Deliver me, O Lord, from death eternal on that fearful day,
When the heavens and the earth shall be moved,
When thou shalt come to judge the world.
Leaving God for God

by Susan O’Brien, DLT 2017

Fr Nicholas Schofield

A history of the British Province of a religious community, the Company of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, may at first suggest a publication of interest only to specialists. However since 1847 the Daughters have left a deep impact on English Catholicism and beyond. One may also have to mention many of the most obvious – and local - examples: St Vincent’s, Carlisle Place. This is the oldest still-active House in the Province and, although (since 2004) no longer a convent, it is the home of the hugely successful charity The Passage, providing care and shelter for the homeless and vulnerable.

This is not the only ‘good work’ that operates in collaboration with the Daughters of Charity and has become a household name – think also of the Depaul Trust and, indeed, the many S.V.P. groups present in our parishes, keeping alive the spirit of the Daughters’ 17th-century founders St Vincent and St Louise de Marillac. That is not to mention the numerous initiatives contributed by the Daughters to the diocese, ranging from St Vincent’s Orthopaedic Hospital in Pinner, at one time one of the leading centres in the country and now a nursing home, to the Trust and, indeed, the many S.V.P. groups present in our parishes, keeping alive the spirit of the Daughters’ 17th-century founders St Vincent and St Louise de Marillac. That is not to mention the numerous initiatives contributed by the Daughters to the diocese, ranging from St Vincent’s Orthopaedic Hospital in Pinner, at one time one of the leading centres in the country and now a nursing home, to the Trust and, indeed, the many S.V.P. groups present in our parishes, keeping alive the spirit of the Daughters’ 17th-century founders St Vincent and St Louise de Marillac. That is not to mention the numerous initiatives contributed by the Daughters to the diocese, ranging from St Vincent’s Orthopaedic Hospital in Pinner, at one time one of the leading centres in the country and now a nursing home, to the Trust and, indeed, the many S.V.P. groups present in our parishes, keeping alive the spirit of the Daughters’ 17th-century founders St Vincent and St Louise de Marillac. That is not to mention the numerous initiatives contributed by the Daughters to the diocese, ranging from St Vincent’s Orthopaedic Hospital in Pinner, at one time one of the leading centres in the country and now a nursing home, to

The handsome volume includes 64 pages of illustrations – ‘full-colour visual essays’ – and a useful Gazetteer detailing the many Houses opened by the Daughters of Charity over the years. Leaving God for God is a refreshing and illuminating take on the history of Catholic sisters and one which will hopefully inspire similar studies of other communities. Marking the 400th anniversary of the ‘birth of the Vincentian charism’, it reminds us those hard-working, heroic and pioneering women should have a central place in our Catholic history.

British cultural distinctiveness’ while remaining part of an international organisation? And are the most recent chapters in the story merely a case of a pre-Vatican II ‘golden age’ and post-conciliar ‘decline and diminishment’ or is there a greater degree of continuity than can sometimes be acknowledged?

The book Review: Leaving God for God by Susan O’Brien, reviewed by Fr Nicholas Schofield

Book Review: Leaving God for God by Susan O’Brien, reviewed by Fr Nicholas Schofield

Fr Nicholas Schofield
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The Companions of Oremus was established in 2016 to recognise those who give generously to support the production of Oremus. Companions' names are published in the magazine each month (see page 7) and, from time to time, Mass will be offered for their intentions. All members will be invited to at least one social event during the year.

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From the Chairman

November is seen by many as rather a nondescript month, but for us Catholics it is a very rich time during which it is a privilege to remember the dead. The Holy Souls Chapel in our Cathedral becomes alive with visitors at prayer and with an increase in votive candles as well as regular November Requiems. The huge demand for the November Dead List shows that the practice of remembering our departed loved ones in November is still a very active Catholic practice.

This year we will be remembering a number of people closely connected with the Cathedral; among them His Eminence Cardinal Murphy-O’Connor, Monsignor Augustine Hoey, Patrick Rogers and Father Norman Brown. Monsignor Hoey had been my Spiritual Director and guide for over 30 years and as he was nearly 102 we all knew that his death could not be far away but, as always when death comes, it came as a shock. His fatherly figure always dressed in his black habit and Roman hat was known to many and his

From the Chairman

Those who live in the growing cities of the world today, in the welter of traffic jams, noise and pollution, may find some significance in the fact that Christ died and rose again in the context of a city. The startling news ‘He is risen’, the foundation stone of Christian faith, was first passed from house to house, in the back streets and shopping centres of Jerusalem.

All Christian prayer is made in and through Christ, who is alive for evermore. When I settle down to pray in the city and try to be quiet and recollected, all I am aware of, at first, is the hum of the city all around me. Wave upon wave of traffic sounds from the streets and frequently from the air roll in upon me. There seems no way of stemming the tide, and the more I screw myself up to concentrate on pushing it back, the more it rolls on in. So it is best to let it all flow in and open up to the tumult. It is the noise being created by humanity who are needing to enter my prayer. It gives reality to the words ‘Our Father’ at the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer. The noise, once let in, finds its own level and is no longer a distraction. It has become part of my prayer. I am wanting to come face to face with God, holding hands with all my fellow men and women.

But there are other noises closer at hand than the background hum of traffic. I listen to them. It may be the sound of the record player or the television in the flat above, or people shouting in the street or talking on the stairs, or children playing outside. Like the traffic, it is all part of the noise of humanity and has to be gathered up into my prayer. It may be the ticking of a clock in my room. A clock, one of the earliest technological achievements, created to help the sound of humanity who are needing to enter my prayer. It gives reality to the words ‘Our Father’ at the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer. The noise, once let in, finds its own level and is no longer a distraction. It has become part of my prayer. I am wanting to come face to face with God, holding hands with all my fellow men and women.

serene and prayerful presence was an encouraging sight to all. I feel sure that this Cathedral and its life of service are in the prayers of these good men and of many of the faithful departed; and we all draw strength and help from them.

May God bless you all in this very special November month.

With every blessing and all good wishes.

Canon Christopher Tickwell

November 2017

Oremus

Wester

in the City

Prayer in the City

Oremus

November 2017
From North to South

Fr John Scott

A wedding booked over a year in advance at St George’s Cathedral, Southwark meant that this year’s Two Cathedrals Blessed Sacrament Procession went in reverse direction. Confusingly, walking from South London to north of the river means going from north to south, since the twists of the river disguise the fact that St George’s is geographically north of Westminster Cathedral.

The view, of course, is different when one walks in the opposite direction and the rebuilding of the pavement near St George’s meant that the Procession was walking on the opposite side of the road from the usual route. Does that make a difference? Well, having left St George’s almost the first building one passes is the Imperial War Museum. There is no desire there to glorify war; rather the opposite, but the great guns which sit in front of it made a particularly pointed contrast to the Blessed Sacrament.

It may be possible to have a procession in which everyone is singing or praying the same thing at the same time, but with a booklet which offered a variety of music, the Procession offered different groups of people the chance to choose their own devotion. Inevitably, crossing a number of roads means that some go forward whilst others must wait for the lights to change; then the front halts, the rear catches up and all goes forward again. Thanks go to the stewards for keeping everyone together and on the move.

As the image shows, London Buses kindly added to the Procession’s witness with the scriptural texts on the side of their buses. ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’ on one described the Procession nicely, and ‘Today you will be with me in Paradise’ on another was a reminder of Benediction to come in the Cathedral. Crossing the bridge, at least for the photographer, was a graphic illustration of the housing boom taking place, with many new towers of flats on the south bank forming the backdrop. Who, exactly, can afford to live in them?

On the approach to Lambeth Bridge the first drops of rain were detected, but nothing came of it; or, as one resolute North Londoner put it: ‘See, it’s stopped now we’re north of the river’. Back in familiar territory, and coming down Ambrosden Avenue there was a feeling of Palm Sunday, as the Procession came down to the Piazza and to Victoria Street before sweeping round to make the entry into the Cathedral. As someone noted, perhaps next year the route could include Cardinal Place as well as part of the witness to the Faith and to the Blessed Sacrament as the centre of the Two Cathedrals’ Catholic life.

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New in Cathedral Gift Shop

We are pleased to announce an exquisite addition to the range of gifts available in Westminster Cathedral Gift Shop. Cross pens are renowned worldwide for their design and quality and we now have for sale a luxury ball-point pen which comes with the Cathedral logo and in its own box. This will make an excellent gift for a loved one on that special occasion.

Retail Price: £35.00
In Conversation with Nick Keay

At the beginning of September, Cathedral Lay Clerk Nick Keay celebrated 50 years' association with the Cathedral Choir.

Oremus recently met him to talk about the Cathedral, the Choir and how he came to be involved, both as a Chorister and then later as a Lay Clerk.

My brother and I were at a Catholic Primary School, St John's in Horsham, and in those days all schools would have some sort of music specialist. She went up to my mother and said: 'My son is in the choir at Westminster Cathedral; I think your boys should go as well'. We had some sort of aptitude tests and simple Maths tests, which we did terribly in. We did so badly that they wrote to our school and said: 'What are you teaching these children?'

Then we had to sing for Colin [Mawby, the Master of the Musica]. I sang about two notes and he said: 'You're all right. My parents used to come to Mass on Sundays, we could see earth my parents managed I don't know. My mother got a...'

In Colin's time we Choristers didn't get the formal musical training they do now. My sight reading was that I knew when it went up and when it went down and I could make the sign of the Cross and sing the six books, told to make the sign of the Cross and sing the...
New Art at NUTS

Prominent artists, musicians, authors and visionaries have come together to create visual re-imaginations of Viktor Hartmann and Modest Mussorgsky’s iconic Pictures at an Exhibition in support of London’s homeless. The specially commissioned artworks – which include paintings, sculptures, photographs and sketches – will be available to buy via an online auction, with the funds going directly to support The Passage.

Thirteen people of different backgrounds and disciplines have donated their time and talent in support of the charity and its work, including three international classical musicians – pianist Stephen Hough, and baritones Sir Thomas Allen and Simon Keenlyside. They join photographers David Stewart (winner of the 2015 Taylor Wessing Portrait Prize), Arno (known for his portrait work in advertising and fashion) and Michael Kenna (whose photography features in the permanent collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Washington’s National Gallery of Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum).

Other artists involved in the project include Ken Shuttleworth (founder of MAKE Architect, and credited for the design of London landmarks such as The Gherkin, City Hall and Wembley Stadium), A. Richard Allen (winner of both the 2016 Sky Arts Landscape and 2017 V&A Illustration Awards), artist and cartoonist Annie Tempest (winner of a Pont Award for her portrayals of British character), painter Jill Leman (recently appointed the first female President of the Royal Watercolour Society), illustrator and political satirist Chris Riddell (recently appointed the 2016 Sky Arts Landscape and 2017 V&A Illustration Awards), artist and cartoonist Jill Leman (after Tuileries Gardens)

Chris Riddell

Complete list of new works:

- Chris Riddell: Gnomus and Baba Yaga
- Michael Kenna: Castle and Sky, Abruzzo (after Old Castle)
- Jill Leman: Anemone (after Tuileries Gardens)
- A. Richard Allen: Trading Places (after Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuëly)
- Annie Tempest: ‘A home in the sky’ (after ‘Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks’)
- David Stewart: Trading Places (after Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuëly)
- David Tovey: Gavin and Self Portrait (after Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuëly)
- Stephen Hough CBE: Limoges (after the Market Place at Limoges)
- Arno: Mind in the Mist: Catacombs of the I (after Catacombs)
- Sir Thomas Allen: The Great Gate at Kiev
- Ken Shuttleworth: The Great Gate at Kiev
- Nat Tate: The Great Gate at Kiev
- Simon Keenlyside: The Gnome

On Friday 6 October the Libyan General Prosecutor officially confirmed the finding of the bodies of the 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians who were beheaded in 2015 by jihadists linked to the Islamic State, in a coastal area in the city of Sirte. According to communication channels of the Egyptian public prosecutor’s office, the bodies were found in a coastal area on the outskirts of the city, with their hands tied behind their backs and dressed in the same orange-coloured suits they wore in the macabre video filmed by the executioners during their beheading. Even the heads were also found next to the bodies, and procedures are underway to identify the victims of the massacre through DNA analysis.

At the end of September Prosecutor al-Sadiq al-Sour had announced the discovery of the site where the remains of the Christian Copts had been buried. The identification of the burial site had been linked by the same Attorney to the arrest of a man accused of having taken part in the collective decapitation, whilst the person who filmed the massacre has also been identified. The news of the possible finding of the 21 Coptic bodies immediately spread in Egypt, generating great excitement especially in the Coptic communities of the region of Minya, the home of most of the victims. Family members now hope and pray that the mortal remains of the martyrs will soon be returned to Egypt and their Church.

Just a week after the killings, Orthodox Catholic Patriarch Tawadros II decided to register the 21 martyrs in the Synaxarium, the book of Martyrs of the Coptic Church, establishing that their memory is to be celebrated on February 15.
A Visit to Père Jacques Hamel’s Church

Paul Tobin

When we had a holiday home in the middle of France, we would take the overnight ferry crossing from Newhaven to Dieppe and usually pass through Rouen as the sun was about to rise. On the return journey we would get a better glimpse of the magnificent cathedral, so badly damaged in the Second War, and not fail to be impressed by the spire that dominates that city. So many times we passed Rouen, vowing to visit there one day; and this summer for a few days in August we were able to do so whilst on an organised tour that included visits to Fécamp, Bayeux (to see the tapestry) and finally Honfleur at the mouth of the Seine.

As we were close to the church where Père Jacques Hamel was so cruelly murdered in July of last year while celebrating Mass, we decided to make our own pilgrimage to the church at Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray late one afternoon. A taxi was ordered and although Ste Etienne is described as a suburb of Rouen, the route taken was on a number of fast roads before we turned off and found ourselves in the centre of this quiet and orderly small town where the church in the square was instantly recognisable from the pictures seen on TV news at the time of his death. Outside the church a monument for ‘Peace and Fraternity’ was recently unveiled at a special Mass on the first anniversary of Père Hamel’s death, celebrated by the Archbishop of Rouen, Mgr Dominique Lebrun. This is in the form of a metallic globe and contains the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

As we entered the church itself, we were immediately struck by an aura of great peace and an overwhelming feeling that one was most definitely in the house of God rather than a place where a brutal killing had taken place. Looking at the altar where Père Hamel would have celebrated Mass on many occasions gave us a feeling of a definite closeness with this devoted and much-loved priest who had worked for greater co-operation with people of other faiths. At the back of the church is a shrine to him, with a portrait of him ‘painted and offered by Moubine, a Muslim believer’. In the portrait Père Jacques’ head is surmounted by a halo. Pope Francis has already accelerated the cause for his beatification and ultimate canonisation; in September last year he had the photograph on which this painting is based, placed on the altar at a special Mass he celebrated in the Domus Sanctae Marthae for Père Hamel.

Visiting the church itself, we were immediately struck by an aura of great peace and an overwhelming feeling that one was most definitely in the house of God rather than a place where a brutal killing had taken place. Looking at the altar where Père Hamel would have celebrated Mass on many occasions gave us a feeling of a definite closeness with this devoted and much-loved priest who had worked for greater co-operation with people of other faiths. At the back of the church is a shrine to him, with a portrait of him ‘painted and offered by Moubine, a Muslim believer’. In the portrait Père Jacques’ head is surmounted by a halo. Pope Francis has already accelerated the cause for his beatification and ultimate canonisation; in September last year he had the photograph on which this painting is based, placed on the altar at a special Mass he celebrated in the Domus Sanctae Marthae for Père Hamel.

Ollie the Intern

For several years, Westminster Cathedral has employed interns to work as Personal Assistants to the Sub-Administrator for a year. This internship provides an opportunity for those possibly considering the priesthood or religious life to discern their vocation whilst gaining experience within a busy office environment. Our 2017/18 Intern is Oliver Delargy, who writes:

I grew up not too far away in Shepherd’s Bush, so I feel very much at home here in the Cathedral. I was born in 1995 in Hammersmith and spent my school years with the Oratorians at St Philip’s School, followed by the London Oratory School from 2006-2013. Whilst I was at LOS, I took great delight in serving Mass at the Brompton Oratory on Saturday evenings. My other great passion whilst I was at school was as an RAF cadet in the school’s Combined Cadet Force. I was fortunate enough to get many hours in the air during my years there. I come from a cultural Catholic background and so I would say that it was thanks to being drawn to parish life in my late teens, as well as from the witness of many friends that I made whilst at university, that has allowed my faith to grow. Following school, I enrolled in the BA Theology course at Heythrop College and thoroughly enjoyed my time there. I was able to put my faith into practice at university thanks to the initiatives that our diocese has for young adults, particularly through living as part of the community at our Newman House University Chaplaincy on Gower Street, as well as being a St Frat helper on our diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes for the past four years. I have also been given the opportunity to represent young Catholics at two International Interfaith Conferences in dialogue with young Jews in Berlin and Jerusalem. I have been deeply honoured by the warm welcome I have received here and I look forward to being part of the parish community as I discern my vocation over the next few months.

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Learn more: UKBonSecours@gmail.com
Event Location: Newman House
111 Gower Street
London WC1E 6AR
Registration required: http://lifeasasister.org/event-registration/
BonSecoursVocations.org
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As you reflect upon where God is calling you in life, join us for a day of prayer, camaraderie and thanksgiving for the gifts God has given you. Learn about a Sister’s Life. God may be calling you!

Learn about a Sister’s Life. God may be calling you!
Rowan Williams on Bl Oscar Romero

A true story. Two Welsh countrymen sat in a pub discussing the recent death of one of their neighbours: ‘How much did he leave?’ asked one of them. The other raised an eyebrow and replied: ‘Everything!’ Almost exactly 40 years ago, on 25 September 1977, Archbishop Oscar Romero in his weekly Mass homily provided an extended and more theological version of that comment.

He reflected on the biblical notion of property. Property, he said, in Jewish and Christian Scripture was something that was lent to the user. Never absolutely given. Always to be used, rented from God. And so, he says, the truth is that the rich pay to the poor the rent for the land whose use they are given for a time. In a just world, that is how we should conceive property.

We are given something through which we are set free to discharge our debt to the poor. Because if our God is with the poor, then when we serve the poor, we serve God. When we recognise our indebtedness to the poor, we pay back rent elsewhere in the world to God for the land we use. And in that perspective, he goes on to say, we are all of us beggars together. No one simply owns at another’s will. We are possessed, we are enslaved, by the myth that we can possess the world for ourselves alone. And our true liberation comes when we understand that opening our hands, sharing what we have, is how liberation manifests itself. Christ does not want slaves, says Romero. He wants us all, rich and poor, to love one another as sisters and brothers. He wants liberation to reach everywhere so that no slavery exists in the world, none at all. No person should be the slave of another, nor a slave of misery, nor a slave of anything. This is the content of revelation, this doctrine, this evangelisation.

It’s easy to see from that quotation why it is that Romero believed that our liberation immediately projected us into a deeper level of community. Because once that mythology of possessing and being possessed has disappeared, we are free for one another in a quite new way. And what happens then is community. A community in which we are creating freedom for one another, day after day, in which we, liberated from myth and slavery, from fiction and oppression and injustice, are set free to feed and nourish each other’s humanity to the full. The responsibility of every baptised person, so Archbishop Romero insists again and again, is a responsibility to create freedom. We are not only recipients of liberation, but agents. Not only those who let themselves be fed, by the grace of God and the grace of their neighbour, but those who have the power and authority to feed, to nourish, to set free. In life and in death, Bl Oscar Romero paid his debt to the poor.

In every word he spoke, in every encounter in which he was involved, he saw his responsibility as that of an agent of God’s liberation, challenging day-by-day and week-by-week, in his letters, his sermons, his public addresses, the death-dealing fiction which kept his entire society in slavery. Addressing the gross injustice and inequality of the land-owning system in his country; addressing the barbaric violence that supported that system, and eventually claimed his own life.

He would have been grieved, but perhaps not surprised, to know that that inequality and that barbaric violence are still a feature of so many countries in Central and South America to this very day. Our prayers must today be with those who continue his work, in costly witness, in speaking the truth. He himself describes elsewhere the Church itself as above all an agent of truth in an environment of myth and lies. But we should always remember the stress which he laid upon the idea that the poor were to take their own agency, their own responsibility. Rather than simply talking about a Church for the poor, Archbishop Romero was one of those who genuinely understood what it might be for the Church to be a Church of the poor. A Church where the Church itself is why, later in the same year, when Archbishop Romero preaches about slavery and freedom, he describes the freedom of those who have heard the gospel in terms precisely of a freedom from the slavery of seeking possession. We are possessed, we are enslaved, by the myth that we can possess the world for ourselves alone. And our true liberation comes when we understand that opening our hands, sharing what we have, is how liberation manifests itself. Christ does not want slaves, says Romero. He wants us all, rich and poor, to love one another as sisters and brothers. He wants liberation to reach everywhere so that no slavery exists in the world, none at all. No person should be the slave of another, nor a slave of misery, nor a slave of anything. This is the content of revelation, this doctrine, this evangelisation.

We are beggars together, and when we have recognised that, liberation begins to come alive. When liberation begins to become alive we become people who in Christ are enabled to set one another free. When we begin to set one another free, we move into the fullness of community. When we move into the fullness of community, we show the beauty of God’s act in Christ, and God’s continuing act in the Church. In giving thanks for the life and the martyrdom of Bl Oscar Romero, we ask ourselves how far we are still enslaved by the myth of possessing and being possessed. What is the level of our own willingness to be beggars together? The level of our own willingness not only to be set free, but to be agents of freedom?

We look with thanksgiving to one of Christ’s great servants, who stands with us in the everlasting communion of saints, who stands with us at the Eucharistic table of Jesus Christ, who calls us as his blood is shed, to be – with him – agents of the beauty of God’s people, renewing the face of the earth.

This sermon was preached at a Commemorative Evensong in the Abbey and is reproduced by kind permission of Bishop Rowan.
Exploring the Quarries: Carrara

Patrick Rodgers

When marble is mentioned, many people will think of the structures of ancient Rome. Others may remember the buildings and sculptures of the Renaissance, London’s Marble Arch or churchyard monuments. Most of these originated in the Carrara region of Italy, the world’s largest producer of white marble. But the area produces over 50 varieties of marble, some coloured, and many of them can be found in Westminster Cathedral.

Carrara lies between the mountains and the sea in north-west Tuscany. The main quarries are in the Colonnata, Fantiscritti and Ravacce valleys, but the marble mountains of the Apuan Alps stretch 20 miles from Carrara in the west to the villages of Seravezza and Stazzema to the east. The marble was formed some 200 million years ago from calcium carbonate deposits which resolidified over millions of years. Great earth movements millions of years ago resulted in fragmentation of the marble, allowing water-borne minerals to penetrate and stain it a variety of colours before it gradually resolidified. Thus the breccias were formed. Columns of Breccia di Stazzema from the organ loft above the narthex and are paired with green Verde Antico and Cipollino columns at the transepts. Breccia Violetta, of a more pronounced violet hue and from Seravezza, can be seen on the walls of the entrance lobbies and set into the baldacchino. Finally, as it to demonstrate the variety of marbles from the Seravezza and Stazzema region, a column of Fior di Pesco (peach blossom) marble stands against the wall in St Joseph’s Chapel, while one of blue Bardiglio (or Bardiglietto) stands opposite in St Paul’s Chapel.

The ancient Etruscan-Roman port of Luni or Luna, about five miles west of modern Carrara, was founded in 177 BC and was the centre of the local marble industry in Roman times. Luni marble was in large-scale use in Rome by 36 BC and about ten years earlier, Mamurra, who lived on the Coelian Hill, was the first to have solid marble columns in his whole house, these being of Caryatides (Greek Cipollino) or Luni marble. Mamurra was Julius Caesar’s prefect of works and probably organised the exploitation of the quarries for his building programme. Subsequently Emperor Augustus used the marble extensively for temples and other buildings in Rome. For the next 150 years Luni supplied most of Rome’s white marble, examples of its use being Trajan’s Column and that of Marcus Aurelius, both well over 100 feet high. From the late 2nd century AD onwards, however, more costly and fashionable marbles from overseas, notably Proconnesian and Pentelic, came to predominate.

In England the white marbles of Carrara have traditionally been divided into Sicilian, Vein and Statuary. It is still not clear why the name ‘Sicilian’ was used in England and nowhere else. Napoleonic Europe was under British naval blockade in the early 19th century. Indeed Napoleon made his sister, Elisa, Princess of Lucca, only 30 miles from Carrara itself. But Sicily was outside Napoleon’s control and was being used by the British. To call marble from Carrara ‘Sicilian’ is just the sort of cocking a snook at the authorities and private joke that marble merchants (then and now) would have enjoyed. Anyway, that’s my theory. Sicilian, or White Carrara (Bianco Carrara) is extremely hardwearing and is the only pure white marble which can be used externally, so it was used for the Queen Victoria Memorial opposite Buckingham Palace, the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, Marble Arch and numerous municipal and graveyard monuments and gravestones. The other types are softer and deteriorate in the open air. In Vein marble (Bianco Venato) the markings are more accentuated. It is generally used for the decoration of the interior of buildings and includes varieties like Arabesca made up of white polygonal shapes divided by grey veining. Statuary (Statuario) is softer still and easy to carve but liable to staining and decay as a result of environmental pollution. Second Statuary or Vein Statuary also contains some veining but is hard enough to be used for paving.

Fine-grained Statuary marble (suitable for sculpture) is found in stratified beds all along this mountain range. In Westminster Cathedral it was used for the column capitals, each one of which took two stonemasons from Farmer & Brindley three months to carve, using chisels and hand-drills in situ. More recently a variety of Carrara Statuary marble called Acqua-bianca (white water) was used for Cardinal Hume’s tomb in the Chapel of St Gregory and St Augustine.

Most marble from the Carrara region is not, in fact, pure white. Veining and shading result from the presence of mineral deposits during formation. Lightly veined Second Statuary was used for the marble floor of the Cathedral while the more heavily veined Arabesco is on the walls and floor of St George’s Chapel. Below the stratified beds of white and white vein marble in the mountains, lie beds of a generally blue-grey colour. The darker grey were known in England as ‘Dovestones’ and examples can be seen at the corners of the Chapel of the Holy Souls. Lighter blue-grey marble, traversed by darker veins, is Bardiglio Fiordito. It paves the northex floor and is on the walls and floor in the Holy Souls Chapel.

Great earth movements millions of years ago also resulted in fragmentation of the marble, allowing water-borne minerals to penetrate and stain it a variety of colours before it gradually resolidified. Thus the breccias were formed. Columns of Breccia di Stazzema from the organ loft above the narthex and are paired with green Verde Antico and Cipollino columns at the transepts. Breccia Violetta, of a more pronounced violet hue and from Seravezza, can be seen on the walls of the entrance lobbies and set into the baldacchino. Finally, as it to demonstrate the variety of marbles from the Seravezza and Stazzema region, a column of Fior di Pesco (peach blossom) marble stands against the wall in St Joseph’s Chapel, while one of blue Bardiglio (or Bardiglietto) stands opposite in St Paul’s Chapel.

The ancient Etruscan-Roman port of Luni or Luna, about five miles west of modern Carrara, was founded in 177 BC and was the centre of the local marble industry in Roman times. Luni marble was in large-scale use in Rome by 36 BC and about ten years earlier, Mamurra, who lived on the Coelian Hill, was the first to have solid marble columns in his whole house, these being of Caryatides (Greek Cipollino) or Luni marble. Mamurra was Julius Caesar’s prefect of works and probably organised the exploitation of the quarries for his building programme. Subsequently Emperor Augustus used the marble extensively for temples and other buildings in Rome. For the next 150 years Luni supplied most of Rome’s white marble, examples of its use being Trajan’s Column and that of Marcus Aurelius, both well over 100 feet high. From the late 2nd century AD onwards, however, more costly and fashionable marbles from overseas, notably Proconnesian and Pentelic, came to predominate.

For a thousand years the Carrara quarries were largely deserted until again being extensively used in the Renaissance. Duke Cosimo de’ Medici in Florence was anxious to exploit the mineral wealth of Tuscany and Michelangelo claimed to have introduced the art of quarrying to Carrara. He became a well-known figure in his goatskin boots as he tramped the hills and valleys of the region and tales are still told of his exploits. There he found the marble for the sculptures which made his reputation - the Pietà now in St Peter’s, Rome, which he created when only 24 years of age and which was the only work he ever signed; the David which symbolised the Florentine Republic, and the figure of Moses intended for the tomb of Pope Julius II, in the bead of which (so it is said) are carved portraits of both the Pope and Michelangelo himself. But to his dismay the new Pope, Leo X, sent him to the unexploited Monte Altissimo region above Seravezza for marble for the façade of the Medici church of San Lorenzo in Florence. In the event San Lorenzo remained unclad brickwork, but marble from the region was used for both the Duomo in Florence and St Peter’s Basilica in Rome. I explored some of the Monte Altissimo marble quarries in September 2000, but the autumn mist was eddying and swirling all around me, frustrating efforts to find a landmark. It was only when it cleared that I was able to see where I was and to examine and take photographs of the quarries.

There are 200-300 active marble quarries in the Carrara region, less than half the number of a century ago. But mechanisation has resulted in 700,000 tons of marble being produced annually, mostly for the Middle and Far East, and great blocks can be seen at the quarries inscribed with their destination. Until the end of the 19th century the marble was quarried with pickaxes, chisels and wedges and allowed to slide down the mountains on wooden sledges before being carried away by bullock wagon – practices unchanged since Roman times. Only in 1898 was the endless wire saw, commonly fed with quartz sand and water and used in conjunction with the penetrating pulley, widely introduced into the quarries. Meanwhile in the town of Carrara, the main processing centre, marble blocks are now sawn into slabs for walls and floors using diamond bladed saws, and full-size marble statues are created from the plaster models of sculptors.
Down the Spiral Stairs, Something’s Cooking

Oremus called in on the Cathedral Kitchen at lunchtime recently and found it full of happy customers. The redecoration and new furniture work well, so it seemed time to whet your appetite with a reminder of the good things to be had at very reasonable prices. The new Opening Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, from 10am to 4pm.

Food for Young and Old

Two’s Company, Three’s a Music Department

Jonny Allsopp, Cathedral Organ Scholar

I grew up not too far from here, in leafy Surrey. When I was younger, I was a particularly keen cricketer, and sometimes wondered whether I wanted to pursue it further than the school cricket field. Alas, it was not to be, and so for my first couple of years at secondary school, I wasn’t entirely sure what I was going to do in the future. However, having been exposed regularly to the incredible improvisations of our school organist (an improvisation expert), one day something clicked. And I’ve never looked back!

After being organ scholar at my local parish church while I finished off my school years, I moved to Hereford for my gap year to be organ scholar at the cathedral, which was the ideal year to experience cathedral music for the first time. After a very memorable and enjoyable time in Hereford, I moved to the far north to study music at Durham. While there, I was organ scholar at Durham Cathedral, and the experience of making music every day in that unbuildable building was unforgettable, with a fantastic choir and colleagues. I also ran one of the college chapel choirs for two years, taking them on tour earlier this year to Canada and the USA for 10 days, and set up my own consort group, the highlight of which was performing Bach’s St John Passion. Three years at Durham flew by very quickly, and soon it was time to start applying for another job, and in my mind, there was only one place I wanted next to do an organ scholarship. I was rather ecstatic when Martin Baker phoned me up to offer me the post here, and I’ve been counting down the days ever since...

I’m only a month into working here, but I’ve already absorbed a huge amount of what the Cathedral choir does and the unique way it does it. The Cathedral community has been incredibly welcoming since I arrived, and I’m immensely looking forward to the rest of the year ahead.

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Our Lady of Walsingham goes International

The International Mass was celebrated on 24 September, otherwise the feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, whose image was solemnly carried in during the Entrance Procession amid all the banners of the various Chaplaincies. Cardinal Vincent welcomed a packed congregation, representative of so many nationalities whose identity is shared by their Catholic faith. At the Offertory the girls of the Vietnamese community enhanced the Presentation of the Gifts for Mass with their dance.

Choir Concert

The residents of Clergy House are used to Musical Mondays, when we hear the Bach Choir rehearsing in Cathedral Hall in the evening. The Choir is our longest-standing hirer of the Hall and the connection with the Cathedral is deepened through its present director, David Hill, a former Master of the Music here. On Thursday 28 September the Choir presented a concert of English music, including works by Howells and MacMillan, alongside Rachmaninov’s Vespers.

The Westminster Inquisition

Willing victims, well supplied with bottles of wine and fortified by fish and chips, offered themselves up for interrogation at the October Quiz Night. Canon Christopher presided as Grand Inquisitor, aided and abetted by his fiendish question-setter, Mathew D’Souza.

Off Probation – New Choristers

Sunday 8 October saw the Induction of New Choristers at Solemn Vespers. Parents, families and friends were present to watch the five new boys being admitted by Canon Christopher. For the psalms they were sitting down quietly on the front row of the stalls, but once admitted they went straight up to the Apse, and to work, as the Magnificat was sung. We wish them every fulfilment as they take their particular place in sustaining the worship of God here at the Cathedral.

Silver Sunday

It started, we are told, with a tea dance and has become a national campaign to tackle loneliness among older people. The day is observed on the first Sunday in October and the Filipino Club has taken up the challenge of organising the tea and the dancing on our behalf. As can be seen from the images, a good crowd packed Cathedral Hall, whilst some stylish moves were seen on the floor.

New Canons for the Chapter

At the Cathedral Chapter’s October meeting two new Canons were admitted to its brotherhood, completing the full number of the body. Canon Brockie, as Provost, presided at Mass and is seen here (centre) with Canon John O’Leary, parish priest of St Mellitus, Tollington Park (front left) and Canon Alexander Sherbrooke, parish priest of St Patrick, Soho Square (front right) and the other members of the Chapter.
**The Month of November**

### Holy Father’s Prayer Intention:

Christians in Asia - That Christians in Asia, bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed, may promote dialogue, peace, and mutual understanding, especially with those of other religions.

**Wednesday 1 November ALL SAINTS**

5pm Solemn Second Vesper

3.30pm Solemn Mass (Men’s voices)

Byrd – Mass for four voices

Byrd – Iustorum animae

Byrd – Beati mundi conditio

G. J. S. Bach – Fugue in E flat (BWV 552)

**Thursday 2 November**

THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED (ALL SOULS’ DAY)

5pm Vespers in the Holy Souls Chapel

5.30pm Solemn Requiem Mass

**Friday 3 November (Fraternity Abstinence)**

St Martin de Porres, Religious

Ps 2 Week 2

8pm Charismatic Prayer Group 45th Anniversary Mass in Cathedral Hall

**Saturday 4 November**

St Charles Borromeo, Bishop

2.30pm LMS Pontifical High Mass of Requiem (Bishop Jabaale OSB)

**Sunday 5 November**

31st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Ps Week 3

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Knights of St Columba attend (Bishop Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

10.30am Masses: 8.00am; 9.00am; 10.30am; 11.00am; 11.30am; 12.00noon; 12.30pm; 1.00pm; and 5.30pm. Solemn Vespers and Benedictus

Saturday 4 November (Ps Week 1)

Monday 15 November

Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Victoria – Missa pro defunctis a 6

Brahms – Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen

Elgar – Ave verum corpus

Organ: J. S. Bach – Fantasia & Fugue in C minor

**Wednesday 8 November**

4.45pm Joint Concert with Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir – Mozart Requiem

**Thursday 9 November**

THE DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA

5.30pm St Barnabas Society attends Mass

**Friday 10 November (Fraternity Abstinence)**

St Leo the Great, Pope and Doctor

10.30pm Requiem Mass for Deceased Clergy (Cardinal Nichols)

**Saturday 11 November**

St Martin of Tours, Bishop

4pm Extraordinary Form Requiem Mass (Lady Chapel)

**Sunday 12 November (Ps Week 4)**

32nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(PSY Week 1)

Second Collection for Sick and Retired Clergy (Cardinal Nichols)

**Tuesday 14 November**

10.30am Solemn Requiem Mass for the Fallen (Full Choir)

Victoria – Missa pro defunctis a 6

Brahms – Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen

Elgar – Ave verum corpus

Organ: J. S. Bach – Fantasia & Fugue in C minor

**Wednesday 15 November**

10.30am Solemn Mass at Westminster Cathedral (St Cecilia’s Day Joint Service with School Schola)

**Thursday 16 November**

St Andrew Duns Scotus, Priest and Doctor

6.30pm Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

**Friday 17 November (Fraternity Abstinence)**

St Elizabeth of Hungary, Religious

St Hugh of Lincoln, Bishop

**Saturday 18 November**

Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday

The (The Dedication of the Basilicas of St Peter and Paul, Apostles)

**Sunday 19 November**

33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Byrd – Mass for five voices

A. Gabrieli – De profundis

A. Gabrieli – O sacrum convivium

Organ: Dupré – Esequiae in B flat minor (Trois Esquisses)

12pm Catechists attend Mass (Bishop Hudson)

3.30pm Solemn Vespers and Benedictus (Full Choir)

Bvean – Magnificat quarti toni

Edgar – Johanna haet in F

Organ: Franck – Choral no. 3 in A minor

4.45pm Organ Recital: Peter Stevens (Westminster Cathedral)

**Monday 20 November**

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Victoria – Missa pro defunctis a 6

Brahms – Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen

Elgar – Ave verum corpus

Organ: J. S. Bach – Fantasia & Fugue in C minor

**Tuesday 21 November**

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Wednesday 22 November

St Cecilia, Virgin and Martyr

11am St Cecilia’s Day Joint Service with Westminster Abbey and St Paul’s Cathedral

10.30am Mass. On Public and Bank Holidays the Masses: 8.00am; 9.00am; 10.30am; 11.00am; 11.30am; and 12.00noon.

Wednesday 22 November (Solemn Latin, sung by the Choir); and 12.30pm.

Thursday 23 November

St Hugh of Lincoln, Bishop

Sunday 26 November

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, King of the Universe

Second Collection for Catholic Youth Service

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

5.30pm St Teresa of Avila, Monastery

4.45pm Organ Recital: Jonathan Allsopp (Westminster Cathedral)

Monday 27 November

Ps Week 2

Feria

**Sunday 26 November**

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, King of the Universe

Second Collection for Catholic Youth Service

10.30am Solemn Mass (Full Choir)

Victoria – Messe solennelle in C Sharp minor

Philippe – Eec victo Leo

Philippe – Ave Jesus Christus

Organ: Tournemire – Fantaisie sur le Te Deum et Guirlandes Alleluia

St Hugh of Lincoln, Bishop

**Thursday 23 November**

4.45pm Organ Recital: Jonathan Allsopp (Westminster Cathedral)

Monday 27 November

Ps Week 2

Feria

Key to the Diary: Saints’ days and holy days written in BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS denote Sundays and Solemnities. CAPITAL LETTERS denote Feasts, and those not in capitals denote Memorials, whether optional or otherwise. Memorials in brackets are not celebrated liturgically.

### From the Registers

**Baptisms**

Zachariah Evans

Ambrose Merry

Francis Merry

Gabriel Ayree

Luca Pisano

Juliette Simoes

Jerome Collins

Conrad Collins

Stephen Greenwood

**Confirmation**

Vincent Akinwemi

Njords Belardo

Davidie Cioffi

Cecilio Gilbos De Abreu

Stephen Greenwood

Mariangela Giombini

Paola Ledda

Olivia Penney

Joseline Quintero Sanella

**Diary and From the Registers/ Notices**

### What Happens and When

**Public Services:** The Cathedral opens shortly before the first Mass of the day; doves close at 7.00pm, Monday to Saturday, with occasional exceptions. On Sunday mornings the Cathedral closes after the 7.00am. On Public and Bank Holidays the Cathedral closes at 5.30pm in the afternoon.

**Monday to Friday:** Masses: 7.00am; 8.00am; 10.30am (Latin, said); 12.00pm; 1.05pm and 5.30pm. Solemn, sung by the Choir. Morning Prayer (Full Choir): 7.00am. Evening Prayer (Latin Vespers) by the Lay Clerks in the Lady Chapel: 5.00pm (*except Tuesday when it is sung in English.*). Rosary is prayed after the 1.05pm Mass.

**Saturday:** Masses: 8.00am; 10.00am; 11.00am; 12.00noon; and 5.30pm. Solemn, sung by the Choir; and 12.30pm. Morning Prayer (Lady Chapel): 10.00am. First Evening Prayer of Sunday Lady Chapel: 5.30pm. First Mass of Sunday: 6.00pm.

Sunday: Masses: 8.00am; 9.00am; 10.30am; 12.00noon; and 5.30pm. Solemn, sung by the Choir; 12 noon; 5.30pm; and 7.00pm. Morning Prayer (Lady Chapel) 10.00am. Solemn Vespers and Benedictus: 3.00pm. Organ Recital when scheduled: 4.45pm.

**Holy Days of Obligation:** As Monday-Friday, Vigil Mass being of the previous day at 5.30pm.

**Public Holidays:** Masses: 10.00am; 12.00noon; 5.30pm.

**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:**

This takes place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel every Monday to Friday following the 1.10pm Mass, until 4.45pm.

**Continuation of the Holy Hour:**

Saturday: 10.30am-6.30pm. Sunday: 11.00am-1.00pm; and 4.30-7.00pm. Monday-Friday: 11.00am-6.00pm. Public Holidays: 1.00noon-5.00pm.

**Sacred Heart Church,** Honeypot Road SW1P 2ES: 11am Mass, 11.00am-12noon. Monday-Sunday. 12.30-13.10pm

**Enquiries about arranging a funeral at the Cathedral:** For enquiries about arranging a funeral at the Cathedral, a High Court Judge, Honorary Road should be made to a priest at Cathedral Clergy House in the first instance.

### Throughout the Year

**Mondays:** 11.00am: Prayer Group in the Hinley Room. 6.30pm: Guild of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral.

**Tuesdays:** Wishingham Prayer Group in St George’s Chapel. 2.10pm on first Tuesday of the month; 6.30pm: The Guild of St Anthony in the Cathedral.

**Wednesdays:** 12.00noon 1st Wednesday every day in the Hinley Room.

**Thursdays:** 1.15pm: Rude Pip Prayer Group at Sacred Heart. 6.30pm: The Legion of Mary in Clergy House.

**Fridays:** 5.00pm: Charismatic Prayer Group in the Cathedral Hall – please check in advance for confirmation.

**Saturdays:** 10.00am: Christening Prayer Group in the Hinley Room. 2.00pm: Justice and Peace Group in the Chapel on the last of the month.
Family Connections

Time and Chance (Eccles 9:11-12)

Linda Davidson

Returning from a long overdue and first trip to Southern Ireland, to meet some newly-found family members, I pondered on the ever-revealing truth, that not only is Westminster Cathedral a holy and prayerful place of worship, it is also a place of contrasts and wonderment, some of which can be life-changing! As a Sunday volunteer who is privileged to meet many people, from all corners of the globe, none could be more memorable or unforgettable, as an encounter last year proved to be. I experienced what was to become one of the most serendipitous moments in my life.

In between the Sunday morning Masses, I had dashed downstairs to the Cathedral Kitchen for a quick cup of coffee, and just happened to sit close to a couple on a nearby table, who were chatting animatedly. At one stage, the woman looked over in my direction and we smiled at each other. Nothing unusual in that; however, for some strange reason, as they both got up to leave, I somehow felt compelled to speak to her. The man had gone on ahead and she very kindly stopped and we chatted about the Cathedral. She politely asked how I came to be volunteering there. During this very brief conversation, I mentioned that my duties had been haphazard of late, due to the fact that my mother had been very unwell. She immediately wrote down her telephone number and told me to call her, at any time I felt the need to. The kindness of strangers, I thought, crossed my mind.

The telephone number sat in a drawer at home for three months, before I came across it again. This time, I took it with me on another maternal visit. One quiet evening, I decided to call the number and I recognised (what I was to realise as) Roisin’s voice and introduced myself. During the course of the conversation she asked if I had any Irish connections. I said: ‘Yes, my father was Irish’. She asked me details about him, as she too, had a similar background. ‘Did he have any brothers?’ she asked. ‘Yes’, I replied. ‘Was one called Thomas?’ she counter-queried. ‘Yes’, I repeated, as the obvious link very slowly became apparent to us both. ‘Why, you and I are first cousins!’ she excitedly announced. The rest, as they say, is history.

Even more strangely, with the Cathedral Kitchen now being closed on Sundays, divine intervention had put Roisin and I together at a crucial time in our lives: a true blessing of time and chance.

Catholic Women of the Year

The 2017 Awards have been announced, and of the four names, two have connections with the Cathedral:

Kathy Kelly who for over 25 years ran the Padre Pio Bookshop near London’s Victoria Station. She launched a prayer group meeting daily at 3pm for Divine Mercy devotions and the Rosary, and through friendship and kindness helped many who were lonely or experiencing difficulties. Her welcome and openness meant that people who had strayed from the Church or were confused in their faith found a new direction. Prayer groups now continue both at Sacred Heart Church and at Holy Apostles, Pimlico as a legacy of Kathy’s devotion.

Antonia Molfat, whose campaigning to promote devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham helped to result in the removal of the Cathedral’s image into the St George’s Chapel. Antonia now works for the National Shrine at Walsingham and travels to different parishes and groups to teach the message of reviving the faith through devotion to Our Lady under this ancient title. Her dedication and commitment have helped to ensure that a new wave of enthusiasm is gathering pace among Catholics, with a message of hope for the New Evangelisation.

The Friends of Westminster Cathedral

Tales from the Riverbank

Christina White

We are standing in a Georgian bedroom looking through a telescope at the red-sailed barges on the River Thames. Imagine green fields as far as the eye can see, save for the gleaming white stucco of Marble Hill House; beyond are the fish ponds and there, in the distance, the fishermen walking home with their long, wicker eel traps. This is JMW Turner’s House in Twickenham, recently restored – so much so that you can still smell the heritage paint. The white of the kitchen staircase is pristine and the pretty beige flower print wallpaper is unsullied by little fingerprints. But the telescope is all make-believe, as the telescope is all make-believe, the telescope is all make-believe.

The trip to Sandycombe Lodge was part of a day spent by the river. We visited Marble Hill House in the morning – our tour took us through the minefield of court and parliamentary politics of the early 18th century, and we were left with an overwhelming sympathy for Henrietta Howard, who built the house. The majority of the group stayed to linger over coffee and cake after lunch, but this stretch of riverbank, blanketed now in the gold and russet of autumn is ‘really, as it was’, adding an extra poignancy to the beautiful Regency house and the simpler but equally lovely lodge now hidden behind the hurrying estate of the 19th and 20th centuries. Do visit.

Coming up in November we have our black tie dinner at the In and Out Club with guest speaker, the Hon. Jacob Rees-Mogg MP. This is not to be missed. Our Lay Clerks will also be putting in an appearance with a musical interlude. Giles Tremlett is also returning in November for his delayed talk on Isabella of Castille. If you did book and pay in June please contact the office for your replacement ticket. And don’t forget the Christmas Fair on 10 December. Raffle tickets and the Friends’ Christmas Puddings are now available through Clergy House reception.

Contact us
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• Call: 020 7778 9059
• Email: friends@westminstercathedral.org.uk

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Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 8 November: The Mozart Requiem. Pre-concert talk by Professor Tim Jones of the Royal Academy of Music. The talk is in Clergy House at 6.15pm. Refreshments will be served. Guests will be escorted through to the Cathedral for the concert at 7.30pm. Tickets £10 (please note that you must purchase a ticket for the concert separately, via the Ticketmaster website). Friday 10 November: An introduction to Tate Modern in London. Afternoon arts tour with Paul Pickering, with tea to follow. Meet just inside the entrance to the Turbine Hall at 1.45pm for the tour to start at 2pm. Tickets £18.

Tuesday 14 November: Friends’ 40th Black-Tie Dinner with special guest speaker, the Hon. Jacob Rees-Mogg MP. The In and Out Club, St James’s Square, London SW1Y 4JU: Drinks reception at 7pm Dinner at 8pm. Carriages at 10.45pm. Tickets £145.

Friday 24 November: Waddesdon Manor Christmas Fair. Coach trip to the Christmas Fair at Waddesdon Manor, formerly the country residence of the Rothschild family. The coach will leave from Clergy House at 8.30am. On arrival at Waddesdon we will have tea and coffee on arrival and then our entrance to the House is booked from 11am. After the house visit there is free time to sample the many fooddrink and Christmas stalls which the fair has on offer. Our coach will depart for London at 3.30pm. Tickets £38.

Tuesday 28 November: Giles Tremlett on Isabella of Castille; Clergy House Library 6.45pm. The talk will commence at 7pm. Tickets £10.
In retrospect: from the Cathedral Chronicle

In this issue the articles [by Dr Terry, the Master of the Music] on ‘Polyphonic Music’ come to a conclusion. One thing Dr Terry seems to have omitted, and that is: Why has it been the policy of the Cathedral to specialise in this Polyphonic Music? The question is pertinent and the answer simple. (1) it is the Church’s own music, produced from within, by musicians trained in the Cathedral and the cloister; and it is not the mere incidental contribution of secular musicians to the services of the Church, in the intervals of their other pursuits. (2) It is founded on the official music of the Church – the traditional Plainsong; and, as the late Holy Father said, ‘The more closely a Church composition approaches, in its inspiration, the Plainsong form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the Temple’.

Having defined what Polyphonic Music is, perhaps we may mention what it is not. It is not sensuous; it is not ear-tickling; it is not dramatic; it has no secular associations. Its smooth placid flow; its atmosphere of aloofness and detachment from mundane things; its serene and mystical character, render it, in the opinion of those best able to judge, most admirably fitted for the solemnities of public worship.

Another factor which cannot be lost sight of is the absence of solos; and therefore the absence of any temptation to personal display on the part of the singers. It is an act of corporate praise in which the personality of the individual singer is never obtruded to the distraction of the worshipper at his prayers.

from Editorial Notes in the November 1917 Cathedral Chronicle

One has to understand why there is such a strong liturgy in the Cathedral. The main reason is the daily worship of God, and the offering to God of the highest artistic forms which man can devise. There are many other reasons – music teaches the people about the beauty of God, it aids their prayer, it illustrates the long history of the Church, and it teaches the links between Christianity and the Jewish religion. How many of us realise that the tone used for the Lamentations is based on a chant heard daily in the Cathedral? There have been sung and heard by Our Lord? ‘And when they (Our Lord and his disciples) had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives’ (Matthew 26:30). How many of us realise that the chant heard daily in the Cathedral is similar to the chant that has been prayed, sung and listened to by many of the great Christian saints.

When the boys of the Cathedral choir visited Switzerland and sang at High Mass in the Abbey of Einsiedeln, it was a deeply moving experience to reflect that Mass had been sung there to the traditional chant of the Church for over a thousand years. We felt a deep reverence for the music which linked us with all those long-dead choirs of monks and began to realise the tremendous continuity of Catholic worship, and the vast span of Catholic history.

Colin Mawby, Master of the Music, writes in support of the Church Music Trust in the November 1967 Cathedral Chronicle

In anticipation of the Feast of St Thomas of Canterbury a pilgrimage was made to his Cathedral town on Thursday, the 5th of July, 1917, under the auspices of the Guild of Ramsom and their Master, Fr Philip Fletcher. The Master, with his usual foresight, had arranged the route, looked out the trains and duly advertised them in the Catholic press, so what excuse was there not to be there? Surely only that of super-acquisitiveness - that it was all too comfortable. ‘What,’ said a Protestant friend, ‘going the pilgrimage by rail! Why, I did it on foot, guided only by the roadside yews planted by our pilgrim ancestors. You, I should have expected, would have done it barefoot, or at least with stones in your shoes’. However, we consoled ourselves with the convenient reflection that perhaps after all ease and comfort might lend themselves best to contemplation, and so to the better honour of the blissful Martyr who, after all, had not always worn a hair shirt.

from A Canterbury Pilgrimage in the November 1917 Cathedral Chronicle

As the late Holy Father said, 'The more closely a Church composition approaches, in its inspiration, the Plainsong form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the Temple'.

To submit a poem whether by yourself or another for publication, please contact the Editor – details on page 3.
I knew I would be a priest at the age of seven. I grew up with good Catholic teachers in Exeter where our very kind French-Canadian Sisters imparted the Faith to any small child who was paying attention. And I do remember paying attention. Particularly to Sister Sebastian and Sister Jeanne – God rest their souls. No subject was of greater interest to me than the life, death, resurrection and triumph of Jesus Christ. Clearly nothing – nothing at all in human affairs – could possibly be more important than the redemption of the world, which Jesus by his life and love for humanity, had accomplished. So in this, I was very, very blessed. Many kids just wanted these lessons to end so they could get on with making raffia table-mats or playing rounders.

Although shirk it, I did, as you are about to discover. When school years ended, I presented myself to the Bishop of Plymouth, who sent me to Oscott College, the seminary of Birmingham diocese. It was to be a six-year course; and I knew that knowledge to your dealings with people in the parish!’

‘It’s so good that you came to the priesthood later, with plenty of life experience, you bring that knowledge to your dealings with people in the parish!’

Looking back, I have the greatest regard nowadays for those men who enter the seminary when they are quite young and embrace the life in prospect with generosity and single-minded commitment. I know two chaps at the moment who have completed their first couple of years of study, prayer and discernment. They are the ones who are giving up a great deal (I never did).

One of them, shortly before entering the seminary, gained a degree in engineering and had to walk away from a terrific job in the railways where he already had an established career. Often there is very little or no encouragement from their friends and family, yet they have set out on a course that God has prepared for them with absolute trust. We need such young people to train for the priesthood.

The Church always needs candidates for the priesthood both young and not-so-young. There must be men all over the world – all over this country – who are hearing the call in the depths of their being, but have yet to understand or translate their vocation into action. We don’t know who they are, but God has chosen them from all eternity and he expects us to pray for them. Our society today seems to be in a state of confusion, like sheep without a shepherd; and so our need for the Lord Jesus Christ, Our Holy Redeemer, has never been greater.

I give thanks today for the graces I have received, particularly those I never realised I needed. I thank the Lord Jesus Christ for calling me forward, forgiving my sins and giving me some work to do in his vineyard for the past 25 years. I give thanks to the Holy Spirit for enabling me to respond – eventually – to the word he spoke to me when I was seven. And I give thanks to our Father in heaven for the Faith he instilled in me from my earliest days. Because faith, like a vocation, is a gift of God. Although those in receipt of such a gift have done nothing to deserve it, God is intensely interested to see what it is we are going to do with it.

Thank you for your prayers and goodwill. Thank you all for being at this Mass.

This homily was given at a Mass of Thanksgiving on 26 September, celebrated at Our Lady Help of Christians, Rickmansworth to mark the Silver Jubilee of Fr Tim’s Ordination.
The High Altar, in my View

Natalia Zochova, Year 5

As a pupil of St Vincent de Paul School, I see the Cathedral almost every day. I see it as I go to school, as I go to the shops and as I just pass by. During break, I see the great building soar up right next to me. The Cathedral is the most holy place in the world to me, because it is God’s House! The most important place in the whole Cathedral is the High Altar, as it is where the Consecration takes place, when the bread and wine becomes the body and blood of Jesus in a special way.

It is also a very historic place because a lot of Cardinals are buried there. I also think it is a beautiful place because of all the light reflecting as it touches the altar. As soon as you come in, your eyes are drawn towards the baldacchino, a sort of canopy for the altar. The High Altar has a crucifix and candles on it. On the cross there is a figure of Jesus made from bronze gilt. There are also red, white and turquoise enamel diamonds. The edges of the Crucifix have beads which bring a shimmering light into the Cathedral, there are eighty-five of them.

The Cathedral was designed by an architect called John Francis Bentley and was built in 1895. It took eight years to build, but at the time it was just a bare brick shell. John got his ideas from Byzantine churches which surprised people and still surprises people today. The High Altar is a single block weighing 12 tonnes, of Cornish granite. The Baldacchino is made of white marble, inlayed with coloured marble, lapis lazuli, pearl and gold. It is the largest structure of its kind.

Recently, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor was buried just outside St Patrick’s chapel. His Funeral Mass took place in the Cathedral. The Altar was the centre of the Mass and the focus of the worship. I think the Cardinal would have been very pleased, but especially because it took place in the church where he said Mass so many times!

My personal thought about the Cathedral that it is an amazing place. It is a place that you can share your personal thoughts with God and talk to God. When I look at the crucifix and the High Altar, I feel the love of God.

Dying Well is Award-Winning

The Art of Dying Well podcast series won the Jerusalem Award for digital audio at an awards ceremony held last night at BAFTA.

The Jerusalem Awards have been recognising high-quality Christian broadcasting for over 22 years. All the entrants have a passion and skill to increase understanding of Christianity and its values via broadcast media.

The series was shortlisted from those submitted by groups which included Christians in Sport, Clifton Diocese and others. The judging panel described the series as a ‘professional and sensitive exploration of the topic’ of death and dying.

James Abbott, podcast editor and co-presenter, spoke of the importance of bringing the conversation of death to a wider audience. ‘One of the main aims of the podcast, and in fact the whole Art of Dying Well project, is to take the fear and anxiety out of our conversations on death and dying. We talk about everything from palliative care, child bereavement and mental health issues to funerals, remembrance and spirituality. It’s a wonderful award for the podcast, but more importantly, we’re delighted the panel recognised that conversations about death and dying – this very human journey – are well worth having’.

You can find all episodes of the podcast series and more at: www.artofdyingwell.org/podcasts/

Persecuted and Forgotten?

The persecution of Christians is worse now than at any time in history, but is being largely ignored by the world, according to a new report launched by Aid to the Church in Need. The report Persecuted and Forgotten? concludes that the persecution of Christians has reached a high water mark in 2015-17, with growing attacks on the faithful by Daesh (ISIS), Boko Haram, and other fundamentalist groups. At the beginning of the meeting, Lord Alton announced that another Coptic priest had been murdered in Egypt that morning.

According to the report, the international community has failed to adequately respond to the needs of Christians attacked by militant extremists: ‘Governments in the West and the UN failed to offer Christmas in countries such as Iraq and Syria the emergency help they needed as genocide got underway. ’Christian organisations and other institutions had not filled the gap, the Christian presence could already have disappeared in Iraq and other parts of the Middle East’. Lord Alton commented that: ‘I wish aid sent by Christian organisations was matched by western governments’. Several speakers pointed out that although it was claimed that UN and international government funding was being sent to the region, there was little sign of it on the ground. Sr Annie Demejian SJM, who works with families in Aleppo, described desperate living condition where traumatised families had been surviving with no water or electricity and little food or medicines: ‘Syrian children have become victims of war waged by others’.

During the campaign of genocide by Daesh and other Islamist militant groups in the Middle East, Christians were disproportionately affected by the extremists. In Iraq, more than half of the country’s Christian population became internal refugees and Aleppo, which until 2011 was home to the largest Christian community, saw numbers dropping from 150,000 to barely 35,000 by spring 2017 - a fall of more than 75 percent. Despite national governments and international organisations having determined that a genocide has taken place, local Church leaders in the Middle East have repeatedly said that they feel forgotten by the international community. Work resettling displaced Christians in the towns and villages they were driven from by Daesh in northern Iraq was described by Fr Salar Kajo, Vicar General of Alqosh, who helps oversee the programme returning displaced families to their homes on the Nineveh Plains. Fr Kajo said that Christians were being treated as second class citizens, expressing fears that if further fighting breaks out between the Kurds and Iraqis: ‘The Christians will disappear’. Very little international aid had arrived - apart from that provided by the Church: ‘the Church is helping with rebuilding, providing water, generators, clinics... UNESCO came once and painted something and left’.

Although the report found in the countries under examination that many faith communities have suffered at the hands of extremists and authoritarian regimes, it concluded Christians have experienced the most hostility and violence. The report supports this claim with a series of examples showing the extent of the problems facing Christians in each of the 13 core countries it assesses in depth, as well as providing an overview of the state of religious freedom for the country’s various denominations.

For more information see: www.acnuk.org
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