

*Fr Hoyal Writes*

## **THEN NOW NEXT...**

Sunday 8 June marks the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the consecration of the original All Saints in 1868 by Charles Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol.

Clifton parishes were all in Evangelical hands at the time. From the start Richard Randall, the first vicar, knew what he was about – reclaiming the fullness of Catholic faith and practice in the Church of England.

In tune with the dedicated group who inspired the building of All Saints, he wanted All Saints to be a model for worship and teaching in line with a wholeheartedly Catholic interpretation of the Book of Common Prayer.

“We began at once,” he writes, looking back, “with the daily Morning and Evening Prayer ordered in the Prayer Book, with a daily celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and with two celebrations on Sundays and all Saints’ Days.” While we have long been used to this level of worship provision at All Saints, and still are, in the 1860s this was most uncommon in the Church of England.

From the start all seats were free; there were no pew rents to discourage the poor. On Sundays and Holy Days there was always a fully choral celebration of the Eucharist with as much godly ceremonial as was deemed consonant with Church of England rules. Preaching standards were excellent, and soon large numbers of children were attending and enjoying the weekly children’s service on Sunday afternoons.

Mattins and Evensong were sung daily during the week as well as on Sundays, and a choir school was soon established to support the services. High choral standards were very much part of Randall’s vision of first-class worship for the new All Saints, and I am glad to say they remain important.

All Saints-tide 1869 saw the inauguration of the annual All Saints festival. The church was soon justly famous for its yearly November octave of well

attended daily services of great power and devotion, embellished by sermons from celebrated preachers of the time.

The advanced Catholicism of the parish inspired and delighted many but inevitably displeased others. Bishop Ellicott respected Randall's integrity and ability, yet he long opposed certain aspects of Randall's High Church teaching and practice, thus making it difficult for Randall and All Saints to play any part in the life of the diocese. But by the later part of Randall's incumbency the bishop was won round enough to make Randall an honorary canon of Bristol.

We are hugely in debt to the faith and commitment of our predecessors, Randall himself not least. Certainly, gratitude is in order, though not necessarily uncritical gratitude.

But a 140 years on, and already 41 years into occupation of the new All Saints so different from G E Street's Victorian building, how have we fared?

Inevitably, answers to this question will be a blend of plusses and minuses. Either way, our anniversary year beginning this June provides us with valuable opportunities for reflection and evaluation.

The festival will encourage us to revisit our roots. We must look back and re-inform ourselves. What was it like *then* and why? And what does *then* tell us about *now*? What have we lost, what have we gained, what are the current needs? This is a good moment to examine our *now*.

In this task we have the stimulus of the continuing diocesan growth initiative and the benefit of our own recent work to produce a parish growth plan. But we have to reckon with the uncertain effect of current Church controversies, as our Victorian forebears had to with those in their day. *Now* and *next* remain matters for prayerful attention.

An All Saints-tide festival of the style and magnitude once our custom is not currently being considered. But I am delighted by the enthusiasm behind the week-long All Saints festival planned for September to mark our 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The programme of special services, displays and exhibitions, and social and musical events will be a wonderful opportunity to “put ourselves on offer” as we welcome new friends and old. We have much to share about *then* and *now*. Hopefully the festival week will also help us identify and own those things God wants of us *next*.

To my mind, the uniting principle in regard to *then* and *now* and *next* for All Saints is still very much centred upon what motivated Randall and his generation, viz sacrificial commitment to the Catholic faith in the Church’s proclamation of Christ.

This is a harder undertaking now, despite widespread adoption over the years of so-called Catholic practices within the Church of England. Uncritically accepted habits of worship are not necessarily a sign of principled conviction.

The Prayer Book is not in the unifying position it once was – we no longer all use the same words and the same services, and we certainly don’t all embrace the teaching and discipline of the Prayer Book.

Evangelicalism has been in the ascendant for several decades again. And while time will tell about the rightness or otherwise of women’s ordination, there is no denying that its introduction has provoked new divisions within the Church in the shorter term at least.

Since Randall’s day, society at large has become much more secularised, church attendance has been in decline, and other faiths are now very much in evidence. *Next* is not going to be easy.

Amid all this I remain attentive to the dynamic we encounter in the Eucharist, where in obedience to Christ’s command the past is brought into the present, and for the sake of the future.

“Do this in remembrance of me” is no wistful ordinance. It effects the making real and present for us now of the once-for-all sacrifice of the cross. That is what we celebrate and proclaim in the Mass. And we do so to secure Christ’s presence with us both now and for the future.

It is these considerations that underlie the choice of the title THEN NOW NEXT... for the forthcoming festival. I hope many will be glad to be involved. Even more, I pray that the worship and mission of All Saints will be renewed as we seek to celebrate and make our own the commitment to Christ and the Catholic faith that so characterised All Saints 140 years ago.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Hoyle".

### **Churchwarden's ramblings on Trinity One.**

I've turned the AGA back up, for the third or fourth time, and this morning I said to My Colleague, with my customary diffidence, 'I wonder what would happen if we switched the boilers on?' His response was Pure Fear. We do not need heating; we are quite warm enough; such a grave step should only be taken once a year, with acolytes, cross and incense. 'And the Asperges?' I asked. 'Yes, but not near the pilot light!'

What we need is more festivals, to keep us warm with candle power. But even the Big Six began to give out this morning. They were new for Pentecost, to provide the tongues of fire, but the rushing wind has beset them. Back right is going down too quickly, and burning but feebly. Back left is six inches shorter than its friends, and by the end of Mass today had gone out. Madam Sacristan intends to see to them. Poor lambs. I noted that Our Lady was fully supplied with candles, and probably the donors were sitting at her feet. It's a far cry from the other morning when I stood outside to welcome the congregation and watched a jackdaw and a

magpie enjoying a dog fight. The magpie was in ruthless pursuit of the jackdaw, when the jackdaw stalled, dropped and came up on the maggot pie's tail. Just like a Spitfire.

I do have other interests, you know. The latest obsession is to forestall any incipient ASC identity crisis. I have ordered two more notice boards, sizeable beasts with lots of room for, yes, you've guessed it, notices. But the provider is having problems sourcing cork. You know what has happened? Thanks to the wicked ways of the wine trade, who now use plastic stoppers (well, by definition they cannot be corks!) or, absit omen, screw tops, the cork industry is in decline, cork trees will be felled in favour of sustainable sycamores, and pin boards are now made with squashed paper. Nothing daunted, I have started a one woman campaign to support the cork 'cork' industry, and you need only check my black box for the evidence of my commitment.

I fought temptation today. I fought it on Corpus Christi too, but I lost that battle, so let's move on. Today, I checked that the sacristy was safe before going up to make sure that the All Saints Society was conducting itself appropriately at the Bar, and there, there on the table was a folded sphincter, sorry cincture, befringed and of a fuchsia hue. But I left it there. It is to adorn Evensnog: I'll see you there.

Next Wednesday we are to be licensed in ecclesia Sancti Gregorii.\* I shall swear an oath. Makes a change, dunnit?

Have a happy flaming June.

MCW

\* Next month's Notes to be in Latin: I have work to do.

## **GLASTONBURY PILGRIMAGE 2008    Saturday 21 June**

### **2008 Theme: St Alban – “Beholding the Glory”**

Hurry! There may still be a few seats available on shared transport with All Hallows Easton for this year’s Glastonbury Pilgrimage.

We warmly invite families and children and newer church members to join our stalwarts for what is a most enjoyable day.

We shall be at Glastonbury in good time for children to participate in special young people’s activities at 11 before the great midday Procession through the town that precedes the Festival Mass in the ancient Abbey grounds.

We picnic in the grounds afterwards, and then there is time to relax or look round the town before Pilgrim Prayers and Benediction at 3.30 pm close the day in time for us to be back in Bristol by 6 pm or so.

Please add your name to the porch list without delay. The new-look pilgrimage programme has made the event better than ever.

As last year, all collections will go to support WaterAid’s vital work in Uganda, where many have no access to safe water.

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## **WELCOME TO ...**

**Tom Handy** - on placement from Trinity College at All Saints and All Hallows for a month from Sunday 15 June. Tom and his wife Becky are already worshipping with us on Sundays in preparation for his placement. Offers of meals for Tom in the period from 15 June to 13 July would be appreciated – please contact Fr Richard if you can help.

Tom has kindly written the following for us:

*As far as a passage about myself goes, I have always lived in Somerset having grown up between the Chew Valley and Clevedon. I studied theology at Exeter University and am pursuing an MA course alongside ministerial training. Before starting training I was a secondary school RE teacher at Gordano School in Portishead. I have attended a variety of different churches in my life, mainly from central and open evangelical traditions. I haven't had any previous experience of anglo-catholic tradition, but am looking forward to the opportunity provided by the placement. I am a fairly introverted person but am very comfortable in a public role. In my sending church (Christchurch in Clevedon) I have had experience in planning and leading worship and preaching.*

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***SUNDAY 6<sup>th</sup> JULY***  
**DEDICATION FESTIVAL**  
**& FRIENDS SUNDAY**

*41st Anniversary of Consecration of the new All Saints and  
the 140<sup>th</sup> of the original Consecration*

**11.00 am FESTIVAL MASS**

- attended by **Friends of All Saints**

***Guest Preacher* Canon Donald Macdonald**

*Assistant Priest at All Saints 1975-78*

**Parish Picnic afterwards at church**

*Come and give thanks for All Saints as  
we rededicate ourselves in God's service.*



## **WALSINGHAM 2008**

Our parish pilgrimage this year to this lovely Shrine village is from Monday 6 to Friday 10 October, and we are sharing a coach with St Gregory's Horfield since they are booked for the same week.

The beauty and holiness of Walsingham, and the wonderful spiritual fellowship one always meets there, make the pilgrimage a very special experience. Do ask Garfield Griffiths or Fr Hoyal if you would like to know more.

It is already time to book – please contact Garfield, either at church or at 0117 9441035 or [Garfield.Griffiths@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Garfield.Griffiths@uwe.ac.uk) .

## **IN THIS MONTH ... JUNE 1926**

### Missa de Sanctis

With reference to this Mass which was sung on Sunday in the Octave of the Ascension, I think it probable many of our congregation may not be aware that the Mass was specially composed for our Church and is dedicated to our Organist (Mr Kirby) and the Choir of All Saints'.

In reply to a letter of congratulation and thanks sent to Dr Pearce on behalf of the Choir on the occasion of this, the first rendering of the Mass, Dr Pearce, who personally conducted, writes as follows:

“Thank you for your kind letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> which I read with much joy. I am so glad my little Missa de Sanctis has met with the approval of the Choir of All Saints' Clifton.



Please thank all the members, including my dear old friend W.E. Kirby, for the perfectly delightful rendering of the work which they and the band gave on Sunday morning last, a rendering in which it was my honoured privilege to have a share. Everything seemed to go smoothly and reverently and *con amore*.

The highest praise you can bestow upon my music is to say as you do in your letter that it is suitable for the solemn service which called it into existence. Like Beethoven, I may be permitted to say ‘it has come from the heart’; and, if it has been fortunate enough to touch the hearts of those for whom it was written, I can only say in thankfulness and humility *Non nobis Domine*.

I sincerely wish I lived nearer your glorious church, that I might be able to attend its services *regularly*. *I love it*. May God’s blessing ever rest upon the good work done there for His glory and the advancement of the Catholic Faith and Practice.”

**BRISTOL SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES (BSOCS)  
LECTURE ON 7TH OCTOBER 2008**

“*Climate Change: a Challenge for Christians*” and the speaker is Sir Ghillean Prance. The lecture takes place at Woodlands Church on 7 October 2008, starting at 7.30 pm. Admission is £5 and there is no pre-booking.