

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

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

October 2015

The Challenge of Hospitality

As many of you know, I have rudely invited myself to come and eat with you in your homes. I have put a chart at the back of church that has all the time slots that are available until the end of November and I would be delighted if you could fill them in. No need to do anything elaborate – a bowl of soup will be fine, and I'm happy to bring the soup! It's just that eating together, as I discovered in my last parish, is simply the best way to really get to know people and find out what St Mary's is all about. Of course, as I am discovering, there are as many different understandings of what St Mary's is as there are people, but certain themes are developing. One of which is the great hospitality and friendliness of St Mary's, which was certainly in evidence on Harvest Sunday over lunch in the hall.

There are always some verses in scripture that you struggle with more than others: and Paul's command 'Practice hospitality' is certainly one that gnaws away at me. I want to be hospitable, but am not one of those people who finds cooking a relaxing and restorative pastime. Yet hospitality is more than food; it is about the quality of the welcome you receive and the care taken to make you feel at home. While I find 'practice hospitality' a challenge, at least it has the word 'practice' in it. The assumption must be that it is not something that comes naturally. You have to work at it.

When I told people about my new job and marvellous vicarage, often the first thing they said was: 'you could take in some Syrian refugees'. Well, I could; but it is already filling up: three lodgers and another couple of people

who have expressed an interest. It is not surprising if you read the article by Lucy Holdon Life for Generation Rent in the *Times Magazine* on 3 October, which began: 'I am one of more than nine million renters in England who don't like going home. A third of us live in dirty, dishevelled properties below a decent standard – and there's nothing we can do about it.' She and her boyfriend rent a grotty room in Clapham for £700 a month, sharing a bathroom and kitchen with others.

Property will be the big issue in the London Mayoral race. The person who wins may be the person who best convinces the electorate that he or she can improve the situation. In this context the upcoming housing bill, which seeks to permit people in housing association properties to buy their own homes, seems almost comically out of touch. I spoke to the leader of the RBKC Council this week who said they have only 40 vacancies in their properties each year, and over 1000 people on the waiting list. If the housing bill is passed without the suggested safeguards, the Council will have no way to fulfil their statutory responsibility to house the homeless people, and this in the context of so many properties standing vacant, their overseas owners using them for a handful of weeks a year, if at all.

What can we do about it? Well, the leader of the Council certainly recommended that when the bill is completed and it will promote 'social cleansing' that we should write or visit our MP to protest. Perhaps if you are allowed to do so and have capacity, you might think of renting a room. For older people, a Home Share might

be an even better prospect: you get a few hours' help around the house in return for offering accommodation. To learn more about such schemes, have a look at www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk. There is an agency that does Home Share based in Kensington High St called www.draycotthomeshare.co.uk.

The good news about all this is that welcoming others into our homes is a way of helping directly with the refugee crisis; anyone we welcome comes out of the pool of people seeking accommodation. If you feel you would like to explore welcoming a refugee or asylum seeker yourself directly, contact www.nacom.org.uk. Remember too, the encouragement of the scriptures: 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.' (Hebrews 13:2)
Sarah Archer



Will Aid Month

At the beginning of October we gave thanks for all the fruits of the earth that sustain our physical bodies. At the end of the month we will

come to the time when we give thanks for all who have died, and celebrate those who have lived well. In this season of harvest, of reaping and gathering in, as well as considering the fruits of the earth and remembering people who have died, perhaps we should pause and consider also the harvest of our own lives. What will we leave behind when we die, who will gather it in, and how will it be disposed of?

These matters are best dealt with in a Will. It is all too easy to put off making a Will, but it is not a difficult thing to do and it does mean that you will get an outcome that you want, whether that is leaving possessions to friends and loved ones, making sure loved ones are

properly provided for, or leaving lasting gifts or legacies to a favourite charity. Put another way, with a Will, the harvest of your life will be used in the way that you want.

If you die without a Will, you risk leaving your loved ones with the stress of coping with avoidable legal complications. There are detailed rules of law that govern how your assets are distributed. New rules on dying without a Will were introduced in England in 2014 and they could mean that your assets are distributed in a way that you might not have anticipated. Bear in mind also that even if you have made a Will it is important to keep it up to date to reflect changes in your own life and circumstances: out of date information in a Will can leave executors with all kinds of problems. If you need advice preparing or revising a basic Will, help is at hand because, fortunately, November is Will Aid month. Will Aid is a special partnership between the legal profession and nine of the UK's best-loved charities. Every November, participating solicitors waive their fee for writing a basic Will. Instead, they invite their clients to make a donation to Will Aid (suggested voluntary donations are £95 for a basic Will, or £150 for a pair of basic mirror Wills). Donations are shared equally between the nine Will Aid charities. Each year, thousands of people use the Will Aid scheme. They not only gain peace of mind by writing their Will, they help to fund life-changing charity work at the same time. If you want to take advantage of the scheme act now, and make an appointment to see a participating solicitor.

Full details of the Will Aid scheme and of how to find a participating solicitor are available on the Will Aid website site: www.willaid.org.uk You can also find a useful checklist there of the information that you will need to gather in order to have a Will prepared (copies of this information are also available at the back of church).

When making or amending a Will, many people like to take the opportunity to include a gift to one or more of their favourite charities. This is a wonderful way to leave a lasting legacy to a cause close to your heart. Will you consider leaving a legacy to St Mary's? Sometimes people are concerned how a legacy would be used and often leave a legacy to a charity for a specific purpose, but a charity's need can change over time and complications can arise if legacies are too tightly restricted. At St Mary's the PCC approved a Legacy Policy in 2013 that describes in general terms how unrestricted legacies, i.e. those left for general purposes, would be used. Copies of this policy are also available at the back of church. If you need more information about any of these matters, please do not hesitate to ask.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie



Capital Mass aims to engage and support every parish in the Diocese of London in tackling poverty and the causes of poverty.

Our main website will be launched in November 2015.

www.capitalmass.org.uk

- On the site you will find 4 charities who with your financial backing will and are making lasting change into refugees lives
- On the site you will find connections to organisation who we fully endorse to you as ways for you to engage in this crisis.
- On the site you will find links to events and gatherings on this crisis as well as written material
- On the site you will find links to prayers and reflections as we bring this crisis to Christ

- Also on the site you will read about the longer term impact that the Diocese wishes to make through the appointment of a Refugee Response Coordinator.

The God of our Deepest Prayer 3

This is Hugh Beach's third article in this series.

Please see the July Clarion for the introductory article and the September Clarion for the second

Up to now we have been discussing prayer as though the finding of deep silence within ourselves is the only valid goal. This view is open to serious criticism, not least because what our Lord teaches us directly about prayer consists of words, not silence.

First it will be said that the prayer of quiet is only for specialists, indeed the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* says so explicitly, addressing a particular individual with a calling to live among fellow contemplatives (Chapter One).

This is rejected by the modern authors who maintain that contemplative prayer is for everyone.

Secondly it will be said that the metaphysical thinking on which the prayer of quiet is based derives from Greek philosophy (Plato and the Neoplatonists) rather than anything found in the Old Testament. This is true, but it hardly stands up as a criticism when one considers that the terminology of the 'Word' in John's Gospel (1:1-18) derives from Heraclitus via the Stoics and Philo (William Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, Macmillan, 1949, pp 3,4).

Thirdly it will be said that much of the writing about contemplative prayer emphasises progress towards some end state: for example the 'indescribable vastness, streaming in from all sides, streaming in from no side, an ocean full and overflowing with luminous nothing' quoted in the first article of this series. To which it could be added that this process is essentially self-centred, focussing on personal progress in prayer; and to the extent that such progress is

experienced it can very easily lead into the sin of pride. I have heard a number of Christians, including priests, maintain that for them 'it does not work', presumably meaning that the promised end state never arrives. The American friar Martin Laird OSA has useful a corrective on this point: 'It's best to become comfortable with the sense of always being a beginner. St. Gregory of Nyssa thinks it characterises the spiritual life. In his beautiful *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, Gregory points out that the Bride, no matter how much she has matured in her spiritual journey, "always seems to be just beginning the journey". Her beginner's mind is much more spacious and conducive to contemplation than any feeling of being good at prayer'. (*Into the Silent Land: The Practice of Contemplation*, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 87)

I strongly agree with this latter point. For me, the prayer of silence is an end in itself and I never expect to emerge from the foothills. Nor need this type of prayer be self-centred; Martin Laird has a beautiful description of how such prayer can reach out. He describes a lady who, while largely bed-ridden and in continual pain, could find in herself a silent centre where she felt closer to God. '[Then came] the realization that in this very silence there was communion with all people, a loving solidarity with *all* humanity. The awareness of this was seamlessly united with her awareness of God. This realization expressed itself as self-forgetful, loving attention to all whom she met.' (*Into the Silent Land*, p. 109)

Let's leave the prayer of quiet at this point and turn to the much wider issue that for many Christians, probably most, the aim of their deepest prayer is simply to be close to Jesus. Take, for example, Ignatian spirituality as taught by the Jesuits. The distinctive Ignatian prayer is the Daily Examen, a review of the day's activities with an eye towards detecting and responding to the presence of God. Three

challenging and reflective questions lie at the heart of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the book Ignatius wrote, to help others deepen their spiritual lives: 'What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?' Ignatian spirituality places great value on collaboration and teamwork. It sees the link between God and people as a *relationship*: a bond of friendship that develops over time, as a human relationship does. Another example is the practice of *Lectio Divina* (Latin for 'Divine Reading'). This is a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's Word. It does not treat Scripture as a text to be studied, but as the Living Word. For example, given Jesus' statement in John 14:27: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you', an analytical approach would focus on the reason for the statement during the Last Supper, the biblical context, and so forth. In *Lectio Divina*, however, the practitioner 'enters' and 'shares' the peace of Christ rather than 'dissecting' it.

The issue of *franciscan* magazine for January 2015 carried articles by two prominent Anglican Franciscans. Br John SSF, now Guardian of the house at Alnmouth, was for many years a minister in the Baptist Church. He says: 'Its abiding legacy is a *personal relationship* with the risen Christ.' Sister Sue CSF, Minister Provincial of the First Order Sisters, speaking of her time in the Methodist church, says: 'While a theology student, excited and stimulated by the range of ideas, at times I found myself confused and unsure about large swathes of Christian doctrine, and unable to say the Creed, so that being in church felt painfully hypocritical. Yet still with *a deep sense of connection with Christ for which I had no words*, I was unable to leave' (emphasis added). This emphasis on a personal relationship with Jesus needs no further underscoring. Probably most Christians, if they were able to articulate the point, would say

that keeping this relationship alive and warm lay at the heart of their prayer life.

Returning to our theme, how can one reconcile a prayer life that puts a personal relationship with Jesus at its centre, and a belief in God, creator of the Universe and all that is in it? Richard Rohr, a Franciscan friar and director of the Centre for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico and well known in this country as lecturer and author, tackles this point head-on in his latest book *Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi* (Hodder and Stoughton, 2014). He says: 'Yahweh and Jesus are the very essence of what we mean by being "personal". *This is not to deny that God is transpersonal too – Energy, Life Itself, Formlessness, Consciousness, Ground of Being, Truth, Love* and so forth. We live therefore in an entirely personalized universe, and we are made for communion and relationship with everything. ... Many believers eventually move towards a *transpersonal* notion of God as presence itself, consciousness itself, pure Being, the very Ground of Being, the force field of the Holy Spirit, God with us and God in all things – yet many of those very same people frequently find it helpful, if not necessary, to still relate to God through the intimate sharing of one trusting self to another. Why not?' (pp 216,7, original emphases).

Lest this sound too patronising, let's finish again with St Paul. Writing to the Colossians about the Son (Jesus) he says: 'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible. ... He himself is before all things and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell' (1:15-19, NRSV). For those whose prayer life is centred on Jesus, the

notion of Creator God is built in from the outset and there can be no contradiction.
Hugh Beach

This article concludes Hugh's second series of articles of reflections understanding our faith. A third series on 'Mercies' will follow, discussing life-changing mercies, life-saving mercies, and gratitude. His scheme is that having dealt with the God we encounter in creation (first series), the God we meet in our deepest prayer (second series) and the God who seems to intervene in our daily lives (third series), there will be a fourth series that will deal with the God we meet through Christ on the Cross.



Have you heard of Open Age? Open Age was established in

1993 and are now celebrating over 20 years of championing an active life for older people. 'We work across Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham to enable anyone aged 50 or older to sustain their physical and mental fitness, maintain an active lifestyle and develop new and stimulating interests.

We provide a wide range of physical, creative and mentally stimulating activities to enable older people to develop new skills, fulfill their potential and make new friends.'

Activities and outings groups

They provide over 350 weekly activities from more than 60 sites, including the New Horizons Centre in Chelsea, The Second Half Centre in North Kensington and the Open Age Hubs in Westminster, as well as community centres, sheltered housing, church halls and libraries.

Activities cover everything from health and fitness classes, walking groups, creative and performing arts sessions, men's groups,

philosophy, and weekly groups with speakers. There are daily computer classes and drop-in sessions at the Open Age computer suites, as well as from other venues. An outings group arranges regular visits to attractions in and around London.

There are facilitated telephone groups for those who are housebound and unable to leave their homes. 'Time For Me' provides activities and trips out for older carers. Link-Up staff work on a one to one basis and help people who are isolated into activity, breaking down the barriers that are preventing them leaving their homes.

For further information please call 020 8962 4141, or New Horizons 020 7590 8970. Check them out on the website: www.openage.org.uk. See also: www.silversunday.org.uk and www.peoplefirstinfo.org.uk

Out in the garden...

The plants and shrubs are now shutting down for winter and most of the summer flowers have gone, but now the winter flowers are starting to develop. Already the very small cyclamen are out in force in the rockery, and the nerines are just beginning to show their heads. Look out for these stunning pink lilies in the next few days. They will surprise and even shock with their unexpected beauty. As before, if you have any suggestions about the garden, or can give any hints, please let me know. I am always looking how to improve any gardening skills.

Verena Tschudin

Clocks go back



The clocks go back on **25 October**.

Octobers Year's mind

Peter Jouvét
Mary Challen
Charles Lawther
Margaret Singer
James McNair
John Marryat
Mary Proctor
John Williams
Anne Williams
Gavin Hodge
John Symons
Sandra Ockwell
Florence Payne
Mary Pretyma



Lifeboats

Please support our 5th Annual Concert at St Mary's

In aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution

(organised by the RNLI Kensington Branch)

Thursday 29 October 2015 at 7.15 pm

Concert followed by
Reception in the Church Hall
£25 per ticket (Students £10)
Including wine and canapés

Further information and tickets
contact Catriona Essenhigh
catrionag@hhs.co.uk
020 7751 0833

Upcoming dates at St Mary

Sunday 1 November

10.30am All Saints

5.00pm Eucharist for All Soul's Day

Saturday 7 November

Confirmation at St Paul's Cathedral

Sunday 22 November

12noon The Big Leaf Rake

Thursday 3 December

Trinity Hospice Carol Concert

Sunday 6 December

10.30am All Age Worship with Nativity Play

Wednesday 9 December

Sentebale Carol Concert

Sunday 13 December

7pm Carol Service

Thursday 24 December

Christmas Eve:

Crib Service 4pm

Midnight Mass 11.30pm

Friday 25 December

Christmas Day

10.30am Sung Eucharist

The 2015 Real Advent Calendar launches

The Meaningful Chocolate Company is hoping to donate £15,000 from sales of its 2015 Real Advent Calendar to help fund a baby clinic in Kenya and support overseas farmers through Traidcraft Exchange.

The calendar includes a Christmas story/activity booklet, 24 Fairtrade Belgian chocolates and a line of the Christmas story behind each of the windows. If you would like one please go to www.realadvent.co.uk or they will be available at the larger Tesco stores.

Trinity Hospice
Living every moment

Light up a Life

Christmas is a special holiday for many people who use this period to spend time and create memories with their family and friends. However it can also be a sensitive and difficult time of year for those who have a loved one living with a terminal illness.

We are delighted to welcome our local hospice Trinity Hospice back to St Mary the Boltons for their second annual Light up a Life remembrance service which takes place on Thursday 3rd December 2015 at 7.30pm.

Everyone is welcome to this lovely service, which will include Christmas carols and wine and mince pies afterwards

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

Sunday 11 October Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity with Baptism of Grace Lawson & Isabelle da Silva Harler

Readings at 10.30am *Hebrews 4. 12-end;*
Mark 10. 17-31

Wednesday 14 Eucharist 12 noon *Romans 2. 1-11;*
Luke 11. 42-46

Sunday 18 October Luke the Evangelist

Readings at 10.30 *Isaiah 35. 3-6;*
2 Timothy 4. 5-17;
Luke 10. 1-9

Wednesday 21 Eucharist 12 noon
Romans 6. 12-18;
Luke 12. 39-48

Sunday 25 October Last Sunday after Trinity

Readings at 10.30am *Job 42. 1-6, 10-end;*
Hebrews 7. 23-end;
Mark 10. 46-end

Sunday 1 November All Saints

Readings at 10.30 *Isaiah 25. 6-9;*
Revelation 21. 1-6a;
John 11. 32-44

All Souls

Readings at 10.30 *Isaiah 25. 6-9;*
Revelation 21. 1-6a;
John 11. 32-44

Wednesday 4 November 12 noon
Eucharist with Prayers for Healing
Romans 13. 8-10;
Luke 14. 25-33

Parish Office

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

Vicar The Revd Dr Sarah Archer
vicar@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Day Off Friday

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 Cauberghs

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

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 November Clarion should be sent to the church office by 23 October.

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