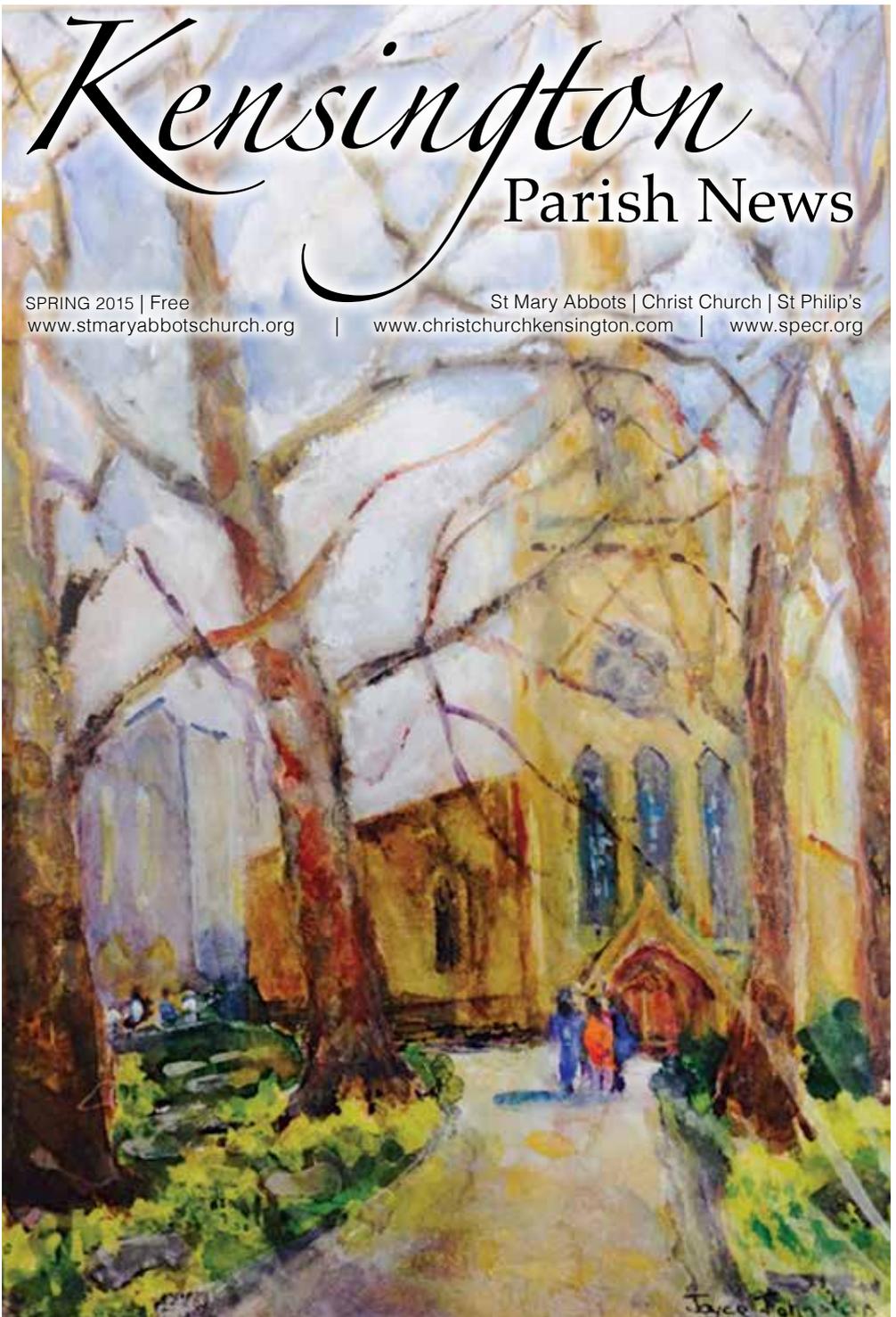


Kensington Parish News

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FRONT PAGE IMAGE: St Mary Abbots Church by Joyce Johnston

Would readers wishing to submit articles for our next issue Summer 2015 or who would like to advertise in the KPN (all proceeds to the church) please email kensingtonparishnews@gmail.com

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VICAR'S VOICE

Associate Vicar **Julia Hedley**
BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW

An abridged version of the sermon preached at Matins on 8th March at St Mary Abbots for International Women's Day. The Biblical text is Exodus 5.1 - 6.1

Since it began in 1911 International Women's Day has celebrated the economic, political and social achievements of women, while calling for greater equality. Despite what it might sound like this is not a purely feminist agenda. In striving for equality between men and women, we empower all of humanity to reach its full potential. And of course, for those of us who are Christians, to realise our God-given natures as people created equally in God's image and equally loved.

20 years ago 189 countries attended the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing which resulted in the Beijing Declaration.

In essence this states that we believe in and will work for:

'The empowerment and advancement of women, including the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, thus



contributing to the moral, ethical, spiritual and intellectual needs of women and men.

We are convinced that:

Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. Women's rights are human rights.'

Now since 1995 there has indeed been progress in the empowerment of women, but that progress has been slow and uneven. The United Nations women's executive director, Phumzilke Mlambo-Ngcuka, said in advance of International Women's Day that there remains chronic underfunding for new and better policy making in most countries of the world; and that violence against women remains rife in ALL countries.

I don't know if any of you saw the film India's Daughter — the documentary about the brutal rape and murder of Jyoti, in Delhi in 2012. I didn't watch it, partly because I was horrified by the news coverage broadcasting the interview it contained with one of the rapists, blaming Jyoti for what happened to her. 'She shouldn't have been out at that time of night with a boy, she should have been at home doing the housework, she should have let us do what we wanted to her, she shouldn't have fought back.' Attitudes that I would have hoped had been put away a long time ago, and an interview that I could see no justification for repeating on the main news bulletins.

Horrible though Jyoti's story is, it's not unusual, and not only in India. We've heard this week of more than 350 girls sexually and physically abused in Oxford. Appalling enough in itself. But what is even worse, those who had the courage to go to the police and social services were not believed. We too have a long way to go.

Across the road from St Mary Abbots is the base of RAHAB, a charity that works with sex workers and women trafficked into the country. They do wonderful work, but

ST MARY ABBOTS**Sundays**

8.00 am Holy Eucharist
 9.30 am *SUNG EUCHARIST*
 with *Creche & Sunday School*
 11.15 am Choral Matins & Sermon
 12.30 pm *HOLY EUCHARIST*
 6.30 pm Evensong with Sermon & Holy Eucharist
1st Sunday of month:
 Taize Prayer & Holy Eucharist

Mondays

8.30 am Morning Prayer
 1.05 pm Sunday on Monday service
 5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Tuesdays

8.30 am Morning Prayer
 11.30 am *HOLY EUCHARIST*
Book of Common Prayer
 5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Wednesdays

7.10 am Morning Prayer
 7.30 am *HOLY EUCHARIST*
 2.00 pm 3rd Weds in the month: Holy Eucharist
 with *Laying-on of Hands & Anointing*
 5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Thursdays

7.10 am Morning Prayer
 9.30 am St Mary Abbots School Eucharist
 in term time - all welcome
 5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Fridays

7.10 am Morning Prayer
 7.30 am *HOLY COMMUNION*
 5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Saturdays

9.40 am Morning Prayer
 10.00 am *HOLY EUCHARIST*
 5.30 pm Evening Prayer

On MAJOR FEASTDAYS additional Services also offered: see the Bulletin & Noticeboard.

CHRIST CHURCH**Sundays**

8.30 am *HOLY COMMUNION*
 11.00 am *1st and 3rd Sundays in the month:*
 BCP Holy Communion
 11.00 am *2nd & 4th Sundays in the month:*
 BCP Morning Prayer
 6.30 pm Contemporary Evening Service

ST PHILIP'S**Sundays**

8.30 am Holy Communion
 10.30 am *SUNG EUCHARIST* with *Sunday School*
 3rd Sunday: all age service with Eucharist

Monday to Friday

9.10 am Morning Prayer

Parish Directory

Clergy, wardens, vestry and office

THE PARISH

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Children on Sunday /

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Administrator	Adele Pye	020 7937 2966	admin@christchurchkensington.com
Director of Music	Rupert Perkins		

ST PHILIPS**Associate Vicar with Special Responsibility for St Philip**

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Director of Music	Rebecca Taylor		rebecca.taylor@specr.org

the real wonder would be a world in which such charities were not needed, where such modern versions of slavery were unheard of.

We've heard the story this morning of the Israelite slaves, working in Egypt under increasingly harsh conditions. In response to God's instructions Moses has asked Pharaoh to release the prisoners, supposedly so they can go and worship. Pharaoh's response is to increase the hardship of the slaves. He calls them lazy, making the problem theirs rather than his, a trick of oppressive regimes everywhere. It was okay that I raped her; she shouldn't have been out at night.

When the Israelite overseers complain, Pharaoh tells them that it's Moses' fault and so they complain to him. 'You've put us in bad odour with Pharaoh.' You've made matters worse with your interfering.

Who do we blame for the injustice we see around us? Often the person that we can get at, whether or not it is their fault, whether or not they can do anything about it.

The Indian govt. blamed the BBC for showing the documentary India's Daughter. But they haven't done anything like enough to change the culture that says rape is okay.

And who is ultimately to blame — well, God of course. Moses complains — 'O God why have you mistreated this people? And done nothing to deliver them?'

But God is not to blame for human failings; the evil that we are capable of is legion — in big things and in small ones. This is not the doing of God.

Religion may indeed be to blame for some, much, of the violence perpetrated on women — not only on their persons but on their souls. For too long, too many religions have treated women as second class citizens, with all the implications that has for their oppression.

But in the citizenship of God, there is no such thing. We are all created equal in God's sight, and God's desire for us is that we all have an equal chance to flourish.

God did indeed get Pharaoh to let the people go, but only after a long and bitter struggle. Evil is not easily defeated even by God. We know that ultimately it took the death of God on the cross to overcome those forces, and that even now they continue to make their presence felt in defeat.

But defeated they are. Such organisations as International Women's Day, the United Nations, Rahab, and thousands of others, all testify to a desire to move from where we have been to where we are and beyond.

The colour of the International Women's movement is purple; chosen because it was one of the three colours used by the Suffragette movement, symbolising justice and dignity. Purple is also, of course, the colour of Lent. The colour for repentance, of needing to turn again to God by looking at our deeds and actions, our attitudes and prejudices.

International women's day is always on 8th March, always in Lent. As we move into Passiontide perhaps that's worth thinking about. Amen

STUDY AND RENEWAL

Fr Gilleen Craig reflects on his three months spent on planned study leave

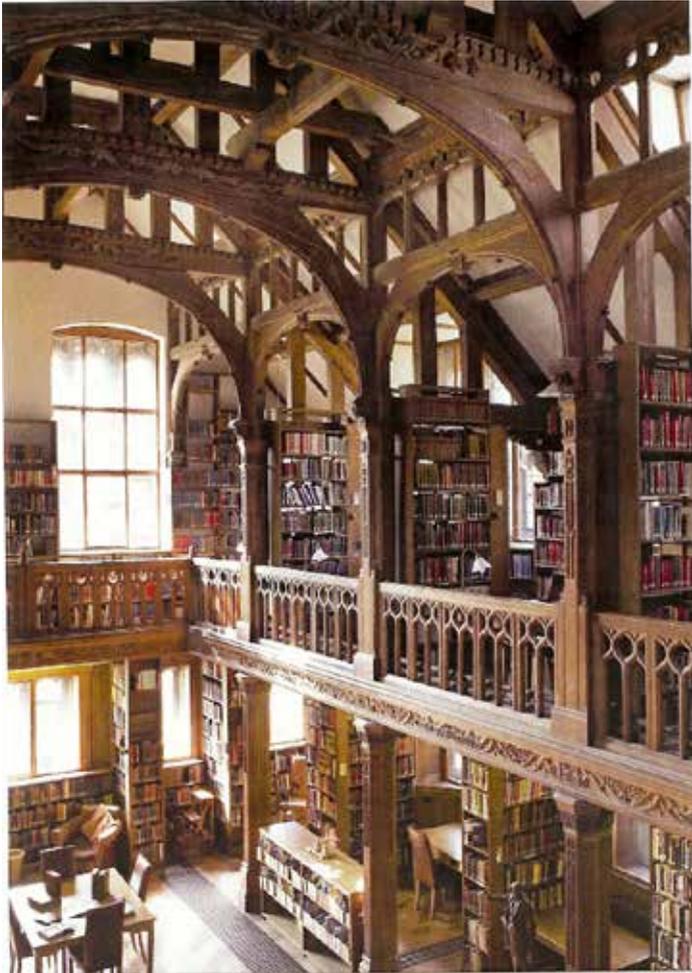
Church of England Clergy are supposed to take a period of Study Leave every ten years or so, to learn something new, reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their ministry, and generally refresh their lives. After 37 years, it was pointed out to me that I had never taken such time out from the parish, and it was suggested that everyone, not least myself, might benefit if I did. The way it works is that you have to propose a plan of study and renewal that the Bishop must approve in advance (you can't spend the whole time in, say, Las Vegas), raise the necessary funds from trusts etc, and make your own arrangements about who will carry on the work while you're away. This was perhaps the key factor: in Jenny and Julia, in the wardens and other officers, I was absolutely confident that St Mary Abbots has such a strong team that it wouldn't make much difference whether I was there or not! I must start by thanking them, and all of you, for working so hard in my absence and ensuring growth and development in the parish. Additionally, I know that some of you gave very generously so that I was presented with a cheque that made a real difference,

allaying anxiety that I was about to run out of money half way through. I am very grateful to you all.

WHERE DID I GO?

FROM 9 – 19 SEPTEMBER I took an extended Retreat to reflect on my ministry so far. No retreat house offering regular daily services was able to offer me the full period, so I had to split it between two: The first week in Mucknell Abbey, just outside Worcester, and the second at Launde Abbey in Leicestershire. Of these, the time at Mucknell fulfilled my aim far better: this contemporary re-thinking of a mixed Benedictine rule with the five-fold Daily Office offers a wonderful stimulus for reflection and self-examination. I found Launde, although very comfortable and welcoming, far more a Conference – even holiday - Centre than a retreat house, and the worship far less central to its daily life.

I then returned to the parish for a weekend to conduct seven Baptisms (I wasn't going to miss baptising triplets, or my own step-grandson!)



*Gladstone's Library,
Hawarden*

SEPTEMBER 22 – OCTOBER 17 In residence at Gladstone's Library, Hawarden, greatly valuing its unique mixture of first-rate theological and related subjects library, comfortable accommodation, daily eucharist, and constantly-changing visiting groups, conferences and individual students

extremely stimulating both for study and recreation. This period was interrupted by a weekend's break – 4/5 October – when I travelled across to Yorkshire and Linda joined me for a family baptism. Unfortunately the purely recreational value of this weekend was affected by the tragic unexplained death

of the daughter of good friends of ours who live in Yorkshire, and we stayed with them to offer comfort and plan a memorial service.

OCTOBER 17 – 19 This planned weekend's recreation between my stay in Hawarden and move to Cambridge was compromised by the unfortunate loss or theft of my passport, meaning that I could not travel as had been planned to Rome in a week's time. Much time was wasted fruitlessly searching for it, then making the arrangements to obtain a new one.

OCTOBER 20 – NOVEMBER 8 Instead of the planned week's residence at Westcott House, the need to get a new passport meant that in the event I stayed there for three weeks. This was thanks to the great generosity and hospitality of the Principal, Martin Seeley, and all the staff and students whom I encountered. I want to record my gratitude to them. This period was also broken into, by the need to travel to Kensington to conduct the Memorial Service for Deborah MacDonald, and to get my new passport. The extended time in Cambridge proved to be one of the very richest that I can remember. I had a succession of the most valuable consultations about my topic of research – far more than I would have been able to fit in within a week – reconnected (after 37 years) with the daily life of a theological college, sharing in their worship and courses (even leading seminars and preaching the Commemoration sermon), and took up old and new friendships across the University, enjoying the hospitality of several Colleges and worshipping in their chapels.

NOVEMBER 9 – DECEMBER 4 Based in Rome, firstly in Brigettine Convent in Piazza Farnese, which I found comfortable but solitary, not offering me the conversations and encounters for which I had planned to be in Rome, then in the Domus Internationalis Paulus VI, just off the Piazza Navona, which provides a base for clergy working in the Curia and the many clergy who visit Rome for conferences etc. This provided a far better source of the kind of discussions that I had hoped for. I also enjoyed contact with the Anglican Centre in Rome, All Saints Anglican church and the Venerable English College. Within the period I had a weekend's Recreation, when my wife was able to fly out and stay with me in central Rome.

RESEARCH

My topic was the relationship between science and Christianity, especially in light of the 'New Atheists' attack on faith, and with particular reference to the Garden of Eden story, which I consider is a particularly significant Biblical focus for this area of debate. My plan was to research and draft a short, popular book on this subject, avoiding the classification of academic or even predominantly religious publishing to make it accessible to the thoughtful general reader. This was a wildly ambitious aim for someone who has never previously written a book, and it was not realized: but in my defence I claim that the loss of my passport's necessitating a three rather than a one week stay in Cambridge meant that I was able to hold far more consultations than I had expected, and each one proved to be so



Westcott House

rich with ideas and suggestions for further consideration that, instead of arriving in Rome with the rough material more-or-less in place, and with a 5+ weeks period for writing up, I ended up with only 3+ weeks there and a far wider mass of material that was not yet assimilated. In fact, even the time remaining to me in Rome was inadequate to think through the significance of these extra dimensions, and though the first few short sections were drafted out against the calendar deadline, I suspect that the proper course would be to go back to the beginning and re-think how I want to present my arguments.

I hope to work with my colleagues to find a way of setting aside a regular time in my diary so that I can continue to work on this material before it grows completely cold.

I greatly enjoyed the return to reading serious theology, Biblical studies and fairly basic-level science. The excitement of working in libraries, of following up references and leads was in itself a delight and has I hoped sharpened up my mind somewhat. The experience of working in a sustained manner on a topic unrelated to day-to-day church management has been a great pleasure,

and opened a vista which I've kept closed up for many years – it's now up to me to find ways of continuing to prosecute this newly-discovered delight. I have been able to consider issues of philosophy and theology that lay outside the specific courses I took all those years ago when studying for Ordination. I have re-connected with Biblical scholarship in ways which I am sure will inform my preaching and teaching ministry.

CONSULTATIONS

I was very fortunate indeed in the number and quality of experts willing to discuss my work and suggest direction for further study, among them: Rowans Williams, John Polkinghorne, Paul Mueller, SJ (Director, Pontifical Observatory) Professor Julian Allwood (Professor of Engineering and the Environment, University of Cambridge), Dr Gordon McPhate, Dean of Chester, and above all, acting as it were as unofficial supervisor for the project, Dr Andrew Davison (Starbridge Lecturer in Theology and Natural Sciences)

RECREATION

In addition to the study, I sought to ensure that this time away from the parish acted as an extended period of refreshment. In all the places I stayed, I managed on most days (in an autumn of quite exceptionally fine weather) to explore and visit nearby places of interest or simply go for a walk. Much of this was directed at particular interests of mine, especially architecture and especially church architecture. In Rome this was focused on a area whose extent I had not previously appreciated: the number

of survivals of early mediaeval churches, some still retaining their original internal liturgical arrangements, and many more with surviving mosaics and frescos.

ENCOUNTERS AND THEMES

A crucial element of the recreation was meeting new people – many from areas of church life different from all-encompassing the world of the Diocese of London. This led to many discussions about the church in its ministry throughout the country - and in Rome, of course, I was able to get a sense of the current dramatic situation in the Roman Catholic Church and how the Vatican relates to the rest of that Communion. Of course, I met many people outside the church as well – especially at Gladstone's Library a succession of authors and writers who greatly value that place, and at Cambridge a great number of academics from other disciplines. I was particularly interested in the current state of training for Ordination (the subject of many conversations throughout the period), gaining the highest regard for the students at Westcott, and making interesting comparisons with the preparation of Roman Catholic priests. I experienced many different liturgies and was particularly interested in church music, comparing the services at several Cambridge chapels, in different parts of England, and in Rome. I had consultations on this theme with the Director of Music of Kings College, Cambridge, and Jesus College, discussing the relationship between their choral scholars, academic and vocal training, and the world of professional singing and music in parishes.

PICTURE PERFECT

Hannah Redman reports on the sale of works by artist Joyce Johnston



A quietly remarkable and fiercely independent woman, Joyce Johnston (1921-2015) left her artwork to Dr Martin. Having picked a few favourites, Dr Martin decided to donate the proceeds of a sale of the remainder to St Mary Abbots Church. Together with Mr & Mrs Hensman, the product of a life's work of painting was gathered (some might say rescued) and delivered to the St Mary Abbots Centre. It was only then that we began to fully appreciate how prolific Joyce had been, and how well travelled. A member of various art

societies and groups - including the London Landscape Group, the Fulham Art Society, and the Armed Forces Art Society - she had a particular gift for watercolours and it was terribly exciting turning the Long Room into a gallery of her works, which then buzzed with energy on a dreary Saturday morning.

What followed was a most surprising and happy day, full of sales and stories, a wonderful tribute to an interesting lady and her dedicated friend, Dr Martin. An avid collector of Joyce's work arrived before the sale had even started and amassed a large pile of paintings to fill his already groaning walls. One of Joyce's sketchbooks found a home with Sharon, her carer in the residential home in Fulham she had recently moved into. A young lady came on behalf of her parents, who wished to collect Joyce's work, her grandmother having served with Joyce in the war. A young mother saw the advert in the Evening Standard and came looking for pictures of St Paul's Cathedral, where generations of her family have served. A Frenchman saw a poster locally and not only purchased a few paintings but then joined us for Matins a week later. With a fantastic team running the 'Gallery Cafe', many people lingered to enjoy the atmosphere, art and conversation.

The date had been booked before Joyce's death and many of her friends expressed sadness that she was not with us - though she was all around us - but also gladness that her artistic achievements were recognized, celebrated and enjoyed. She has left a legacy both in the hearts and homes which she has touched through her art and, through Dr Martin, the financial gift of over £2000 for the Church. At the end of the day I commented to my husband what a relief it was the sale had been such a runaway success and he replied: "that was not the result of a week's work or a day's work, but a life's work".

Thank you Dr Martin for bringing us closer to Joyce and closing the circle. Thank you Joyce Johnston for so generously sharing your life's work. Rest in peace.



FROM DUST TO DUST

Rev'd Jenny Welsh explains what happened when she and others offered ashes to passers-by on the streets of Kensington

Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return'. . . A pretty odd sort of greeting to a total stranger on the street corner, but one we used on Ash Wednesday, as we took the ashes outside, and offered the imposition of ashes to passers-by as they rushed by to and from work, the shops or school.

We are familiar in church with this reminder of our mortality, as we begin the Lenten season — mortality is what we deal with as Christians — the fact that we are not indestructible, that we are frail and weak creatures, dependent on the grace of God to hold us in his care. But it's not a message that gets spoken outside the church very often — specially in a society where to be weak is to go to the 'wall; to be dependent' is to risk being shoved aside, taken advantage of, thought less of. The Ash Wednesday

observance is a timely reminder of our need for God's love, inspiration, forgiveness and grace in the whole of our life, not just in the "holy" bits.

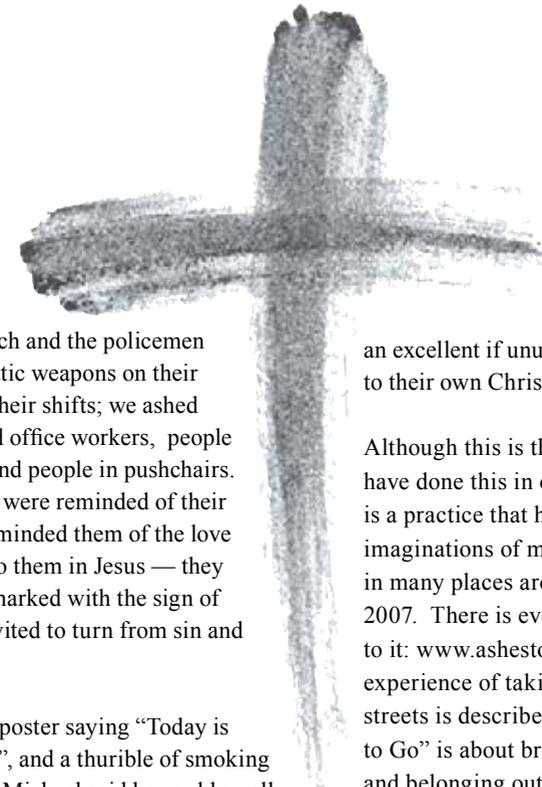
To our surprise and delight, this message of mortality was something that many people came along to ask for — in the course of the day, we offered ashes to everyone who passed by on the street, and about 500 people came to receive them: some people were rather quizzical but came anyway, some came, reminded that Lent was about to begin, and wanting to make a good start as they gave up chocolate or drink, whether they went to church or not. Some people came with great enthusiasm, eager to receive the mark of the cross, and wanting to talk about their own Christian faith. They brought their children, and their friends. We ashed the scaffolders in hard hats going to

work at the church and the policemen carrying automatic weapons on their way back from their shifts; we ashed shopworkers and office workers, people in wheelchairs and people in pushchairs. And just as they were reminded of their mortality, we reminded them of the love of God, shown to them in Jesus — they were of course marked with the sign of the cross and invited to turn from sin and follow Christ.

Beside us was a poster saying "Today is Ash Wednesday", and a thurible of smoking incense (my son Michael said he could smell it across the street, and that's what brought him to be ashed). We were joined by David Walsh from St Philip's and also a gang of enthusiastic lay people who handed out prayer cards, and invited people to join in —

an excellent if unusual way to witness to their own Christian faith.

Although this is the first time we have done this in our own parish, it is a practice that has caught the imaginations of many congregations in many places around the world since 2007. There is even a website dedicated to it: www.ashestogo.org where the experience of taking the ashes out to the streets is described this way: "Ashes to Go" is about bringing spirit, belief, and belonging out from behind church doors, and into the places where we go every day. It's a simple event with deep meaning, drawing on centuries of tradition and worship to provide a contemporary moment of grace."



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DAVID RAMSEY WILSON

19th May 1929 – 17th January 2015

A tribute by **David Banks** given at
Funeral Eucharist on 28th January 2015

For all of us here, David's life has in some way been woven into our own; for many of us, very deep into the fabric. Each of us can cherish what his life means to us and what he has given us through his work, his interests, his guidance, and his ministry.

And it was indeed a ministry. Working in close and loving partnership with Pat, David devoted himself to the needs of others, and responded to the love of God by caring for all. His kindness was sincere and thoughtful, never an affectation, just as his faith was deep and committed, but not ostentatious.

In his life David truly sought to give meaning to the words of the intercession: that we may serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us. As a longstanding member of the Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary, David cared about ritual, and this Requiem Mass recognises that, but his faith was far more than mere ritualism.

Worship, liturgy, and the pattern of the Christian year were for him an expression of his very genuine and deeply rooted

love for the Lord, which manifested itself too — as it should for us all — in care for others, particularly those in special need.

David showed devotion and sensitivity in his vocation of taking the holy sacrament to the sick or housebound, so that they could receive communion at home.

As the Apostle James teaches us: Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. David's religion manifested itself through maintaining high standards of serving at the altar, supporting this congregation in countless ways, and through many hidden acts of kindness.

He worked tirelessly and very practically to support a ministry of welcome and outreach to the many thousands of people who visit this church, or whose lives are touched by its witness to the gospel of love.

So it is perhaps fitting that he left us during the season of the Epiphany, the showing forth of Christ to the Nations.

David grew up in South London, and the organist of the church he attended with his parents recognised his promising musical talent. As a result of that encouragement David was accepted for a place at Salisbury Cathedral Choir School.

Following school, and before the end of the Second World War, David joined the Royal Air Force, even though officially still underage when he signed up. While based in Northern Ireland he flew in Sunderland Flying Boats on Atlantic patrols. His RAF service was crowned with the honour of serving in a special way King George VI.

Back in civilian life, where he pursued a career in engineering, notably in the oil industry, David maintained a connection with the Royal Air Force as a server at St Clement Danes, the London church of the RAF.

It was there that he met Pat, who was training as a midwife at St Bartholomew's Hospital, and on New Year's Eve 1966 Pat and David were married. In 1969, with a child on the way, they started attending St Mary Abbots, where Fr Lorimer Rees, formerly Rector of St Clement Danes, was then Vicar. Catherine was baptised here, and as a girl she sang in the choir here.

David drew great happiness and contentment from family life, and Catherine and Carlos brought him the blessing and joy of two grandchildren, Danny and Bella.

Alongside love for his family, David's enduring passion was for steam engines. This seemed to express itself in the great

gusto and subdued delight with which he stoked and wielded the thurible. The clouds of incense that arose when, like a locomotive, he led processions through church on high days and holidays, brought back that passage from Isaiah: *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.*

Holidays with Pat and Catherine at Blaenau Ffestiniog working on the preservation and operation of the mountain railways of North Wales brought him enormous pleasure and fulfilment.

Those narrow gauge lines were built to transport slate from the quarries, and it is pleasing to discover that the slates to be used in the reroofing of this church over coming months are from a quarry known to David and Pat.

David was always practical. He did jobs that he knew needed to be done, and he did them faithfully and meticulously, often unsung and without acknowledgement, so that the institutions and causes for which he cared could flourish, and others come to enjoy them and appreciate them as he did.

He was immensely proud too of the many practical talents of Pat, his soulmate and helpmeet, particularly her childcare expertise, and skill as a needlewoman and carer for textiles.

Together they made a great team, and I know that it has given Pat great solace that as a trained nurse she was able to care for David

during his long last illness. Her needlework can be seen on the beautiful pall that now with love and loss enfolds David's body.

David had a special devotion to St Joseph the Worker. I am sure that this was partly because as an engineer he identified with Joseph the carpenter, but it was also because he was a husband, a father, and a nurturer of the young.

Those of us who worship here at St Mary Abbots Sunday by Sunday can be reminded of David as we see the children of this church lighting candles at the statue of the Holy Family, with St Joseph caring for Mary and the Holy Child Jesus on the Flight into Egypt.

David shared his faith by training and passing on his knowledge to the young so that they too could take on responsibilities in church. In doing this he was never patronising, and treated with dignity all those he trained, whatever their age, according them respect and courtesy.

That two of those serving at this Requiem were trained by David when they themselves were children is testimony to the lasting impression left by his gentle guidance and example.

St Mary Abbots is known for worship that is dignified yet not stuffy. Much of that is thanks to David's approach and his influence over many years as Head Server. His advice to me nearly forty years ago, was to try to know what I was doing, but if I didn't, at least to look as though I did.

David was an early adopter of new technology. At meetings in the 1980s he

was already using a pocket computer, albeit one designed for fairly industrial sized pockets, a PSION organiser.

He also applied developments in technology to the many tasks he undertook faithfully over many years, as Editor of the weekly newsletter for this church, and as Electoral Roll Officer for the Parish.

In doing all these tasks he showed what George Herbert, meant when he wrote:

*Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee.*

That was his prayer in all that he did; in his family life and friendships, his professional life, his administrative duties, and his service in the sanctuary.

In my own mind's eye I see the altar rail here in St Mary Abbots as just one small section of that great circle of all who kneel around the throne of grace.

It is part of an arc that extends through time and eternity, and at communion we kneel alongside our brothers and sisters around the world, and with the saints and all the faithful who have gone before to glory.

Today as David's body is borne away from the altar he served, and out of church he loved, he remains united with us in that glorious communion of the love and mercy of God.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.



MEMORIAL STONE

A new stone has been laid at St Mary Abbots in memory of Ethne Rudd. Ethne's daughter **Melissa Dunford Wood** tells us more

My mother would have really loved her beautiful memorial stone being in such a pivotal position as we walk into church. It was the way she came to church on Sunday from her home in Kensington Square, or to church watch during the week, or towards the school when she would collect the children for me.

The stone was cut in the highlands of Scotland and sent down by a courier through a snow storm just in time for the date we had managed to get fixed for all the family to come together - an exercise, incidentally, rather like herding cats. It

was the accumulation of a five year project initiated by David Banks - and we are all so very grateful to David and Fr Gillean for pushing to make it happen and to get through all the Diocesan red tape. And of course to the sculptor Robbie Schneider for his beautifully carved green welsh slate.



Memories over time fade, but having that stone at St Mary Abbots is a wonderful way to be reminded of my mother, Ethne, who loved the church, the community, and the school. She loved coming to church with my father and sitting in the same pew as her children and grandchildren tumbled in all around her, squashed in beside her and on her lap. She's truly at home.

AMBASSADORS FOR GOD?



Sam Talbot-Rice encourages us to be more confident in sharing our faith

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Located as we are in London’s ‘embassy zone’, it seems appropriate that Christ Church’s weekly home groups have this term been considering what it means to be ambassadors for Christ in our homes, workplaces and colleges. As the Diocese’s Capital Vision 2020 strategy has made clear, we need to think about the Monday-Saturday as well as the Sunday – in other words, how we can live and speak for God in the various places and roles we find ourselves, in a way that honours him. Most of us find this very difficult – after all, discussing religion (or politics) is said not to be acceptable at the dinner table!

The weekly series (Lost for Words) has focused on helping us to become more confident in sharing our faith. That confidence, we have

been reminded, is not because of any skills, abilities or persuasiveness on our own part (in fact, if you are anything like me this will be a relief as you will have plenty not to be confident about!) but because of the momentous news of the Gospel that God has given us to share with those around us.

Early on in the term we looked at the parable of the hidden treasure and the pearl (Matthew 13), where Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to treasure hidden in a field and a pearl of immense value. When someone stumbles on these things, they sell everything they have to get their hands on the treasure. This was a powerful reminder that as Christians we have been given something of incalculable value – forgiveness of sins through the death of Jesus and this is wonderful news to share with those around us. As DT Niles put it, Christianity is one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread. So rather than worrying about clever presentation,

soaring oratory or intellectual prowess, we can focus on “setting forth the truth plainly” (2 Corinthians 4) and pray that God will work in the hearts of hearers. As Archbishop Justin Welby said recently, “The best decision anyone can ever make, at any point in life, in any circumstances, whoever they are, wherever they are, whatever they are, is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ.”

We have also spent some time thinking in practical terms about how we can try to address some of the tricky questions we may get asked by friends (“How can a loving God allow so much suffering?”, “Don’t all religions

lead to God?”, “Can we trust the Bible?”) and the importance of engaging with the news and culture around us so that we can give an informed, Christian perspective on the hot topics of the day.

A key aspect of the Capital Vision 2020 programme is to equip 100,000 ambassadors representing Jesus Christ in their daily life. Our weekly series has been a great help along the way to this goal, strengthening our convictions and encouraging us to think afresh about how we can be effective ambassadors, so that we don’t find ourselves lost for words just when we need to find the right ones.



SINGING FROM THE HEART

Being a chorister at St Paul’s Cathedral is the experience of a lifetime

St Paul’s choristers sing in one of the most famous and beautiful places of worship in the world, perform in concerts around the globe, and receive a first-class academic education at the Cathedral School. Boys are not expected to have fully-developed voices or much formal singing experience – enthusiasm, intelligence and musical potential are the keys.

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THE ROLE OF AREA DEAN

David Walsh became one of six Area Deans covering the Kensington Episcopal Area in 2011.

Lesley Raymond asks him about his role



Fortunately for David, he had the support of both non-stipendiary vicar Lesley Perry and our then Curate, Ije Ajibade, as well as two lay readers. Lesley, in particular, stepped up to take over more responsibility in the church. St Philip's also appointed an Administrator to help with the practicalities of running the church. Kensington is the largest Area within the Diocese of London with 120 churches. Its leader is the Bishop of Kensington, supported by an Archdeacon who in turn has a team of six Area Deans reporting into him. David's 'patch' is the Deanery covering Kensington and Notting Hill, which has 16 churches and around 26 clergy - including the team at St Mary Abbots. "This puts me in quite an unusual position," says David, "because I am Area Dean to Father Gillian to whom I report."

While the Bishop is the public face of the Church of England in the Kensington Episcopal Area, and sets the direction for its mission, the Archdeacon is involved in those aspects that enable the churches to fulfil this mission – such as the fabric and maintenance of buildings, health & safety, legal issues, funding across the Deanery, supporting local clergy and ensuring that churches are meeting the needs of their communities.

“I was approached by the Bishop of Kensington, who had sounded out local clergy about the sort of person who should fill the role,” David explains. “I wanted to discover how the wider church works and it’s been excellent in expanding my vocation and my ability to contribute to the work of the church in this part of London.”

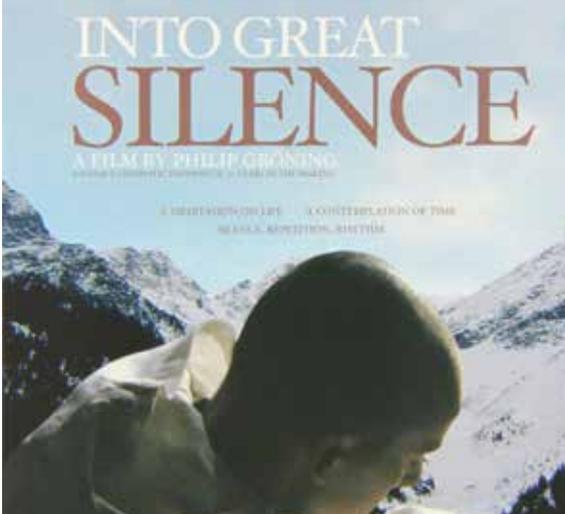
David combines the work of an Area Dean with being Associate Vicar at St Philip's, and his expanded workload came as something of a shock. “I thought it would be an interesting thing to do but I had no idea how much work was involved,” he says. “It’s almost impossible to juggle the demands of the two roles.”

Much of David's time as Area Dean is taken up with representing the area at regular meetings, both inside and outside the Deanery, such as the Deanery Synod, the Kensington Area Leadership Team and the Kensington Area Council. These meetings look at a range of church issues, from the way parishes are organised, to the Deanery's role in education (there are four Church of England primary schools in the area) and how to encourage churches to work together more efficiently by sharing resources. David also represented the Deanery when the London Diocese was drafting its Capital Vision 2020 and he contributed to the wording in the document.

One of the key roles of an Area Dean is supporting local clergy, both through formal meetings and in one-to-ones. Area Deans attend church services in their Area and also get involved in interviewing potential ordinands for the ministry and

swearing in new church wardens. David has a particular responsibility to support churches where a priest is ill or on study leave, or where there is a vacancy.

The Area Dean is also responsible for the Common Fund – that is, the money that churches raise to cover their costs of ministry. Although Kensington is a wealthy Area, several churches in the north of the Deanery struggle to pay their way. David has worked hard over the last three years to ensure that churches in the more prosperous south raise more than they need in order to share their excess with all the churches in this part of London. “Two years ago only three of our churches were paying more than their costs,” says David. “Last year it was nine – over half the total. In the past St Philip's has been fortunate to benefit from the financial support of St Mary Abbots, so I am very pleased that now we are in a position to do the same for other churches.”



INTO GREAT SILENCE
A FILM BY PHILIP GRÖNING

SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH
6:45 FOR 7PM START

The ST PHILIP'S FILM CLUB'S LENT 2015
showing will take place in the Lower Hall

The film will be the highly acclaimed Into Great Silence, a beautiful, challenging and highly meditative immersion into the lives of Carthusian monks in the French Alps.”

THANKS BE TO GOD

Archivist **Jane MacAllan** recognises the contribution three St Mary Abbots curates who served as army chaplains in the First World War

Recently, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York signed The Armed Forces Covenant. Archbishop Welby stated that the Churches “relish the privilege to be involved in ministering with the people in the armed services. That is absolutely crucial to our understanding of the role of the Church.” He added: “There are chaplains in every part of the armed services, and that is part of the heritage of the Church that we value hugely”. Coincidentally, the Army Reserve (previously the Territorial Army) is running a recruitment campaign for part-time chaplains. During the First World War, three Curates from the clergy team at St Mary Abbots served as Army Chaplains.

Commissioned in December 1914, Rev. Sydney Groves spent a short time at Aldershot before being posted overseas. At the outbreak of war, there were around 116 chaplains, which increased to 3,000 in France alone by 1918. Some were given training, others were sent directly to join their Brigades. The Army Chaplains’ Department was hierarchical. Chaplains were given a rank, often that of Captain. Officer ranks enjoyed certain privileges, including their own room; although, conditions in France were quite different.

In June 1915, Groves was stationed at a small village on the border between France and Belgium and was ‘in charge of the 27th Brigade and all the Divisional troops in the Brigade area...I have an extensive parish to cover, so spend most of the time jogging around on a horse or bicycle.’ He continued: ‘I have got a billet of sorts, but prefer to sleep out in my flea-bag in this beautiful weather. The ground is a bit hard, but I have got used to it. It is, of course, a very healthy life, and I am feeling very fit. The food is excellent and there is plenty of it.’

The role of chaplains was not clearly defined. One aspect, however, was to take services, invariably under challenging circumstances. Groves revealed that ‘I have never yet been able to rise above a stable for my Celebrations, and sometimes the back of a cart has to serve as an altar.’ He explained: ‘It is obviously unsafe to collect men in any numbers in an exposed position. German aeroplanes are constantly hovering about looking for our batteries, and if we give the show away and they spot us it means shells.’ Nevertheless, ‘we always try and have an early Celebration with each Battalion on the morning before they return to their grim work...Picture to

yourselves men of all ranks kneeling side by side in a barn or under the trees, some of them making it an Act of Thanksgiving for some wonderful escape from death, all of them feeling it may be their last opportunity of receiving the Blessed Sacrament.’

In July 1915, Rev. W.L. Seymour Dallas was commissioned as an Army Chaplain just days after returning to the parish having completed four years as a priest in the Edmonton Mission, Canada. By August, Dallas was attached to 5th Brigade, 2nd Division, British Expeditionary Force in France. ‘I live in an Advance Dressing Station just behind the firing line. It was at one time a magnificent farm house, but is now simply a ruin. The wounded are brought in here on stretchers, their wounds receive a very preliminary dressing, and motor ambulances then whisk off the men to a R.A.M.C. Hospital further back. I frequently manage to see the men as they pass through, and then look them up later in the hospital.’

Additionally, chaplains were concerned with soldiers’ welfare, appealing for items to improve daily life and boost morale. In August 1917, Groves asked for ‘old magazines etc.’ explaining that ‘life in the trenches consists of periods of intense boredom, punctuated by periods of intense fear’.

Apart from the living, chaplains were also responsible for the dead. As Groves lamented, ‘that is the awful part of it all!’ Sometimes it took weeks to recover the corpses of soldiers. At the beginning of the war, there was no central system for registering casualties. Chaplains assisted with identification and organising burials.

A decent funeral was important, especially for the morale of their surviving comrades.

At the beginning of the war, chaplains were not permitted in the Front lines. Groves wrote that ‘in the trenches we can do nothing but get in the way – it means going up in broad daylight if we are to chat with the men, and ‘as...snipers abound’, it is a decidedly risky job.’ By early 1916, attitudes were changing. Chaplains were advised to ‘live with the men, go where they go, make up your mind that you will share their risks, and more, if you can do any good. You can take it that the best place for a padre is where there is the most danger of death. Our first job is to go beyond the men in self-sacrifice and reckless devotion. Don’t be bamboozled into believing that your proper place is behind the lines – it isn’t.’

Meanwhile, Rev. Arthur E. Morris had been desperate to serve as an Army Chaplain ever since war broke out, but had been repeatedly rejected. Bishops were worried about the welfare of their diocese if too many clergy volunteered. In addition, there were concerns over the selection process. The Rt. Rev. John Taylor Smith, a renowned Evangelical, was Chaplain-General at the outbreak of war. There were claims that he had discriminated against Anglo-Catholics regarding them as ‘extremists...out of place in the Army’. After interviewing candidates, Smith ‘made no bones about rejecting any clergy he felt unsuitable’ for whatever reason ‘and sometimes...his judgements were spot on’. In March 1918, Morris was finally successful. Morris was attached to the 20th Middlesex Regt. and left for France on April 17th, 1918.

He wrote on Ascension Day: ‘Things are, of course, a bit different out here; for instance, it is a bit of a change after the choir of St Mary Abbots, to start hymns myself in the open air without any musical instrument.’ In July, the Vicar revealed that Morris’s most recent letter was ‘too hilarious to print in the sober pages of a parish magazine.’ Humour was often used as an antidote to the brutality of war.

There were some incidents, however, that could not be sugar-coated. On 20th September 1917, Rev. Dallas was killed instantly by a shell, which landed on the parapet of a trench where he had been talking to two other officers. The third officer was left ‘shaken but unhurt’. The Colonel wrote to Dallas’s sister: ‘If it was to be, I am sure that he would not wish to have died in a better place than ‘facing the music’, surrounded

by the men whom he had instructed so well in the ideals for which we are fighting.’

By the end of the war, nearly 200 chaplains had died, over half from enemy fire. Their bravery cannot be underestimated. They demonstrated commitment to serve wherever the soldiers were and to provide spiritual comfort, care and compassion whatever the personal cost. Groves wrote in 1915, ‘what a wonderful experience and privilege it is to be a Chaplain at the Front.’ Today, regardless of how the nature of warfare and role of military chaplain have changed, Morris, perhaps, best sums up what still underpins a padre’s calling: ‘the principles of ministry...are always the same, wherever we are, and it is those which will always join us in one and cheer our hearts at all times; I mean, of course, the Love of God and the Faith which we all believe.’

This eggstraordinary facsimile has been taken from the February 1916 issue of the St Mary Abbots Kensington Parish Magazine

The story is told that a preacher was telling his hearers of the sad shortage of eggs for our wounded men in the hospitals. He was hoping that they might be induced to remedy this defect by a united effort, and ended his appeal with the words, “What a splendid thing it would be if each member of the congregation on leaving the Church next Sunday were to lay an egg in the font!” (“Splendid” indeed, but surely a counsel of perfection!) The reason why we allude to this story, which is apparently of some age, is that we have more than once heard it connected with St Mary Abbots. But the clergy disclaim all knowledge of it.



WORLD BOOK DAY PARADE

The Book Parade is one of the highlights of the school year. The children love dressing up as book characters and the teachers don't seem to mind either. Here is a small selection of some of the costumes on display..



SIMPLY DELICIOUS

Sally Clarke's restaurant is a familiar and welcoming neighbour; her trademark is unfussy but artful food made with the best ingredients. Here she shares with us one of her favourite spring dishes. Yum!

They say that you have to be mad to run a restaurant and that is probably true — unless you happen to love it — as I do. Even though hours are long, and the days stressful, there are from time to time a few 'perks'.

Many years ago I was asked to advise British Airways on their menus for Concorde, the payment being a few flights to New York!

Then soon after, when Julian Metcalfe of Pret a Manger fame, asked me to help create the Love Bar, I leapt at the chance as I was such a fan of what he had created.

One of his other great ideas was to print the recipe of a seemingly simple sandwich on a Pret paper napkin. The recipe was so complicated and detailed that no one in their right mind would have attempted it. Of course that was the aim - all he wanted was to persuade his customers to buy his sandwiches!

With that in mind, I feel a little naughty suggesting this recipe here, as it IS rather complicated as first sight. But I promise, it is well worth all the effort - and more importantly it showcases the fabulous new season peas and broad beans which have just arrived in our markets.

PEA AND FAVA BEAN RAVIOLI WITH RICOTTA AND HERBS x 6

*200g '00' Italian pasta flour plus a little for dusting
a little salt
1/2 egg beaten
dash of olive oil*

Using a robot coupe mix all the ingredients until it resembles rough crumbs. Turn it all out onto a table top and knead together firmly until smooth. Wrap in clingwrap and chill for at least 2 hours, but preferably overnight in the fridge. Meanwhile make the filling.

*200 fresh podded peas (or frozen if you HAVE to!) cooked for 30 seconds in boiling salted water and drained
250g fresh ricotta
salt and pepper
1 Tbsp chopped chives, mint or chervil (or a mixture of all 3)
pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
85g freshly grated Parmesan
1 egg whisked with salt pepper and water to serve
200g fresh broad (fava) beans, blanched for a few seconds and peeled if large good olive oil, chervil sprigs and grated Parmesan*

1. Place ricotta in a robot coupe with the cooled peas and puree until almost smooth, season with salt and pepper. Remove to a bowl and stir in the herbs, nutmeg and Parmesan. Taste and cover.
2. Prepare a baking sheet by lining it with silicone wax paper sprinkled with a little pasta flour.
3. Cut the pasta into 3 or 4 and roll each one



by one through a pasta machine on decreasing settings until it is almost at its thinnest. Lay the sheets, one at a time on a table top and cut them into even sized squares, approximately 5cmx5cm. Dust them with a little flour to prevent sticking.

4. Working a small batches, using a teaspoon, scoop the filling into the centre of each square, then brush the edge of the pasta sparingly with the egg wash.
5. Fold the squares over into triangles and press the edges gently together (and gently push the trapped air out at the same time).
6. Lay them on the baking sheet, with a little space between them. Cook ideally within a few hours.

TO SERVE

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and warm 6 soup bowls.

Poach the ravioli gently for 2-3 minutes or until the pasta is cooked to your liking. At the last second add the cooked fava beans, then drain very carefully and divide all between the serving bowls. Immediately drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Scatter with chervil sprigs and freshly grated Parmesan and serve.

MESSY CATHEDRAL

Alexandra Swann and family had a marvellous day making St Paul's messy in January. She tell us why!

When I hear of any trip to St Pauls, be it with school or church, I always jump at the chance! There is something so majestic and inspiring about the place, that I always feel energised and renewed from my visit – even if it is with 30 kids!!

So I was thrilled to hear Jenny Welsh that Messy Church was coming to St Paul's again this year! An opportunity for our children to see the cathedral as they never had before! Messy Church is a world wide organisation that aims to teach Children to lead Christ-centred lives through creativity, hospitality and celebration (and mess!).

St Pauls was hosting Mess Church to celebrate the feast day of the conversion of Paul.

Messy Church started for us before we even entered the cathedral, as mother (who had kindly got us all drinks) spilt them all over the Cathedral steps. Poor Jenny, watched stoically as the hot chocolate she had so been looking forward to on this cold day, sat in a puddle at her feet. My mother and I thought this a good time to make a swift departure into the crypt, leaving Jenny standing alone before the incriminating evidence waiting for the other 22 participating children and their families to arrive.

A guard did approach her and you will be glad to know that someone was quickly called in to clean up the mess. St Paul's security will be keeping an eye on her in the future...

We entered through the crypt where each child was handed a St Paul's bag to fill up with all the crafts. This added to the sense of excitement of things to come! As we entered the Cathedral floor, a friendly guide greeted us and pointed us in the direction of the 15 drop in craft stalls available to us! At which point I could hear my children gasp with joy at the sheer amount of activities. Numbers had been carefully controlled this year, so you never felt overcrowded, there was plenty of space and plenty staff available to help the little ones.

The Light of the World theme saw children making lighthouse candles by decorating paper cups then placing a battery operated tea-light on top as well as glow stick necklaces. Julie Grills was thrilled as this was perfect for her son Wilfred's Candlemas homework!. My girls still have the lighthouse and have been including it in many playtime activities! I think that was one of the most popular crafts and so simple to put together. This is one to remember for our Sunday School!

The children spent the rest of the afternoon making paper prayer hangers, bead necklaces, glitter angels and colouring in "plastic stained glass windows", as well as headbands and twinkly cds. Banner making was to be found in the crypt: all children could decorate a portion of the banner which would then be displayed during the Family Eucharist that followed the Messy Church.

If you could tear your child away from the crafts, there were 3 scheduled story telling sessions including the story of Florence Nightingale and 2 music workshop sessions where children get to be right up close to a church organ!

So the visit was educational in many ways and absolutely free of charge!

This is what one little girl wrote in her school diary after the visit: "On Saturday our papa drove my sister and I to St Paul's cathedral fo a special children's day. In the crypt we saw Nelson's and Wellington's tombs. Then we went upstairs to do some craft activities like making a necklace with a cross in the middle. Then we listened to the story of Florence Nightingale. She saved the soldiers in the Crimean war of 1854. We looked around the cathedral.



My favourite was Nelson's tomb because of the beautiful mosaics. Nelson saved England in a sea battle. We had a good day out.

Messy Church was followed by a Family Eucharist in which children could carry the banner they had created together. This was Archie's highlight! His sister Margot loved the paper candle handed out that said "I will make people smile".

On the way out, we saw a little toddler stop suddenly in front of a gigantic statue and he gasped, eyes wide open in amazement then exclaimed "What?!!". It was such a privilege to be in this striking building full of art, history, beauty and wonder.

All children were handed a chocolate biscuit on the way out printed with an icing Messy Church logo and a bookmark to remember the day.

All in all, this was a very well organised affair and I hope even more of you will join us next year!!

Oh and by the way, (please don't let this put you off!) Russell Brand (?!?) was spotted sitting under the Dome with a nice foulard wrapped round his neck soaking up the atmosphere...

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