rained inside. The Finance Committee agreed to a new shed: miracle number 1. The new shed was scheduled to arrive on a given day and that meant that the old one had to be dismantled the day before. The weather was helpful, no rain, no hurricane, no snow: miracle number 2. Two of the parish's 70+ ladies set to with screw drivers, hammers and spades to reduce the structure to the original components. So far so good, but these damsels faced distress when it came to lift off the roof without damage to themselves. Just then two young men from one

of the firms working in The Boltons came by, offered their help and the roof was off in a few minutes: miracle number 3. The next day, the shed was lifted off a lorry and was ready for use by 08.45am. It arrived on the day promised, no hitches, no delay: miracle number 4. The two damsels no longer in distress now, set to with sawing and fixing shelves by re-using some of the wood and hooks and making it the envy of the parish in recycling in the now reduced space of a smaller shed: miracle number 5. Miracle number 6 is waiting because the other shed needs the same treatment as a hole was spotted in its roof...

Margarete Geier and Verena Tschudin

March Year's Mind

Edward Lidderdale
 Mary Pilkington
 Peter Hamilton-Davies
 Robert Priest
 Thomas Spicer
 Anthony Clives
 Storm Larkins
 Thomas Barclay
 Anjoli Fernado-Kleinsorge
 David Hancock
 Simon Perkins
 Lily Dwight
 Lynette Hopper
 Gary Marshfield
 Derek Pilkington
 Iris Warwick
 Madeline Habgood
 Kinbarra Morse



Coffee after the 10.30am Service

Could you volunteer to join the Coffee Rota? We are in need of some extra helpers as some of our volunteers have been faithfully serving coffee at St Marys for many years and now wish to retire. Please speak to Joanna Hackett if you are willing to join the rota. Thank you.

Summer Fair

The Summer fair takes place on Saturday 20 June



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.

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Eucharist, 10.30am Sung Eucharist
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); except Public Holidays. Wednesday 7.00pm Eucharist

Readings in March 2015

Sunday 1 Readings at 10.30am	Second Sunday of Lent <i>Genesis 17. 1-7, 15-16; Romans 4. 13-end; Mark 8. 31-end</i>
Wednesday 4	Eucharist with Prayers for Healing <i>Jeremiah 18. 18-20; Matthew 20. 17-28</i>
Sunday 8 Readings at 10.30am	Third Sunday of Lent <i>Exodus 20. 1-17; 1 Corinthians 1. 18-25; John 2. 13-22</i>
Sunday 15 Readings at 10.30am	Mothering Sunday <i>2 Corinthians 1. 3-7; John 19. 25b-27</i>
Sunday 22 Readings at 10.30am	Fifth Sunday or Lent (Passiontide) <i>Jeremiah 13. 31-34; Hebrews 5. 5-10; John 12. 20-33</i>
Sunday 29 Readings at 10.30am	Palm Sunday <i>Mark 11. 1-11; Philippians 2. 5-11; The Passion according to St Mark</i>

Monday 30 Eucharist
 Readings at 7.00pm *Isaiah 42. 1-9;*
John 12. 1-11

Tuesday 31 Eucharist
 Readings at 12 noon *Isaiah 42. 1-7;*
John 12. 20-36

Wednesday 1 March Eucharist
 Readings at 7.00pm *Isaiah 50. 4-9a;*
John 13. 21-32

Upcoming in March 2015

Sunday 1 Parish Lunch
 Sunday 8 12 noon Baptism of Otto De Jager
 Thursday 12 12.30pm Thursday Lunch
 Sunday 15 Mothering Sunday
 All Age Worship
 Sunday 22 12.30am Baptism of
 Gabriel Thomasson

Parish Office

St Mary's Church House, The Boltons, London
 SW10 9TB Tel 020 7835 1440
www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Parish Administrator

John McVeigh 020 7835 1440 (Parish Office)
 Mon to Fri 9.15am-2.15pm
john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Director of Music John Ward
 07853 406050

boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Verger / Caretaker David Ireton
 020 7244 8998 / 07881 865386
 Day off: Tuesday

Churchwardens and Vice-chairmen of the PCC

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie 020 7384 3246
 Ann Mulcare 020 7937 2005

Members of the PCC

Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie
 Mr Richard Brudenell
 Mrs Tania Caubergs
 Mr Craig Drake
 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
 Mr Edward Quinton
 Mrs Judy Rydell
 Mrs Katrin Roskelly

Safeguarding Officer

The St Mary The Boltons' Safeguarding Officer is Timon Molloy. His role is 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. Alternatively, speak to: Sheryl Kent, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: 020 7932 1224

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) helpline: 0845 120 4550
 Family Lives: 0808 800 222 (Previously Parentline) Childline: 0800 111

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 / [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

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

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 March Clarion should

be sent in to the church office by 21 March

2015

*The PCC of St. Mary with St Peter & St. Jude, West Brompton is a
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