

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

rooted in faith

open in thought

reaching out in service

APRIL 2013

Where life was lost, there life has been restored. Alleluia!

Daffodils and Easter Eggs – the very down to earth symbols we use to celebrate the extraordinary events of Easter Day. This dull, bitter winter, more than any other I can remember, I've been looking out for daffodils as they push their way up through the still chill ground, rise on their green stems, and suddenly, with the sun, burst into yellow flower. For once they are not over by Easter, but with us heralding, celebrating the arrival of spring. At the time of writing (Palm Sunday), it's a spring for which we still hope!

At Easter we joyfully celebrate the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead – and proclaim “Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia.” Few can be unmoved by this message of triumph of God's life over death, God's love over evil and hope over despair. And yet Jesus' resurrection is a mystery that we, quite rightly, find it hard to grasp, and with which many struggle both as a matter of doctrine, and in living out faith in the resurrection in daily life.

It was just so for the disciples who knew Jesus, lived and walked and talked with him. Mary Magdalene, Peter, Thomas, the disciples on the Emmaus Road all failed to recognise Jesus on first sight until prompted by a word or an action, and then the gasp of recognition “It is the Lord!” The disciples' lives were transformed, not in an instant, but over time.

That first Easter they thought they had witnessed the triumph of evil over innocence, the victory of betrayal over friendship and trust, the triumph of political and religious

power play over a life of love. Not so. Easter marks the dawning revelation that once and for all the world is a different place: where life was lost, there life has been restored. Healing is brought to the point of deepest pain: humanity's capacity and ability to inflict pain, to do terrible evil, even in the name of good. God's life triumphs over death; God's love defines us, not the power of the evil that we do or that is done to us; and hope shines through the darkest despair. Jesus reaches out to his disciples: to Peter who had betrayed him by denying him, to the other disciples who simply took to their heels and ran. All are forgiven, all given a new start, and entrusted with sharing the good news they have received.

Many, many centuries later, their stories of Jesus and of the life of the early communities of faith, come to transform us today, in a world far distant from first century Galilee and Jerusalem. Yet the message of lives transformed by the life of Jesus Christ remains a constant theme, and a constant reason to shout “Alleluia!”

Jane Shaw, author of our Lent Book *Practical Christianity: Working on Transforming our Lives* makes the key point that the life of faith is not first and foremost about doctrine, what we believe. The key question is how our lives have been transformed by faith in Jesus Christ – not as a solid dogma, but the risky journey of lives open to God's love and God' love for the world. A journey she points out that is likely to be full of uncertainty, where new life is to be found in places of pain, restoration of life in the unlikely places of deepest darkness. Perhaps the hardest step to take in faith is trusting not in ourselves, our efforts of will,

but in the grace of God. We're not called to proclaim the love of God with an iron will through gritted teeth, but freely, joyfully in ways that liberate us and those around us.

Hints of the resurrection life come tangentially, unexpectedly, perhaps through a gift of daffodils or Easter Egg, a kind word, a smile, the gift of fresh water to a remote village, or a tin of soup to a Foodbank. The transforming love of God, the resurrection life, Jane Shaw suggests, is seen less in bold statements of certainty than in the uncertain lives of loving service. The Archbishop of Canterbury and Pope Francis I, both new in office, are both pointing to the poorest and most vulnerable people in God's world as where that transforming love is to be found.
Ruth Lampard

Parish Lunch

The next Parish Lunch take place on Sunday 7 April. If you would like to attend please put your name on the list at the back of the church.

**Thursday 4 April
Taizé Service
at 7.30pm**



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

Thursday Lunch

The next Thursday Lunch will be on Thursday 11 April at 12.30pm. The speaker is Revd Sharon Connell, Chaplain at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. Please sign the list at the back of Church if you would like to attend. The lunch will be preceded by a Eucharist at 11.45am.

How to be a better believer (I)

I finished my last piece for the *Clarion* with the question whether I ought to be making more effort to improve my performance as a believer. In other words, is there some way in which – by thought, word or deed – I can make progress in faith?

The Cord is a quarterly magazine published by the Franciscan Institute at St Bonaventure University New York. The issue for April/June 2012 carried a review by Girard Etzkorn (a retired professor of that University) of a book entitled *Jesus, an Historical Approximation* by José Antonino Pagola. (1). He writes: 'God is one who invites but does not resort to force, whether physical or psychological. Jesus often praises those of great faith, where faith is understood as the belief that the Father through his servant Jesus can help those who suffer. What God cared about was liberating the people from whatever dehumanised them and caused them suffering'. He adds a killer footnote: 'How faith came to be understood as belief in doctrine may be regarded as a Hellenization of Christianity, but that is another story'. Let's see what progress we can make towards a faith that God, through Jesus, can liberate us.

I have never been able to muster any sense of personal love or even affection towards the person of Jesus. (Could it be that my first five years, without mother or father to bond with, has left me emotionally crippled?) Taught by my schooling and scientific cast of mind I cannot take much of the bible literally and I have doubts about many of the clauses in the creeds. At a recent meeting when I explained all this, a wise friar said 'have doubt about your doubts'. This makes a great deal of sense. How dare I set myself up as wiser than all the learned Christian teachers of the past two millennia? Perhaps I have simply shied away from being too much of a literal-minded Christian for fear that it would lead me to give away all my earthly goods, or spend much more time out and about (in hospitals or prisons or food banks) rather

than in my comfortable warm study doing the things like reading and writing that I enjoy much more. I take it to be axiomatic that one cannot manufacture affection of a personal kind, nor indeed order the intellect to believe what it simply finds unacceptable. So what is to be done?

In a short series of essays I will take various aspects of the faith, beginning here with the question whether there is life after death, which was the subject of two excellent articles in the previous issue of *Clarion*. It is a topic on which I have always been resolutely agnostic, on the grounds that this life is more than enough to be getting on with. Traditional Christian teaching says that the soul, freed from its mortal body at death, will be incarnated in a new and glorified body at the Resurrection, when Christ himself comes in Glory. This may indeed help some people who are suffering, but the way that the New Testament hammers away at the need to believe the reality of resurrection, shows that this was hard to swallow even in the first century. In today's terms the problem is that after death there is no more brain; the structure crumbles and the molecules dissipate. Once the neurones have gone, with the information stored in them and in the complex pattern of their interconnections, how can the personality survive? (2) The 'software' of the human brain cannot exist nakedly *in vacuo*. Where and in what 'hardware' can this information be carried: how, even 'in Christ', can it be resurrected? No one, to my knowledge, has answered this question satisfactorily, though many wise heads have tried.

Bishop Richard Harries, in his book *Christ is Risen* (Popular Christian Paperbacks 1988) recognises that for the individual human being there is no satisfactory answer to this problem. At death, he says, we may go out into the dark and know nothing, but God continues to know us. 'Our knowledge may cease but God does not forget us; and this essential self He clothes with a means of expression appropriate to eternity'. This is not easy to follow. (Is my totality to be

stored for ever on the hard drive in the Celestial Server?) Sheila Cassidy, a doctor tortured by the Pinochet regime in Chile, put a similar point in more down-to-earth terms. In an interview on Radio 4 I heard her say: 'Even the cleverest theologian does not know that there is a life after death. I say to my patients "It may after all be only a long sleep. But it might just be something so bloody marvellous that we shall all be asking ourselves what on earth we have been making all that fuss about"'. This seems to me to have much in common with the famous argument in apologetic philosophy called 'Pascal's Wager', having been devised by the French philosopher, mathematician, and physicist, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662). He says that there is more to be gained from wagering on the existence of God than from atheism, and that a rational person should live as if God exists, even though the truth of the matter cannot actually be known. (*Pensées* section 233). All of these basically accept my agnostic starting point, but succeed in putting a positive slant on it. I am happy to do the same.

Once again our Lent Book *A Practical Christianity* by Jane Shaw has an excellent thought to offer: 'Faith is not grounded in certainty about where we land upon our deaths. Faith is belief in a God whose graciousness and love are quite beyond our comprehension, such that the exact dimensions of the afterlife are properly beyond our imagination. This realization, this acceptance of mystery if you like, prepares us to map a fresh approach to death and to salvation, - which is the path of this life' (p. 42). This in turn raises a further question of great interest to an almost-nonagenarian like myself. If one takes these points on board, how should one set one's sails towards death as it grows nearer?

In 1225, when St. Francis had been brought home to Assisi, nearly blind and in great pain, he wrote his 'Canticle of the Sun', the first great poem in the Italian language. It is a paean of praise to God, the source of human

and more than human gladness. In the third from last stanza it says:

All praise be yours, my Lord,
through Sister Death
From whose embrace no mortal can
escape
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Happy are those She finds doing your will!
The second death can do no harm to
them.

Having been a member of the Franciscan family for more than 60 years, I hope that when the time comes I can be as courteous to Sister Death as St. Francis was, and I hope that she will find me in a good disposition. As for the second death, this must refer to what T.S. Eliot described as 'what beyond death is not death... foully united forever, nothing with nothing' (*Murder in the Cathedral*, Faber and Faber 1935, Part II, First Scene). From this, the final horror of separation, may the Good Lord deliver me. Meanwhile, perhaps I had better stick as close to Him as I can, in case I am taken by surprise.

Hugh Beach

- 1) *Pagola is a professor of theology at St. Sebastian Seminary in Northern Spain. His book is published in Miami by Convivium Press 2009.*
- 2) *The erosion of the human personality as the brain cells are destroyed by Alzheimer's disease is a vivid illustration of this point.*

Sustainability Top Tip:

Used postage stamps can help to raise money for charity. At St Mary's we are going to start collecting stamps in aid of The Leprosy Mission. Last year, over £100,000 was raised from stamps and collectables!



Stamps – both UK and from overseas – should be left on the envelope and trimmed leaving a 5mm border of paper around the stamp. There is a box at the back of the

church in which to place your stamps. Many thanks!

Save those bottle tops! A programme run by Sutton Council collects all types of plastic bottle tops (no metal please) and exchanges them by weight for money which is then used to purchase wheelchairs for the disabled. Three large green recycling bins full of bottle tops equals enough money to buy one wheelchair; five full bins buys one electric wheelchair. This is a great way to not only support a worthwhile charity, but is also environmentally friendly as the council recycles all the tops.

There is a box at the back of church for bottle top donations. Thank you.

Fiona Brown

Our Annual Parochial Church meeting will be on Sunday 21 April at 12 noon, in the church. Please come and join us if you can.

Thank You

Many thanks to Boo Simpson and all who helped decorate the church for Easter. Thank you to all who helped to clean and polish the church for our Easter celebrations.

Visit to Waldsassen, Germany, 11-15 March

A very happy band of pilgrims met at Heathrow on 11 March for a visit to Waldsassen in Bavaria, Germany. We were a party of twelve, an excellent number for a quasi-pilgrimage. and with ages ranging from the early 30s to the late 80s, we were a fitting cross-section of the congregation here at St Mary the Boltons.

Waldsassen is a small, rather remote town on the German/Czech border; a popular holiday resort for Germans in summer and a leading Catholic centre in a largely Lutheran country. We arrived in cold temperatures similar to the UK, but a couple of inches of snow fell

that first night so we woke to a picturesque winter wonderland of the basilica draped in snow and the bells calling nuns to one of their seven services of the day.

Our home for the four nights was the absolutely stunning St Joseph Haus, a sympathetic development of part of the 17th century convent into a beautiful and well equipped hotel. Many of the rooms looked out over Basilikaplatz and inside rooms were warm, simple and presumably providing more comfort than the nuns were accustomed to. St Joseph Haus is overseen by Sister Sophia, one of the dozen or so nuns remaining at the Waldsassen convent and basilica. A lady with an obvious eye for business, she was helpful and courteous to us and encouraged us to spread the word of her wonderful hotel.

The reason for the visit to Waldsassen came about after Ginny's flying visit to the town last year to see the glass being blown at Lamberts Glas for our wonderful Craigie Aitchison Memorial Window. In the company of our window's commissioner, artistic director, designers and Leo our churchwarden, Ginny enjoyed a wonderful whistle-stop tour of the town and determined to return one day with a group of interested people from St Marys.

Lamberts Glas is a world leader in the production of blown glass. The company has been running for several hundred years and has had commissions as far reaching as York Minster and houses and churches on America's east coast. We were privileged to receive a special tour of Lamberts Glas from the owners and sales director.

While at Waldsassen, a real break from the normal week came in the fact that we celebrated Morning and Evening Prayer together every day. Taking turns to lead and read, this quiet contemplation gave structure to our days and it was a real blessing to be able to worship together in peaceful circumstances so far from home.

Our days in the town were also filled with a tour of the basilica – a baroque masterpiece – and its exquisite – if unusually Germanic (to our eyes) – wood carved library. Photos of these wonderful places will be on the St Mary's website and in the south transept. We were also granted permission to hear the nuns sing vespers one evening; a beautifully haunting experience.

Lastly, a key feature of our few days away was the opportunity provided for discussion as a small group. Much was heard of Dietrich Bonhoeffer; we discussed his unfinished thoughts on 'religionless Christianity' and several of his sermons. More of this great man, who met an untimely death at the Flossenburg labour camp, in *Clarion*.

All in all a wonderful, fascinating and thought provoking visit to charming Waldsassen. It was a real privilege to be guests of the Sisters at the basilica and to find such a warm welcome far from home. Enormous thanks must go to Ginny for initiating and leading such a worthwhile trip open to all the congregation, and to Patrick for his extensive travel arrangements, language translation and general herding us about.

Joanna & Alison Hackett

Craigie Aitchison Memorial Window: Have you ever wondered where the glass was made?

The Craigie Aitchison Memorial Window was installed at St Mary's in time for Easter 2012 and since its service of blessing and dedication by the Bishop of London last year we have received much comment, the vast majority of it positive, on the window. Visitors to St Mary's have expressed delight in the window's modern design, its colouring and its position near the lectern where pink light descends. I expect people have pondered 'who commissioned the window?', 'how was the design chosen?', 'how much did it cost?' and 'what is the significance of the dog/sheep?!' I wonder how many people have

pondered on where the blown glass for the window came from?

Those of us who were fortunate enough to travel to Waldsassen in Germany last month were privileged to have a private tour of the world-famous Lamberts Glas factory. On a picture postcard morning with light snow on the ground, the group of us walked through the little Bavarian town of Waldsassen to Lamberts Glas, a family run business and rightly of great pride to the town. The glassworks does not act as a tourist attraction and is therefore not open to the public, but on account of having had our large commission from Lamberts, we were welcomed like old friends onto the factory floor for a fascinating tour.

Due to the heat of the German summer (and the fact that the glassworks has furnaces running at up to 1300°C), the factory runs on the rather unusual shift pattern of 3.30am to 9.0am each day. However, to accommodate our visit at 9.0am the glassblowers had kindly agreed to delay their working day until 4.30am so that on our arrival we could still see them undertaking their amazing work.

Our tour was conducted by Robert Christ, the Director of Sales, who had brilliant English, and also the factory owner's wife, Gudrun, was on hand to answer any other questions. On arrival at the glassworks the first thing that struck us was the magnificent building they had moved to in the 1960s; the factory's original brick built buildings are preserved and located next door. The factory is a great barn of a building, almost cathedral-like in presence with a fabulous listed 100-year old wooden roof. The stained glass windows around the top of the building exhibited much of what the glassworks is famous for.

The second thing to alert the senses was the noise and the heat of the factory. We were able to see the glassworkers at work in their teams of four, with a head glassblower, two assistants and one apprentice. These teams

work across the factory floor, blowing glass of various different sizes and shapes, the largest pieces actually being created over a pit hollowed out in the floor as there is nowhere large enough to handle the glowing orb of molten glass other than swinging it into a pit! The men work extremely hard in these hot and noisy conditions, taking in vast quantities of lemonade (historically, beer!) during their shifts. Ginny summed up the glassblowing processes by saying that the men almost worked like a ballet company in that their work is surprisingly graceful and each man knows exactly where he should be. The production process is seamless and they never crash into each other.



When the molten glass has been cut into a tubular shape it is cooled and then we were able to see the next phase of production, intriguingly carried out by the only woman on the factory floor. It is thought bad

luck by some to have a lady glassmaker, but this lady with the important role of cutting the glass by eye was given special dispensation as both her husband and son are employed as expert glassblowers.

The final part of our tour was to see the amazing store of blown glass sheets that make up the company's stock. One of the biggest collections in the world with a huge array of colours available at any one time, we were told that many designers and glass buyers think of the place as a 'candy store'. Glass sheets are stored from floor to ceiling, in graded colours of every hue, and in the demonstration rooms mini examples just a few inches across are available to hold up to the light.

Our last introduction of the tour was the factory cat who is there to keep mice at bay, and presumably relishes his very warm home.

On departure we were all given a lovely smooth piece of glass stamped with the Lamberts Glas logo. Appropriately, the glassblower's symbol is an infinity figure of eight, topped with a cross to represent the basilica town of Waldsassen.

Joanna and Alison Hackett

A visit to Flossenbürg Concentration Camp

Silence In the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

It was an accident of geology that brought us to Flossenbürg in the Upper Palatinate, close to the Bavarian/Czech border, surrounded by the Bohemian Forest, but it was granite suitable for quarrying that had led to a small village growing there, well off the beaten track. In 1938 the SS had started to control various companies and use them to make money. One was the German Earth and Stone Works, and due to an extensive building programme throughout the Third Reich, master-minded by Albert Speer, stone for autobahns and ministries was in demand. The local town council approved the building of a Concentration Camp for German prisoners to expand the existing quarries. Over the coming years over 100,000 people would be imprisoned at Flossenbürg and 30,000 died there.

We had driven up from Waldsassen about 45 minutes to the North, passing through a landscape of ponds, fields and then forest as we climbed up to about 2,000 feet. It had snowed the day before and the woods were picture perfect, the fir tree branches weighted with snow, and the bare birch trees rimed with hoar frost. We stood in the freezing temperatures (-5°C) and listened to our guide, a Lutheran Pastor from the local area. Pastor Sörgel told us a direct and matter of fact history of how the camp had developed, bringing prosperity to the small village with access to medical services, a cinema and a small train line. This was not an

extermination camp; it was not set up for Jews but primarily for German political dissidents or criminals. However, as Pastor Sörgel said, you can kill people by gas or you can starve and work them to death. As the war took hold and especially after Stalingrad in late 1942, Flossenbürg became a deadly labour camp, where the largest number of inmates came from Poland and Russia, indiscriminately arrested and transported to Germany.



What I suspect none of us had realised was that as time went on the system of concentration camps became centralised in Berlin, and they were used to supply labour to war factories. Flossenbürg became the administrative centre for nearly 90 sub-camps, stretching from Würzburg to Prague. The aim was to support the German war effort and make armaments, with payment being made by German companies to the SS for the forced labour supplied. At Flossenbürg there was an assembly line for Messerschmidt ME 109s. The Germans believed that the Allies would not bomb the camps and therefore cynically used them for military work. There was a large map in the museum that showed the extent of the hundreds of sub-camps throughout Germany and the East, which took our breath away. All of us knew about the extermination camps, but none of us knew the extent of the labour camps.

We asked Pastor Sörgel about Jews at Flossenbürg, and he replied that there was no policy to bring Jews there although just by the numbers who were imprisoned, some would inevitably have ended up there. I think we have all been so shocked by the Holocaust

(Jewish genocide), that we have not appreciated all the other people who were caught up in this web of destruction.

We asked about Pastor Bonhöffer, and he clarified many points for us, including the fact that he was originally arrested for what was thought to be a false expenses claim, and was mainly considered to be trying to avoid military service. It was only much later that his support for the 20 July Plot was uncovered and he was treated much more harshly. For his first year or so in prison he was able to read books and write some of his great letters from prison, which were smuggled out with the help of a sympathetic guard. As the Allies began to close in on Germany, prisoners were moved back from the front lines, and so it was that Bonhöffer came to Flossenbürg in April 1945. Along with several leading figures from German Counter Intelligence he was condemned by a judge and executed the next morning. We believe he was hanged but there is no formal corroboration of this. In fact Pastor Sörgel was at pains to point out that many stories about the death of Bonhöffer have no basis in fact. The time from the judgement to execution was short, and it was carried out in a small walled area at the camp, where today there is a memorial plaque, with a simple reference to

2 Timothy 1:7: For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

We looked at the site a little longer. When the prisoner and guard barracks were demolished after the war, within a few years local people built their own middle class homes on the same foundations, right in the camp area. Other parts were used for manufacturing of toys or electrical goods, so that when a few survivors were invited back in 1995 for the 50th anniversary of the liberation, they were shocked that there was no memorial. The result was the clearing of the parade ground and setting up of the museum and memorial site as it is today. Pastor Sörgel said that after the war no-one

wanted to know about the camp and the terrible things that went on there. In fact it was not until the student protests in 1968 that Germans were urged to confront the past and face up to what had happened. Pastor Sörgel said that the whole village of Flossenbürg was aware of the camp and what went on there; they could smell the pyres of burning bodies in the open. We were divided on whether it was good for people to be living modern productive lives on the very site of so much pain and death, or whether it would have been better to leave the site empty as a monument to the victims.

As we pondered this visit, which still today has the power to shock, and move us to tears for man's inhumanity to man, as well as the everyday banality of evil, we were troubled by the fear that we too might have been silent and looked the other way, rather than risk our freedom or lives. More chillingly, this inhumanity continues in the world to this day: we only need to recall the roll call of terror in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and not to forget Guantamano Bay, where political prisoners are held in desperate conditions. One of the marks of degradation that was so very clear, was the stripping away of identity, name and personality and the reduction of people to numbers. Wherever this happens, brutality, exploitation and torture will not be far away. Bonhöffer was a courageous man who voluntarily returned from the United States to share in the pain and destruction of his country. He espoused action in the real world and set an example for all who would test their faith in a totalitarian state.

*We are not here to simply bind up the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself. D. Bonhöffer
Patrick Thomas*

The Kindness of Strangers

There is no better way to experience the kindness of strangers than when we take a break from our cosy, regular, routine life.

The five-day trip to Waldsassen by our little band of pilgrims from St.Mary's, proved this point. Right from the beginning I knew that I had to go with open eyes and an open heart to appreciate the goodness of my fellow human beings.

It all started at Heathrow Airport at 9.0am. A pretty young woman in a purple uniform and with a big smile showed me the best way around the labyrinth to the check-in counter. I asked her where she came from and she said, Brazil. When I told her that I was 'made' in Brazil, where my parents had been missionaries, but that I was not born there, her smile turned into laughter.

My next encounter with a friendly stranger was at the Starbucks coffee stand where I ordered a cup of hot chocolate and on my request, the young girl behind the counter filled my plastic bottle with tap water.

The next stranger I could not actually see but clearly hear over the intercom in the Lufthansa plane. This was our pilot Martin Heumuüller, who apologised for the one hour delay of our departure. The plane had been stacked up in Hamburg where it had snowed overnight and it had to be de-iced. The pilot also gave us details about the type of our plane and its performance, most of which I have forgotten, except that in six seconds we covered one mile.

For me, one of the highlights of our trip was the visit to the Lamberts glass works. Gudrun Mendel (who together with her husband Rainer owns the company), and Robert Christ, vice president, sales GB, welcomed us with open arms. They were extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides. Both spoke perfect English. I learned that hand blown glass cannot be made beyond a certain width, just as is the case with handmade bobbin pillow lace. Their talk increased my

appreciation of the Craigie Aitchison window.

On my way back from the glass works through the snow-covered cobbled streets of the little town, an older gentleman, a total stranger, greeted me with 'Grüss Gott' (roughly translated, 'May God be with you') when I passed him on the pavement. This lovely way of saying hello was also the first thing said to me by the young girl who runs the information centre. Incidentally, the motto of Waldsassen is: 'Where heaven and earth meet.' I heard the words 'Grüss Gott' quite often during my stay. On my return to London my husband Philip told me that when he phoned me at our guest-house in Waldsassen, the first words the receptionist who connected us, were 'Grüss Gott.'

On our trip back to London we had a three-hour stop-over at Munich airport. While Ginny wrote part of the coming Sunday's service, I spent my time exploring the Munich Chaplaincy in Terminal 2. This was a small square room covered with about six prayer rugs and a narrow corridor with two benches and a book case. The place was available for prayer and meditation for Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and members of other religions, i.e., for everyone. The only other visitor was a young girl who was saying prayers in a monotonous voice, perhaps in Arabic.

I did not know this girl but I was strongly aware that in God's eyes both of us were no strangers to him. God gave both of us the courage to step out of our comfort zone and see the wonderful world He has made.

Anne Swift

HOW I COOK MY LAMB FOR THE PARISH LUNCH



My choice is a leg of lamb. I dress it the night before with all kinds of seasoning,

but predominately rosemary, then wrap it in bacon foil then put it in a closed pot ready for cooking the next day.

Before cooking I cover the leg with orange or orange marmalade, close it up again and then add water to the roasting tin so that it can cook in its own steam.

Time depends on size (20 minutes per pound).

Margerete Geier

Thursday Lunch Meeting Report of 14 March: SMART

Jill Wood from SMART introduced us to the services offered by this charity that helps their clients and the local community in turn. SMART started life as St Mary Abbot's Rehabilitation and Training in 1985 and is now based in Gertrude Street SW10, just behind the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. It helps people who have been affected by mental illness and who have recently left hospital. The charity offers a variety of programmes and has a bridge building team that links clients to services and activities offered by other organisations.

SMART is funded by the Council, but this is being reduced over the next three years due to the cuts in public spending; and also by donations from individuals and organisations such as St Mary's charitable giving.

The café that is open every day to members of the public. A series of staged programmes help people to rebuild their lives, progressing from washing up to chef, from serving customers to clearing tables and interacting with other people.

There is also a garden project that grows flowers and vegetables throughout the year, the produce of which is then used in the café kitchen. They also organise a floristry course and sell the proceeds on a flower stall in the hospital, thus providing a service for visitors to the hospital and helping their clients to interact with members of the public and learn sales skills and techniques.

SMART runs computer classes, teaching basic skills such as how to use the internet and social networking sites, which help people to re-establish and maintain contact and friendships. The Knit and Natter group meet for conversation and craft, currently making blankets for charities in Africa, helping many people in many different ways. There are singing, dancing and acting groups that are entertaining and enjoyable for those taking part, and for the concerts and shows they put on, often for hospital inpatients.

Now you know of a coffee shop and café near the hospital that provides fresh food with ingredients that come from plot to plate and helps people get back into the skills and routines of everyday life, go and try it out.

Katrina Quinton

Summer Fair

Saturday 15 June is the date for this year's Summer Fair. The magician is booked, the plans are afoot and

we are already hoping that the sun will shine. Put the date in your diary and start sorting through your cupboards, wine cellar, present drawer and bookshelves. Start making your chutneys and jams, planning your baking, and building up your appetites for burgers and hot dogs, tea and cakes.

We will be having a Beat the Goalie competition, toys and bookstalls, the car park café (sounds glamorous, doesn't it, but come and be surprised), barbecue, face painters, the coconut shy (we bought new balls), the restorative Pimm's Tent, and lots of other

things we haven't yet thought of but all to the sound of live music. We are open to offers and ideas, so please do get in touch.

As always we also start begging: for bottles for the tombola, for good quality bric-à-brac, unwanted gifts, raffle prizes, contributions to the Really Splendid Limited Ticket Hampers, cakes and preserves and chutneys for the produce stall and most of all HELP! Help in advance, help in the morning setting up, help in the afternoon itself, and help tidying up at the end of the day.

Last year because of everyone's efforts the Summer Fair contributed over £4,500 to the Charities Pot; if we could reach the £5,000 mark this year it would be wonderful.

Please do start thinking about how you might be able to help. It's a fun day and we have booked the flypast for 1.0pm, after last year's success!

Katrina Quinton

St Paul's Cathedral The Mind of the Maker

On Sunday evenings during Easter-time, St Paul's Cathedral is holding a series of 'Conversations under the Dome' with people in the public eye who express their faith through their various creative skills. The series is intended to reflect on the relationship between divine and human creativity. *The Mind of the Maker* begins with a Eucharist on Sunday 7 April at 6.00pm at which an introductory address will be given by Professor Ann Loades, CBE, Professor Emeritus of Theology, University of Durham. The series continues with four meditative services as follows, all at 6.00pm:
Sunday 14 April: Comedian Frank Skinner in conversation with Andrew Carwood, the Cathedral's Director of Music.
Sunday 21 April: Celebrity Chef Clarissa Dickson-Wright in conversation with Sarah Eynstone, the Cathedral's Chaplain.

Sunday 28 April: Poet Andrew Motion in conversation with Mark Oakley, the Cathedral's Chancellor.

Sunday 5 May: Novelist PD James in conversation with Michael Hampel, the Cathedral's Precentor.

The series closes on Sunday 12 May at 6.00pm with a celebration of the Eucharist at which Michael Hampel will deliver a concluding address.

These will be six relaxed and accessible acts of worship with the potential for some fascinating conversations and lots of interesting thoughts to take away. Do consider going to some or all of these evenings (each will last approximately 45 minutes). There will be music and readings to accompany the conversations. No tickets are required for any of these six evenings.

St Paul's Institute

is hosting a series of debates under the dome on the theme: 'The City and The Common Good: What kind of City do we want?' The debates are chaired by Stephanie Flanders, BBC Economics Editor.

Thursday 11 April, 6.30pm: Good People
Keynote Speaker: Vincent Nichols.

Thursday 7 May, 6.30pm: Good Money,
Keynote Speaker: Robert Skidelsky.

Thursday 12 June, 6.00pm: Good Banks,
Archbishop Justin Welby.

Entry is free and all are welcome. To register for tickets (last year's series was a sell-out) visit: www.stpaulsinstitute.org.uk

Malcolm Goddard

Malcolm Goddard has asked for his address to go into Clarion:

Flat 33 The Hawthorns,
4 Carew Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2BF
malcolm.lorden@gmail.com

Quiz Night !



in support of Christian Aid

on Saturday 18 May 2013

in the Church hall

at 7.0pm

Teams of four or individuals are welcome

Tickets:

£15 (including supper & wine)

Being Martha, Being Mary

'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'

Most of us are familiar with the Biblical story of Mary and Martha, told in Luke 10:38-42. Jesus and his disciples were on their way, moving from town to town, village to village. At this particular village, Martha welcomed Jesus into her home. Martha scurried around, making sure there was food and shelter and everything her guests might need. She did not stop for even a moment while there was still work to be done. Mary, meanwhile, sat at Jesus' feet and just listened to what he was saying. Eventually, tired and frustrated, Martha appeals to Jesus to tell Mary to get up and help her. And what does he do? He rebukes her!

At least, that is how I saw it for many years, and I must say, I took it deeply personally. I was as hurt as if Jesus had appeared before me, tutted, and told me off. Because I am, and always have been, very much a Martha. I *do*. If I am not doing, I do not feel right. I do not feel that I am living with purpose unless I am trying my hardest to take care of everyone and everything. There has always been a part of me very much in sympathy with my Biblical namesake; I too feel like saying to Jesus that it

is all very well to sit and listen, but if that is all everyone ever did, nothing would get done! And then where would we be? Jesus hit the nail on the head with me: I am worried and distracted by many things.

As with so many things, context is everything. The story of Mary and Martha is immediately preceded by the parable of the Good Samaritan, which suggests that contemplating without doing is at best a futile exercise; at worst, it can cost a life. Yet Jesus tells Martha 'there is need of only one thing': to listen. So which is it?

Once I stopped being so offended at Jesus for speaking to Martha as he did, I grew puzzled. Because Martha was an important part of Jesus' ministry. Jesus could have provided food, water and shelter for himself and his followers but he did not – not on this occasion anyway; Martha did. She provided hospitality and in doing so, helped to make it possible for Jesus to provide for others, to do what was important for him to do. In her own small way, she helped to enable Jesus' ministry. Taking care of people was *her* ministry. Martha served.

Perhaps this is why Jesus tells her to take time out. No-one can keep going and going and going without burning out, as I have learned the hard way. Martha loves Jesus, so she serves him the best way she knows how. Jesus loves Martha, so he tells her she needs to strike a balance. He is not telling Martha her work is worthless, or to stop completely. He is telling her not to get so caught up in it that it takes over her life and that her purpose is lost in the sheer volume of tasks she takes upon herself. Jesus reminds Martha of the importance of giving him her undivided attention.

Returning to the idea of context, I also think Jesus is offering Martha a kind of freedom. Jesus was unconventional, he challenged expectations and I think he is letting Martha know she can do the same. At that time, in that place, a good woman's place was very much in the home and her role largely

domestic. Women were not supposed to be scholars, or agents for social or political change. By allowing Mary to sit at his feet, Jesus was going against religious and social custom on at least two fronts. It was not quite the done thing to be in such close physical proximity to an unrelated woman, nor was it usual for a Rabbi to be imparting his teachings to a woman. Jesus was inviting Martha to draw nearer to Him, and showing her she too could listen and learn. She did not have to be confined to a single role, important as that role was.

There is nothing wrong with Martha, nor is there anything wrong with Mary. What I need in my life and what so many of us need, is to strike a spiritual balance between these two seemingly conflicting aspects of our personalities. As an inveterate Martha, it is such a gift to me to be reminded just to stop and listen: to be given permission to let go of my concerns, my busyness and the fragmented nature of my life, and to be invited to stop for a while and just be.

How ironic, that I have always valued myself by how much I can *do* for others, and the greatest gift I have been given is to be listened to, to be heard. Thank God for Mary! Thank Christ for the listeners! I have always been happy to be a listener, but I never appreciated this aspect of myself. I thought it was nothing. I thought it was *not enough* simply to be present, largely because I always thought *I was not enough*. I have had for years a monumental double standard when it comes to valuing service, with myself on one side, always having to do more and try harder, and everyone else on the other side, where it is enough that they just be who they are.

It is tempting to vilify Martha and exemplify Mary. It is tempting to dismiss Martha, as Jesus seemed to be doing. It is tempting to criticise Mary as being selfish, taking the opportunity to learn and letting Martha do all the work without offering to help, but the scripture is more complex than that, as life is

more complex than that, as we are more complex than that.

It is not about being one or the other. We are called to be Martha: to provide food and shelter to all God's children, to nurse them when they are ill, to provide for their physical needs, to fill the need that surrounds us. We are also called to be Mary: to sit, to listen, to provide a safe space for people to tell their stories, to let people be heard. We are called to serve, and Jesus through his life has shown us just how many ways there are to do this, all of which mean something and are part of the larger design. Before we can do any of this, or indeed anything at all meaningful, we first have to give ourselves the freedom to be who we are, and then simply just to be.

Martha Sivaguru



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.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross is the purest and most deeply-felt of all devotional hymns, and it has an honoured place in Christian worship.

Originally written in preparation for a communion service in 1707, it was at first called 'Crucifixion to the World by the Cross of Christ', and had five stanzas. The fourth, which Watts put in brackets indicating that it could be left out if need be, read: 'His dying crimson, like a robe,/ Spreads o'er His body on the tree:/ Then am I dead to all the globe,/ And all the globe is dead to me.'

His guess was probably right – the words are not sung now. Perhaps the image of the blood of the crucified Christ covering him like an

Emperor's cloak is just too shocking for modern tastes.

The original words of the hymn have been altered plenty of times, sometimes by the author. He originally wrote 'Where the young Prince of Glory died' in the first verse; now it is usually 'On which the Prince of Glory died'. It was a bad editorial decision by *Baptist Praise and Worship* to restore the original, as the stress falls on a weak word when it is sung. When this hymn was written, congregational singing was limited to the Psalms, if that; early Dissenters – Baptists, Congregationalists and the like – had fierce controversies over whether hymn-singing was permitted at all. Isaac Watts, because his hymns were so firmly rooted in the Bible, helped to make the practice acceptable.

Interestingly, *When I survey* is the first hymn we know of to be written in the first person. Its author isn't trying to teach doctrine; the hymn is a profound response to what Christ has done for us, and a moving evocation of the cost of salvation.

It is a particularly appropriate hymn to sing at Communion, where at the Lord's Table we are asked to examine ourselves before we eat and drink, and to be at peace with God and one another. 'My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride' in the sight of the Cross. We see the empty riches of the world for what they are, and leave them all for him – sacrifice them to his blood.

In the third verse there is an astonishing imaginative insight, which stretches language to express the inexpressible. It is not blood which flows from Christ's wounds, but sorrow and love; the linkage recalls the water – the pericardial fluid – and blood which flowed from his side. In the third line sorrow and love have reverted to their natural meanings – they are both seen at their most extreme in the suffering of Christ. But when we 'see' his blood, that is what we are seeing; again, it is an intensification of our experience at Communion. The crown of thorns goes

with the cloak of blood in the excluded fourth verse.

Extreme love calls for an extreme response: love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

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April Year's Mind

Linda Beauchamp
Roy Denman
Vera Sloane
Alan Payne
Geoffrey Payne
Arthur Fell
David Lewis
Clas Groth
Edward Mason
William Rogers
John Warwick
Karl-Hans Osbahr
Margaret Stubbs
Molly Kemm
John McLean
Gillian Brown
Jytte Lynner
Diana McLean
Claudine Allport
Michael Bryceson
Richard Barton
Jytte Mackenzie-Charrington
James Bolton-Dignum
Yvonne Madley
Sidney Perry

A fact for each day of April 2013

1. On this day in 1995, Bob Dylan hugged Carole King so enthusiastically that he broke her arm.
2. On this day in 1978 Velcro became available for the first time.
3. The Everly Brothers began their first nationwide UK tour on this day, 1960.
4. On this day in 2001 a 100ft chalk tower at Beachy Head, known as Devil's Chimney, crashed into the sea.
5. Ben Hur won a record 10 Oscars on this day, 1960.
6. PR Guru Max Clifford is 70 today.

7. On this day in 1951 only three horses out of the 36 runners finished the Grand National.
8. On this day in 1975 pagers were launched in Britain.
9. The National Gallery opened in London on this day, 1838.
10. On this day in 1984 the first birth from a frozen embryo took place at Monash University in Australia.
11. On this day in 1955 West Indian cricketer Gary Sobers began his run of 85 unbroken Test appearances.
12. Singer/song-writer David Cassidy was born this day, 1950.
13. On this day in 1962 Animal Magic with Johnny Morris was broadcast for the first time.
14. The Titanic struck an iceberg and started to sink on this day, 1912.
15. British comedian Tommy Cooper died on this day, 1980.
16. On this day in 1980 Arthur Ash retired from professional tennis.
17. A waxwork of Brad Pitt with a squeezable bottom went on display at Madame Tussaud's on this day, 2003.
18. The Sound of Music won the Best Film Oscar on this day, 1966.
19. On this day in 2005 Joseph Ratzinger was elected as the new Pope, Benedict XVI.
20. British actor Nicholas Lyndhurst was born this day, 1961.
21. On this day in 1970 Bobby Charlton made his 100th appearance for England.
22. Britain discontinued printing £1,000 notes on this day, 1943.
23. On this day in 2001 Delia Smith's mum said the celebrity chef had been 'a rubbish cook' when she was at school.
24. On this day in 2001 Barry Norman announced he was giving up film criticism – because films were too terrible to be worth the effort.
25. DNA was modelled for the first time on this day, 1953.
26. The first annual pig race took place in County Kildare in Ireland on this day, 1989.
27. English ballerina Darcy Bussell was born this day, 1969.
28. Torvill and Dean were made Freemen of the City of Nottingham on this day, 1983.
29. On this day in 1990 Stephen Hendry became the youngest holder of the World Snooker Championship at the age of 21, when he beat Jimmy White 18-12 in the final.
30. France sold Louisiana to America for £3 million on this day, 1803.

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist

4.30pm Evening Prayer.

The meeting room at the back of the church is available for people with pre-school children. There is a baby changing facility in the wheelchair accessible toilet in the hall.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

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

Readings in April 2013

Wednesday 3 Eucharist
Readings at 7.00pm Acts 3. 1-10;
Luke 24. 13-35

Sunday 7 April Second Sunday of Easter

Readings at 10.30am Acts 5. 27-32;
Revelation 1. 4-8
John 20. 19-end

William Law
1 Corinthians 2.9-16;
Matthew 17. 1-9

Thursday 11 Eucharist George Selwyn
Readings 11.45am Acts 5. 27-33;
John 5. 31-end

Sunday 14 April Third Sunday of Easter

Readings at 10.30 Acts 9. 1-6;
Revelation 5. 11-end
John 21. 1-19

Wednesday 17 Eucharist
Readings at 7.00pm Acts 8. 1b-8;
John 6. 35-40

Sunday 21 April Fourth Sunday of Easter

Readings at 10.30am Acts 9. 36-end;
Revelation 7. 9-end
John 10. 22-30

Wednesday 24 Eucharist St Melitus
Readings at 7.00pm Acts 12. 24-3.5;
John 12. 44-end

Sunday 28 April Fifth Sunday of Easter

Readings at 10.30am Acts 11. 1-18;
Revelation 21. 1-6
John 13. 31-35

Wednesday 1 May Eucharist
Philip & Paul Apostles
Readings at 7.00pm Isaiah 30. 15-21
John 14. 1-14

Upcoming in April 2013

Friday 5 5.00pm Wedding of
Henrietta Harvey & Dominic Hodgkinson
Saturday 6 Wedding 3.00pm of Louise Boone
& Sam Duffett
Sunday 7 Parish Lunch
Thursday 11 11.45am Eucharist
12.30pm Thursday Lunch
7.00pm Concert in church
Sunday 21 12 noon APCM in church
PCC Meeting for Accounts
Wednesday 24 2.30pm Home communion
Ellesmere House
Thursday 25 2.30-4.00pm Time for Tea
Sunday 28 2.00pm Baptism: Georg
Raschauer-Ladurner

Parish Office

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

www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk

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

Day off: Tuesday

ginny@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Associate Vicar The Revd Ruth Lampard
mobile 07870 651240

Days off Friday & Saturday

ruth@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Director of Music John Ward
07853 406050 (mobile)
boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Parish Administrator

John McVeigh 020 7835 1440 (church office)

Mon to Fri 9.15am-2.15pm

john@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Verger / Caretaker David Ireton
020 7244 8998 / 07881 865386

day off: Tuesday

Churchwardens

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie 020 7384 3246

Ann Mulcare 020 7937 2005

Members of the Parochial Church Council

Revd Ginny Thomas (Chair)

Mr Philip Bedford-Smith,

Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie,

Miss Margarete Geier

(Deanery Synod Representative),

Mrs Mary Godwin,

Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary),

Revd Ruth Lampard,

Mr Kevin Loprimo,

Mr Timon Molloy,

Mrs Ann Mulcare

(Deanery Synod Representative),

Mr David Parsons,

Mrs Katrina Quinton,

Miss Camila Ruz,

Mrs Ann Tait

Treasurer Carolyn Stubbs 020 7835 0074

Assistant Treasurer

Bill Gallagher 020 7384 3246.

Electoral Roll Officer Fiona Parsons

Gift Aid Secretary

John Barker 020 8571 0737

Children's Advocate

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Co-ordinators:

Monday Bible Study Group

Pat Schleger 020 7589 2359

Wednesday Bible Study Group

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Clarion Editor

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Flowers Boo Simpson 020 8878 9898

Prayer Network

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Readers & Intercessors Rota

Mary Meeson (call Parish Office)

Reading at St Cuthbert's and St Matthias School

Sheila Gibbs 020 8788 9744

Thursday monthly lunch

June Brudenell 020 7352 7815 &

Ann Tait 020 7352 5127

Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Sunday School Jane Dass 020 7370 5309

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