

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

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

March 2016

Entering into the drama of the Passion

For our Lent course this year, we have been following through Part I of Tom Wright's book 'Simply Christian'. These chapters speak of what Wright calls 'The Echoes of God's voice in the world'. These echoes are the longing for justice, the quest for spirituality, the hunger for relationships, and the delight in beauty. Tom Wright says of it that: 'This Part, with its four chapters, functions rather like the opening movement of a symphony: once you have heard these themes, the trick is to hold them in your mind while listening to the second and third movements, whose rather different tunes will gradually meet up with the opening ones, producing 'echoes' of a different sort.

Our discussions so far have been many and varied, attended by both atheists and cradle Christians. I'd like to quote now at length from the beginning of a later chapter in the book, 'Jesus: the coming of God's Kingdom'.

'Christianity is about something that happened. Something that happened to Jesus of Nazareth. Something that happened through Jesus of Nazareth.

In other words, Christianity is not about a new moral teaching – as though we were morally clueless and in need of some fresh, or clearer, guidelines...Christianity is not about Jesus offering a wonderful moral example, as though our principal need was to see what a life of utter love and devotion to God and to other people would look like, so that we could try to copy it... Nor is Christianity about Jesus offering, demonstrating or even accomplishing a

new route by which people can 'go to heaven when they die'...Finally, Christianity is not about giving the world fresh teaching about God himself – though clearly, if the Christian claim is true, we do indeed learn a great deal about who God is by looking at Jesus. The point about the Christian faith is not so much that we are ignorant and need better information, but that we are lost and need someone to come and find us, stuck in the quicksand waiting to be rescued, dying and in need of new life.

So what is Christianity about, then?

Christianity is all about the belief that the living God, in fulfilment of his promises and as the climax of the story of Israel, has accomplished all this – the finding, the saving, the giving of new life – in Jesus. He has done it.'

Wright goes on in this and the subsequent chapter to explain exactly how he has done it. He makes some reference to the stories that Jesus told and the way he led his disciples, but most of what he writes addresses what constitutes the second half of each of the gospels: the final week of Jesus' life.

Wright's focus on the events of the first 'Holy Week' demonstrates their central importance in understanding our faith: and while I do commend his book highly, it remains a book that is aimed at showing the logic behind our faith. Frederick Buechner, the theologian and author says that most theology is autobiographical: that, for example the doctrine of Jesus being both human and divine grew chiefly out of the experience of the disciples. Here was a man they went about with, who got hungry and thirsty and tired, just as they did,

but who was able to do things they couldn't explain except through his also being God.

In the book 'Unapologetic: Why, despite everything, Christianity can still make surprising emotional sense' Francis Spufford takes a different view of our faith from apologetic texts like Wright's, even if his work is just as convincing. He makes the important point that unless something works emotionally for us, it is not likely to be perceived as true.

And so both these writers have an important message for us as we approach Holy Week. Wright says in his first chapter on justice 'Judaism speaks of a God who made the world and built into it the passion for justice because it was his own passion. Christianity speaks of this same God having brought that passion into play indeed, 'passion plays' in various sense are a characteristic feature of Christianity) in the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth.'

During Holy Week we are invited both to consider the events of that first Easter but, also, through the music and liturgy, to *enter into* the drama not just with our minds but with our hearts. Walking alongside Jesus in his journey to the cross is not an easy thing; but then most of the things we value in this life are not found along an easy path. Let us walk with him, and learn to sing the song of the redeemed.

*Here might I stay and sing,
no story so divine:
never was love, dear King,
never was grief like thine.
This is my friend,
in whose sweet praise
I all my days
could gladly spend.*

Sarah Archer

Electoral Roll

'Episcopally led, synodically governed': thus we speak about the way the Church of England is organised. And that organisation begins at the parish level, where individual parishioners have

a say in who represents them on the church council. If you consider yourself a member of St Mary's then please consider joining the electoral roll, and putting the date of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (when our churchwardens and PCC members are appointed) into your diary. This year it will be on Sunday 24 April after the 10.30am Sunday Service. To join the Electoral Roll a person must be over 16 years of age, be baptised and either live in the parish or have worshipped at this church for at least 6 months. They should also be a member of the Church of England or any church "in communion" with the Church of England ("*in communion*" means either belonging to a church which is part of the Anglican Communion or any church which believes in the Holy Trinity.) If you think you are already on the Electoral Roll, please check it to make sure. We will be leaving a copy on a clipboard at the back of church. Please complete a purple form if your name is not there and give to John at the Parish Office.



Women's World Day of Prayer

This year the interdenominational service of the Women's World Day of Prayer

(WWDP) will be held at the Servite Church, Fulham Road, London SW10 on Friday 4 March at 11 a.m.

Women's World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical prayer movement that invites women from a different part of the world each year to prepare a service through which their hopes and fears for their country may be brought before the whole world in prayer.

For the 2016 service the Christian women of Cuba have prepared the text and music. On Friday, 4 March 2016 an estimated three million people in over 170 countries and islands will

gather to observe the day of prayer. The service has been translated into over 60 languages and 1000 dialects. In the British Isles alone over 6,000 services will be held. The day begins as the sun rises over the island of Samoa and continues until it sets off the coast of American Samoa, some 35 hours later.

The theme this year 'Receive children, Receive me' reflects St Mark's Gospel, chapter 10 verses 13-16, which is the focus of the service and a reminder that everyone is a child of God and equally worthy of love and respect.

The Republic of Cuba is the largest Caribbean island at the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico. Cuba suffered a great deal due to the economic embargo imposed upon it in 1960, but the island has found strength within itself to move on and overcome many of its problems. Now Cuba has a health care system that is in many ways the envy of the world. Cuba has 83,698 doctors; one for every 133 people, which is the highest ratio in the world and there is one nurse for every 122 people.

The Kensington and Chelsea branch of the WWDP would like to welcome everyone to attend the service, which lasts approximately one hour and is followed by light refreshments.

The mayor of Kensington and Chelsea and a representative of Cuba will be in attendance. We would be delighted if you could also join us.

Anne Swift (St Mary The Boltons WWDP representative)

Step Forward 2016

- Saturday 12th March 2016
Venue: Bishopthorpe Palace, York YO23 2GE

Hosted by Archbishop Sentamu, this free event is for anyone aged 18 - 30 who's considering ordained ministry in the Anglican Church. It will be an opportunity to look at your experience

and what God might be calling you to in the future. Please see Sarah, your vicar, for more information.

Upcoming Dates for your Diary

March

Sunday 6 Mothering Sunday, All-Age Worship

Holy Week begins

Sunday 20 Palm Sunday

Monday 21 7.00pm Taize with Eucharist

Tuesday 22 7.00pm Compline with Meditation

Wednesday 23 12 Noon Eucharist

7.00pm Compline with Meditation

Thursday 21 Maundy Thursday

10.30am Blessing of oils at St Paul's Cathedral,

7.00pm Sung Eucharist followed by Vigil

Friday 22 Good Friday

10.30am All-Age Service

12.00 to 1.30pm, Stabat Mater by Pergolesi with Readings and Meditation

2.15-3.00pm Veneration of the Cross

Saturday 23, Easter Eve

7.00pm Easter Vigil with Baptism, Confirmation and the First Eucharist of Easter

Sunday 24, Easter Day

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.30am Sung Parish Eucharist

Sunday 24 April Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Saturday 18 June

2.00pm Summer Fair

Stewardship Campaign

Our Stewardship Campaign for 2016 started on Sunday 21 February with the first of three formal sermons related to our giving. By the time you read this you may already have received a letter from me with an accompanying leaflet and response slip, as well as the necessary forms to set up gift aid or a standing order. We are asking that response slips are returned at or before the Palm Sunday service on 20th March, and then the results of the campaign will be announced on Easter day. In keeping with the theme of this campaign, you'll find below a copy of a wonderful sermon

by The Revd Dr Sam Wells, who is now Vicar of St Martin in the Fields and also a visiting professor of Theology at Kings College London.
Sarah Archer

Is There a Gospel for the Rich?

This is a sermon preached in Duke University Chapel, North Carolina on 5 August 2007 by Revd Dr Sam Wells (then Dean of the Chapel at Duke University and Research Professor of Christian Ethics at Duke Divinity School; now Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields.)

Is there a gospel for the rich? When I was at seminary, a wise colleague who had formerly been a high school teacher, advised me on how to tackle my assignments. He said 'There's always three answers to every question, "Yes", "No", and "Maybe", and the answer is nearly always "Maybe".' Is there a gospel for the rich? The answer the New Testament gives to this question seems to be, 'Maybe'. To say 'No' implies there is something inherently dirty about money. It suggests that every cent the rich have is taken directly out of the pockets of the poor. It seems to represent a kind of anger that assumes what God really wants is for everyone to be miserable. But simply to say 'Yes' is to ignore the pasting the rich seem to get in the four gospels, especially Luke. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, remember, than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. No one can serve God and Mammon. And here in Luke 12.13-21, in today's gospel, we have a parable in which a rich man says to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have no place to store my crops? I will pull down my barns and build larger ones'. And God calls him an idiot and takes his life the very same night. So the answer to the question 'Is there a gospel for the rich?' has to be, 'Maybe'. Today I want to explore some of the questions raised by that 'Maybe'.

Let's start with the parable. The things the rich man gets wrong set the agenda for all our thinking about wealth and its pitfalls. First of all, the rich man forgets God. He forgets God because he assumes all his wealth belongs to him and that he will possess it indefinitely. It turns out his wealth is in fact on loan from God, and God can have it back at any moment. This is a slap in the face for any view of society that prizes private property. Notice how the rich man likes the word 'my'. My crops, my barns, my grain, my goods, my soul he says, all in the space of a couple of verses. But the parable makes it clear that all these things are God's all along, and the rich man only ever has them out on loan. Abundance turns to greed the moment the rich man forgets that everything he has belongs all along to God. And the second thing the rich man forgets is anyone else but himself. Instead of pausing at the point when he has more than enough, and wondering who else might welcome a little bit more, he presses on and builds bigger barns. And it turns out that the conversations he should have been having with friends and neighbours, the wise and the needy, he is in fact having just with himself. 'He thought to himself', says the parable, and then again 'He said to himself'. Abundance turns to greed the moment the rich man assumes wealth exists to insulate him from other people, rather than to draw him closer to them. This parable shows us what greed is. Greed strives for more without asking what the more is for. Greed is so dazzled by the potential of what money can do that it is content to accumulate without ever investing. Greed stops seeing money as a means to an end and instead sees wealth as an end in itself.

Is it wrong to be rich? This parable does not say so, but it does offer a very straightforward account of how difficult it is to be rich and to be faithful. The reason it is hard to be rich and faithful is that wealth inclines one to forget God and forget other people. Let's start with God. When you have a lot of money, the assumption is easy to make that money can solve pretty

much all your irritations and frustrations. Don't like vacuuming? Pay someone to clean your house. Think your children could get a better education? Pay for one. Not impressed with your health care? Pay for a second opinion. Find long journeys tedious? Buy a nicer car with a purring stereo or even better acquire a private jet. It begins to seem like there is nothing money cannot buy. Except of course the things that really matter. There is nothing wrong with being rich so long as you remember that the things that really matter money cannot buy. Money cannot buy eternal life. Money cannot buy the forgiveness of sins. Money cannot buy the faith that moves mountains, money cannot buy the hope that walks in rhythm with God's step, money cannot buy the love that will not let you go. These are things that everyone can have but no one can buy. The poor are blessed because on the whole they know this. The rich can sometimes become a little forgetful.

And then when it comes to other people, wealth can have a poisoning effect. If you have no possessions, other people are all you have, and you are well advised to keep on pretty good terms with them because you know you are going to need them sooner rather than later, immediately anything goes wrong. But if you have great wealth, great property and great possessions, other people can quickly stop being potential friends and even saviours, and on the contrary become potential threats and enemies who could rob or burgle or steal what you have. Instead of looking at friends with hope you start to look at strangers with fear. Quickly you start to defend your property with alarms and fences and big dogs, and you find you cannot trust anybody because everyone you meet wants something from you. You get further and further away from real human contact with the people who you pay to make your life better and it gets harder and harder to make genuine relationships and friendships with them or indeed anybody. So of course you find it difficult to imagine sharing your surplus income with anyone else because you have

avoided getting to know personally anyone who could in any way represent a threat to your insulated wealth. This is how wealth can make you forget God and thus live in a fantasy of your own immortality and meanwhile wealth can make you forget other people and thus live in a prison of your own self-sufficiency. This is exactly what Jesus is striving to save us from, and he does it bluntly by calling the rich man a fool, an idiot.

So there's a lot of bad news for the rich in this parable, and it is not just bad news in the hereafter, it is just as much bad news in the here and now: bad news that says wealth can put you in a fantasy land at best and a prison at worst. So what is the good news? Is there a gospel for the rich? Maybe there is. But to find it, we need to ask some searching and pretty fundamental questions. And the key question is this. What is money for? The rich man in the parable thought money was for accumulating and enjoying. There is an interesting Greek word here for 'enjoying': euphoria. The rich man thought money was for euphoria. But I suggest money is for something else. Money is a mechanism by which human societies translate labour into other things. Money is of no value in itself: it only becomes of value when it is translated into other things. And the word we use for that translation is investment.

We usually use the word investment for any method of accumulating money. Any way we devise to increase our wealth we tend to call an investment. But I would like you to think for a moment of the word investment as referring not just to the accumulation of wealth, but to every single use to which we put money. In other words, I want to break down the conventional distinction between money we keep and money we give away, and instead suggest that we think of the various things we can do with money as different kinds of investment. Leaving aside what we need to eat and clothe and shelter ourselves and our dependents, I suggest there are about five

things we can do with any money we have left over, and I want to quickly run through them now, to show the difference between investment and accumulation, and thus offer a gospel for the rich by suggesting what it might mean to become 'rich toward God'.

The first thing we can do with money is give it away to individuals. Somehow when we hear Jesus telling the rich young man 'Go, sell what you have, give to the poor and come follow me', we imagine some kind of random distribution of fat wads of banknotes. Giving large sums of money to individuals is generally a very poor investment. For most people who are poor, lack of money isn't the only, or even the main, problem. A sudden influx of unearned cash may do a whole lot more harm than good, particularly if it comes without genuine relationship or appropriate human understanding. The gospel for the rich does not mean an unthinking throwing of money at the poor.

A second thing we can do with money is to give it to institutions established and governed in such a way that they have a time-honoured record of turning money into real human value, in education, health, the practice and sharing of faith, the arts, or a host of other forms. One of my main responsibilities as your Dean is to ensure that Duke Chapel is and remains an institution of this kind. Institution-building is generally a wonderful investment, because it turns the potential of money into the reality of human flourishing, both now and in the future. The best of these institutions have a close eye for how their work genuinely benefits the poor in ways that do not reinforce the cycles and patterns and habits of poverty. This is one of the finest things we can do with our money in order not to build bigger barns but to become rich towards God.

A third and more controversial thing we must do with our money is to yield much of it up to our local and national governments in taxes.

The government is an institution or an aggregate of institutions designed, among other things, to turn money into real human value. Its main difference from the institutions previously mentioned is the relatively small degree of choice we get over where our money goes. But it needs to be said that paying taxes is an honourable thing that an important part of being rich is about paying a lot of tax, and that paying a lot of tax is something to be proud of and not something to avoid at all costs through fiscal loopholes and offshore accounts. Taxes are a way of making sure surplus money is invested in the public good rather than accumulated for private gain. Government is seldom a highly efficient mechanism for investment, and at times it looks like a bigger barn all of its own, but we must be clear that paying proportionate amounts of tax is part of the gospel for the rich.

The fourth thing we may do with our money is establish more conventional investments, such as stocks and shares. While this is a very common way to store up treasure for oneself, it is a very risky way to become rich towards God, precisely because of the temptation to accumulate and for ever postpone the moment when the wealth is translated into genuine human value. However there are two exceptions to this risk. One is to become an active shareholder, agitating for the companies you partly own to embody best practice in their production, marketing, employment and environmental impact and in all appropriate ways to exercise their corporate power for the wider social good. Indeed I believe it is almost a duty for those who are rich to seek to influence the business world for good in this way. The second exception that can make conventional investors rich towards God is to allow their capital to be used for the social good. Community Development Finance Initiatives, of which there are several notable examples in Durham, operate just like a bank, with market level interest rates, but they use their capital to loan money to enable people on

low incomes to buy property or start up their own enterprises. Investing in Community Development Finance Initiatives is a way for the wealthy to become rich towards God because it means entering a world in which everyone can benefit from your wealth.

The fifth and final use of money is to acquire property and possessions. It is amazing how many rich people live very simply, whether out of distaste for ostentation, or to be free of the prison of possessions, or to avoid facing the visible manifestation of their own wealth. If one is to become rich towards God, it is important that such simple living does not become the miserliness of straightforward denial. But there is no doubt that great temptation lies in accumulating property and possessions. To address such temptation, I suggest asking yourself the following kinds of questions about your property and possessions: How reluctant am I to lend my possessions to others? (Willingness to be generous is a pretty good indication of how much you recognize everything you have is ultimately on loan from God.) Am I constantly looking out for ways in which others can enjoy what I own, or are my possessions a wall that insulates me from the strange and dangerous outside world? Does my enjoyment, my flourishing, my entertainment coincide with the joy of others, or does it come at others' expense? Does my wealth make me and others free, or does it make me and others a prisoner? Do I fundamentally want the things that everyone else can have as well? (These are the questions that test whether you are becoming rich towards God.) And finally, am I prepared to allow others to free me from self-deception by sharing the truth about my financial situation with members of my church and asking for their prayers and guidance?

I want to finish with one of my favourite stories, which is about faith but like today's gospel could also be about money. I want you to think about what God is saying to you through this story today: A man fell off a cliff

and tumbled down into a ravine (aaahhh...) until he just managed to cling on to the branch of a tree growing out of the rock face. Dangling from the branch, and holding on with all his might, he shouted up to the top of the cliff, 'Is anybody up there who could help me?' After a short pause a voice came from below him, 'My son, I am here. Let go of the branch and I will hold you'. The man thought for a while, and then he shouted up again, 'Is there anybody else up there?'



Update on the Mast Project

Last autumn the PCC agreed to pursue an opportunity to increase the number of mobile phone masts in the tower for use by a second mobile phone operator. Since then the 'in principle' approval from the Diocesan Advisory Committee has been obtained, together with planning approval from the local authority for an additional electricity meter. This will go on the south side of the church in the garden at the foot of the ladder. The PCC gave final approval for the second lot of equipment at the

January meeting and an application for a Faculty authorising the works has since been submitted to the Chancellor of the Diocese.

If the application for the second Faculty is successful, this will mean that when the works are completed, the tower will house 14 antennas for mobile telecom purposes, together with associated control equipment. The antennas should not be visible from the outside. They will be installed in the room at the base of the tower behind the new GRP (Glass Reinforced Polyester) windows, which will replace the Victorian glass currently in place for the duration of the contract. The original windows will be restored and stored offsite, ready for re-installing at a future date. The other visible change will be a new access ladder running up the side of church on the south side, roughly where the current ladder is, but instead of running over the roof as now it will rise up the side of the building so there is a platform for safe access to the door into the tower room where the antennas will be installed on a metal framework. The new ladder and platform will be painted black and the railings and ladder guards will be black and round in profile, to fit as far as possible with existing metal work in the area.

The site is licenced to Net Coverage Solutions, which is one of the few companies promoting proposals for telecom installations inside churches. Although churches may seem ideal sites for telecom installations, the fact that Anglican churches fall outside the usual local authority planning control system makes them very difficult sites for operators to develop and progress to conclusion. Many churches, or probably most, lack professional estate managers and any changes to the buildings have to be approved by Faculties issued by the legal Chancellor of the Diocese. There are further complications when sites involve listed buildings or are situated in conservation areas. The scheme at St Mary's exemplifies these issues. It is a listed building in a conservation area and there has been the added issue of the need to

restore the original Victorian windows and to provide new safe external access and to steer the project through an interregnum and a change in our Quinquennial Architect. Net Coverage Solutions is the scheme promoter, and they have worked very patiently to bring the project to this stage. The operating companies who will use the equipment at St Mary's are Cornerstone Telecommunications Ltd, a joint venture of Vodaphone and Telefonica, (perhaps better known for its retail mobile brand O2) and Mobile Broadband Networks Ltd, a joint venture of EE and Three UK, which between them run the EE, Orange and T-Mobile phone brands in the UK. It is estimated that the construction phase of the project will take about four weeks and while it is not yet clear when it will begin, the operators have already made some on-site surveys.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie



Tribute to Jeremy Morse

My father, Jeremy Morse, was endowed with extraordinary talents and used them in a way that brightened and enhanced all our lives.

Anyone brave enough to take on Dad at Scrabble will know that there are three Cs in the bag and I have decided to try to evoke his character and charisma with three Cs of my own. And since to play with Dad you always needed a blank, I shall borrow a blank to contribute a fourth C!

Conservative

You may be surprised to hear that the first C is conservative. I do not mean conservative in the political sense, for – as the obituaries have told – Dad famously ran foul of Mrs Thatcher, who effectively denied him two jobs (Governor of

the Bank of England and head of the IMF) in which he could have used his skill and judgement to lead the banking world to a better place than it is in today.

Despite their differences, Mrs T would have approved of the values to which Dad adhered throughout his life – thrift, economy, hard work, the importance of institutions and respect for the law. He famously never borrowed a penny in his life. He always went to work on the tube, and that only after stacking the breakfast dishes in the dishwasher and walking his children to school.

Another aspect of his conservatism was his strong sense of place and belonging to his roots: Beech Hill, situated in his beloved Norwich, and later Lenwade, the home of his parents on the River Wensum. Mum and Dad bought 102A Drayton Gardens in 1955 when they married, and have lived there ever since. Treasured possessions, such as his watch and his chess set, he kept for decades.

Dad loved classical music and poetry; and supported the teaching of Latin and Greek as vital ingredients of a modern education. He refused to embrace new-fangled technology such as emails; even television was regarded with some suspicion; and he was conservative in what he wore. Dad was rarely out of a suit, even when going out to the garden to burn the rubbish or pick vegetables, when wellies and a trusty mac went on to protect his favoured form of dress.

In business he was no less conservative; as Chairman of Lloyds Bank, his refusal to let it embrace the excesses of investment banking led to a significant outperformance compared with the other UK clearing banks. He believed that a bank's primary obligation was to its depositors, not its shareholders, a lesson that has sadly been neglected too frequently in the years since he retired.

Dad loved the old institutions. He loved the established church and worshipped here at St Mary The Boltons and at St Peter's, Little Barrington for more than 60 years. He loved his prep school, West Downs; then Winchester College, New College, All Souls and more recently Bristol University, where he was Chancellor. His service to all these institutions is no less remarkable for being so widely known.

Creative

My second C is creative. He may have been conservative, but Dad was also amazingly creative. From his youth he wrote plays and music (mainly for family members to perform). In our early years he devised innovative games to be played at our birthday parties. From early maturity to the very end he was a renowned composer of crosswords and crossword clues; and in particular of chess problems, where he excelled in two-movers and also tasks and records. These were the subject of his definitive book. The third edition of his book was published on the day of his death. In both the written and spoken word Dad was a brilliant communicator, and much admired as a public speaker.

As a poet, Dad mined a rich seam. We have heard one of his many poems read and it says everything about his creativity: mystical and yet effective, esoteric and yet communicative, concise and yet full of content. These were the things he valued in the creativity of others.

It is perhaps the ultimate in creativity to catalyse others to be creative, and in furnishing the name for Inspector Morse, Dad provided Colin Dexter with the inspiration for an enduringly popular character. Dad hugely enjoyed this relatively late-flowering if vicarious fame, including his participation with John Thaw and Colin Dexter at literary events that were far removed from the pressures of the boardroom.

Competitive

The third C is competitive. Many of you will have faced Dad at cribbage, chess, bridge, piquet, racing demons, darts (in the attic), croquet, or the many other games that he enjoyed, and you will know that he did not care to lose, despite being gallant in that rare eventuality. When he won, which was more often than not, he would modestly attribute his victory to 'A.N.Other'.

No-one gets to the uplands of industry, let alone the City of London, without a competitive streak. Dad demonstrated this, as well as his colossal intellect, at an early age with outstanding scholarships and prizes at school and university. He perfectly exemplified the difference between being competitive (which he was) and ruthless (which he was not).

In our early years, Dad became the first person to win £1,000 in a competitive quiz show on television (Take a Letter). We did not own a telly at the time, and so rented a set to watch the shows, and back it went to the rental shop once the series was done, despite him having won enough to buy it several times over! In fact, with typical generosity, much of the prize money went on small presents to the milkman, postman, and a coat for the daily, all of whom had supported him since his appearance on telly had made him a minor local celebrity.

One tribute on the Crossword Centre website refers to Dad as being the ultimate competitive clue-writer and even to the very end he loved the Ximenes and Azed clue-writing competitions at which he was so successful. Dad submitted clues to *Observer* competitions without a break for more than 50 years and never lost the keen anticipation of finding out how his clue had been judged.

Competition was his spice of life and he enjoyed the recognition of being best in class. That meant a lot of enjoyment.

Caring

The final C is caring. All of the other qualities that Dad exhibited count for nothing against this one. When all is said and done, this is what people remember and what touched our lives.

As many of you will know, Dad suffered the untimely loss of his sister, Joanna, mother of Susanna, and then Mum and Dad lost their eldest daughter Clarissa to lymphoma, when she was but a child. These losses had a profound effect on his life and faith.

Latterly, there have been times when Mum has been unwell and Dad has shown a particular loving care to ensure that she has been given the right treatment, bringing his forensic skills to bear on the medical establishment to her benefit. Her presence here today is testament not only to her formidable fortitude but also to his care. In turn, her care for him and for us has been exemplary. What a team!

Mum and Dad have always had a lively social life, with many deep friendships in London, Barrington and further afield. They have always complemented each other to make generous hospitality their own double act. They toured the world together, something that brought great pleasure to both of them. Mum had provided marvellous loving support to Dad for more than 60 years and we all look forward to supporting her in the months and years to come.

Dad has been a loving godfather to his many godchildren, some of whom are here today. In particular, he has been an adored and adoring grandfather to his 14 grandchildren. No event has filled him with more joy in recent years than the cricket match in which his eleven grandsons took on – and beat – other members of the family.

Dad's care has extended to the wider family: his work on the family tree has been invaluable in helping us to discover more of our forebears and more about them; and his embrace of the

wider family included memorable parties with cousins from Britain, Switzerland and elsewhere, including the relatively recent engagement with the remoter Morse clan from the United States and Canada, when they visited Britain.

The most consistent and remarkable feature referred to in the many wonderful messages we had received had since his death has been his ability to bring this caring quality to every interaction with every person he met, however grand or humble, whether closely related or incidental to his life. He was easy to talk to, engaged and engaging, and willing to lend his help, irrespective whether someone was Chairman of the Board or the washer-up.

Peroration

As we remember a remarkable man who contributed so much, each of us will remember something - maybe many things - that touched our lives for the better. For that we are thankful as we mourn his departure.

Richard Morse

Youth Week-end Away 2016

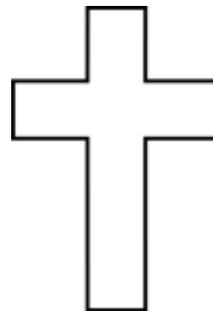
- 13th – 15th May 2016 at Oakwood Youth Challenge Centre, Wokingham RG40 3DA

Katherine Miller and Tim Bateman, along with Bishop Graham, will be hosting another Kensington Area Youth Week-end Away for young people (ages 11-14/15) in different churches within the Kensington Area. For further information, please contact Katherine.miller@london.anglican.org.

Welcoming Refugees

The Home Office has approached London churches to enquire whether we can partner with them and enable local authorities to host refugees, particularly from Syria. Churches are particularly well placed to provide support with

schooling, healthcare, employment etc. as well as being a wonderful witness to the love of God in Christ for the stranger and the vulnerable. At present the greatest need is to find private landlords who would be willing to offer a home to refugees at the area's housing benefit rate for up to 3 years. If you know of anyone in your church who might be able to do this, and you as a local parish might be keen to be involved in this programme, please email the Refugees Co-ordinator Angela Afzal on angela@capitalmass.org.uk at London Diocese and visit the [Diocese's Refugee Response page](#).



Christ Crucified 2

In the previous article (*Clarion* February 2016) I described Jesus' death at the hands of the Roman authorities, which he seems both to have foreseen and co-operated in.

Why did he act in this way?

The Gospels describe a steady progression in Christ's ministry. It started in the towns and villages, where he taught in the synagogues, preached the kingdom, cured all manner of disease and infirmity, and sent out the twelve to act likewise (Matthew 9:35-38 and chap.10). The results were unsatisfactory and Jesus became scathing about those who failed to respond. He pronounced 'woes' on Bethsaida and Capernaum for their impenitence (Matthew 11:20-24); and soon he was in dispute with the Pharisees, which culminated in full-on condemnation (Matthew 12:1-13 and chap. 23). Finally he felt bound to confront the highest authorities in the land. The chief priests exercised political power in close collaboration with the Roman prefect and presided over a huge temple establishment numbering (according to Flavius Josephus) some 20,000 people. At this level, preaching and denouncing would not suffice. Luke describes how, at the transfiguration, Jesus conversed with Moses and

Elijah, 'and they spoke of the death that he was to achieve at Jerusalem' (9:13). The choice of words is interesting: 'ἤμελλεν πληροῦν' means 'intending to perform a duty'.

Jesus was certainly not suicidal, nor did he seek out suffering for himself or for others. His whole life was given to overcoming it in illness, injustice, sin and hopelessness. He was acting out of faithfulness to the intention of God the Father who does not want to see his sons and daughters suffer. Jesus was not seeking death, but neither did he let the threat of it deter him; on the contrary, he refused to change his message by adapting or softening it. He could easily have avoided arrest, needing only to stop doing things that challenged the authority of the chief priests and the Roman prefect, but he kept going. He would sooner die than betray the mission for which he believed he had been chosen. He would be a faithful son to his beloved father. This meant living from day to day in a climate of insecurity and confrontation, continually exposed to scorn and rejection. Finally it meant accepting a fearful end. He insistently repeated his message even in the dangerous environment of the Temple. Nothing could stop him.

By his death Jesus would confirm what he had always lived: total trust in a God who rejects no one and excludes no one from his forgiveness. He would go on proclaiming God's reign to the poorest and most despised people in the Empire, so much so that it alarmed the people around the Roman ruler. If they eventually tortured him to death by crucifixion he would die as the poorest and most despised of all; but his death would seal his message of a God who defends all the poor, oppressed and persecuted people. He would go on loving God with his whole heart, refusing to give to Caesar or to any chief priest what belongs only to God. He would go on defending the poor to the very end. He would accept God's will, even when that led clearly to the cross.

It seems that Jesus never developed any theory about his death, seeing it only as the logical consequence of unconditional commitment to his mission. He saw no contradiction between the establishment of God's reign and his failure as its definitive messenger. This reign would only achieve its completion after his death. He had prepared a band of followers for exactly this purpose, which they carried out brilliantly when the time came. Nor did he interpret his death from a sacrificial perspective. He never connected God's reign with the cultic practices of the temple, never understood his service to God as a ritual sacrifice. It would have been strange if, at the end of his life and to give meaning to his death, he had resorted to a concept from the world of atonement. He never imagined his father as a God whose honour, offended by sin, needed to be restored by his son's death so that he (God) would forgive human beings in the future. We never see Jesus offering his life as an immolation to the father, in exchange for clemency for the world. God does not need to preserve his honour with anyone's destruction. His love for his sons and daughters is gratuitous, his forgiveness unconditional. Jesus did more than talk about God's life and salvation. He lived his service by curing, accepting, blessing and offering God's gratuitous forgiveness. All the evidence suggests that he died as he had lived. His death was the ultimate service to God, his supreme contribution to the salvation of all. Rowan Williams, in his recent excellent little book *Meeting God in Mark* (SPCK, 2014, pp 57-61), makes a telling comparison with the work of Franz Kafka. 'Perhaps we understand Mark a little better if we recognize Kafka's account of what it is like to be locked into the workings of a meaningless, nonsensical, but completely irresistible system of power, devoted to your destruction'. Mark has set aside the idea that we should listen to Jesus because he does and says wonderful things. If we are to listen to what Jesus is saying in his very existence, his mortal flesh, his death, it is something that can

happen when every possibility of hope, of love, of absolution, has apparently been swept away and all that is left is this bare claim. This mortal person (says Jesus) stands here in the place of God; and the place of God is the place of a rejected and condemned human being. God's presence and resource, his love and mercy, cannot be extinguished by loneliness or injustice, by the terrible, apparently meaningless, suffering in which human beings live. God has chosen to be, and to be manifest, at that lowest, weakest point of human experience. And so the poor and the helpless, the condemned and isolated, reading this story from the victim's point of view, can know that God is with them, and the God who is with them cannot be defeated. This is where God chooses to be and to declare himself, and the Gospel is the echo of that divine self-declaration.

This could hardly be more cogent as a Gospel for today.

(In writing this I have leaned heavily on the work of José Pagola, professor at the St. Sebastian Seminary and the faculty of theology of Northern Spain. He is a Roman Catholic biblical scholar in good standing with the Vatican, having served as rector of the diocesan seminary and as Vicar General of the diocese). To be continued.

Hugh Beach



The Church Credit Champions Network

This network was started in 2014 to harness and direct at a local level the energy created by the Archbishop of Canterbury's public intervention on challenging consumer credit, especially payday lending issues. One of the main aims of the Church Credit Champions Network is to enable churches across the country to support credit unions as effectively as possible.

The role of high-cost credit companies in driving problem debt in the UK in the last few years has led many people to consider options for promoting affordable credit alternatives. Organisations such as credit unions offer realistic alternatives to high-cost credit, which are both more affordable and more flexible than mainstream financial providers, while also offering incentives to individuals to develop their means of saving.

Credit unions are essentially not-for-profit community banks, offering savings and loans products. While their cheap and affordable loans gain the most attention, for outcompeting payday lenders such as Wonga, their savings products are equally important to their growth and existence. Without savings from a broad section of the community, credit unions would not have the capital required to provide loans.

Credit unions cannot offer definite interest rates on their savings products, but they do pay a dividend on savings that are subject to the size of any surplus they may have in any particular year. These dividends are often more attractive than the returns from many well-known banks. Deposits are protected within a credit union just as they are in any mainstream bank.

The Church has one of the UK's most extraordinary networks of locally-based communities, with around 50,000 churches active across the country and is therefore an ideal vehicle through which to support credit unions. By strengthening, supporting and increasing access to the credit union sector, the Church is engaging with the systems of society and acting justly, as commanded in Micah 6:8-9.

On 17 April, David Barclay will be coming to speak to St Mary The Boltons about the Church Credit Champions Network and opportunities for engaging with a local credit union, London Plus Credit Union. David studied

Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Oxford University, where he was also president of the Oxford University Student Union. He is currently employed by The Centre for Theology and Community, and pioneered their work on credit and debt, leading to the creation of the Church Credit Champions Network.

London Plus Credit Union were set up in 2008 and since then have grown tremendously, offering competitive and affordable products to a growing membership. The credit union is open to anyone living or working in the London borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and several other neighbouring boroughs. Cheryl Gale, manager of London Plus Credit Union, will be at St Mary's on 17 April along with David, helping the congregation to find out more about the credit union and ways to support it. She will also provide the opportunity for people to join as members.

Tom Newbold

Louise O'Brien, Angel of Compassion

'Refugees on Kos' was the title of a presentation by Louise O'Brien on 7 December at All Saints church in Fulham. It was the most inspirational talk I have ever heard accompanied by the most harrowing slides I have ever seen. Kos is a small Greek island less than four miles from the Southern Turkish coast. It is the quickest route for migrants from war-torn Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan via Turkey into the EU.

Louise O'Brien read about the refugee crisis through her work with the Diocese of Doncaster and when her close friend Zahida from Pakistan said: 'Let's do something about this' both women became efficient organisers in collecting clothes, back packs, boots, toys, toiletries and sleeping bags for refugees on Kos.

Louise, being an action-woman, wanted to do more. In September and December 2015 Louise joined an international group of volunteers for two weeks on Kos. Her slides showed the chaotic life on this small Greek island: mountains of abandoned life jackets on the beach, missing persons' leaflets, five portacabin toilets for 30,000 refugees, many families huddled in make-shift tents near the harbour, tired mothers cuddling small children, single adolescents awaiting decisions in prison because they had no papers, drawings by young refugees of empty life boats with the captions: 'Help me,' etc. What amazed us was the fact that within a very short time, Louise had memorised the names of virtually all the people she got involved with and who, therefore, also became very real to us when their story unfolded through the slides.

Louise had a budget of 10,000 Euros, which was the allowance permitted by the Greek government to bring into the country. With this money she managed to get a few refugees 'into the system', i.e. registration with the local police, temporary hotel accommodation and most urgently of all, food.

There were some slides of smiling faces of families who had just spent a warm, peaceful night in a hotel room, who had been given new clothes and a decent meal by the volunteers. Louise told us that the United Nations Refugee fund supplies only high energy biscuits and water.

Louise said that there were few religious leaders among the volunteers, but just ordinary people who spontaneously had decided to reach out to alleviate the pain of up-rooted, homeless men, women and children. The mayor of Kos, unfortunately, has resisted attempts to establish an official refugee camp.

It was also interesting to learn from Louise that she had only met two families who wanted to go to England and France. Almost all refugees

were aiming to make a new life in Germany, Austria, Sweden and Denmark.

How we can help? The Bishop of London recommends that we help through the Lent Appeal 2016 at source, i.e. by supporting persecuted Christians directly in the war-torn countries of Iraq and Syria. There are two reputable charities who are already active among the beleaguered Christian communities in these two countries.

Even a small donation will make a big difference so that Christians can stay in their own homeland and do not have to make the horrendous journey via Kos to the EU.

Anne Swift

Out in the Garden...

The garden never really went to sleep this winter and something was flowering all the time. It astonishes me every year how after dying down, the spring flowers all put out their heads again, without any help at all, and each year there are more crocuses, snow drops, small daffodils, and the ubiquitous bluebells. Most of these are the Spanish hybrids, but if you look closely you will see (in a week or two) that the bluebells along the path by the first bed near the young magnolia are of the English variety. I hope they will stay there.

Verena Tschudin



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.

Contributions for the April Clarion should be sent to the Parish Office by 18 March 2016.

March Year's Mind

Ivy Cooling
Olive Smith
Rhoda Bolton-Dignam
John Gairdner
Christie Parkinson
Maximilian Heyer
Dorothy Buss
Florence Lidderdale
Ivor Howlett
Elizabeth Ledochowska
Michael Wilson
Aida Gowan
Simon Perks
Vera Owen
Hugh Pringle
Dorothy Hale

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Usually Morning Prayer is said daily at 8.30am & 5.30pm: except Public Holidays. Wednesday 12noon Eucharist.

Wednesday 2 March 12 noon

Eucharist with Prayers for Healing / *Timothy 6. 11b-16; Matthew 5. 17-19*

Sunday 6 March Mothering Sunday All-Age Worship

Readings at 10.30am *Colossians 3.12-17; John 19.25b-27*

Wednesday 9 March 12 noon Eucharist

Isaiah 49.8-15; John 5.17-20

Sunday 13 March Fifth Sunday of Lent (Passiontide)

Readings at 10.30am *Isaiah 43.16-21; Philippians 3.4b-14; John 12.1-18*

Wednesday 16 March 12 noon Eucharist

Daniel 3. 24-25, 28; John 8.31-42

Holy Week begins

Sunday 20 March Palm Sunday

Luke 19.28-40;
Readings at 10.30am *Philippians 2.5-11;*
Luke 23. 1-49

Monday 21, 7.00pm Taize Eucharist

Tuesday 22 7.00pm Compline with Meditation

Wednesday 23 12 noon Eucharist
7.00pm Compline with Meditation

Thursday 24, Maundy Thursday

10.30am Blessing of oils at St Paul's Cathedral
 7.00pm Sung Eucharist followed by Vigil
Exodus 12.1-4, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11.23-26;
John 13.1-17, 31b-35

Friday 25 Good Friday

10.30am All-Age Service
 12.00 to 1.30pm, Stabat Mater with Readings and
 Meditation
 2.15-3.00pm Veneration of the Cross

Saturday 26, Easter Eve

7.00pm Easter Vigil with Baptism, Confirmation
 and the First Eucharist of Easter

Sunday 27 Easter Day

8.00am Said Eucharist
 10.30am Sung Parish Eucharist *Acts 10. 34-43; 1*
Corinthians 15. 19-26; John 20. 1-18
 Wednesday 30 March 12 noon Eucharist
Acts 3.1-10; Luke 24. 13-35

Parish Office

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

Vicar

The Revd Dr Sarah Archer 020 7835 1440
vicar@stmarytheboltons.org.uk
 (Day Off Friday)

Parish Administrator

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

Director of Music

John Ward 07853 406050
boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Verger / Caretaker

David Ireton 020 7244 8998
 (Day Off Tuesday) 07881 865386

Churchwardens

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
 Ms Julie Crutchley
 Mr Craig Drake
 Miss Margarete Geier (Deanery Synod
 Representative)
 Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary)
 Mrs Ann Mulcare (Deanery Synod
 representative)

Mr Edward Quinton

Mrs Judy Rydell

Mrs Katrin Roskelly

Ms Camila Ruz

Ms Kelly Webb

Safeguarding Officer

The St Mary The Boltons' Safeguarding Officer is Julie Crutchley. Her role is to help us to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. She 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 Julie on 07764497413. 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
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

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

Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Sunday School Parish Office

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

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