

Father Hoyal Writes

NUTS AND BOLTS

Our annual parish meeting takes place as usual on Passion Sunday, this year 29 March. Technically there are two meetings.

The first is the **Annual Meeting of Parishioners** to elect church wardens for the coming twelve months. In fact all registered residents of the (geographical) parish are entitled to vote, as well as All Saints Electoral Roll members, though few non ER members choose to exercise this right.

The second is the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** which considers church reports and accounts from the preceding calendar year and elects PCC members, Deanery Synod representatives, Ebbsfleet representatives. Only Electoral Roll members have a vote at this meeting.

!6 is the youngest at which one may go on the Electoral Roll. You are entitled to go on if you live in the parish or if you have attended All Saints regularly for at least six months.

Every year the Electoral Roll is brought up to date by our Electoral Roll Officer (currently Caroline Griffiths – 0117 9441035 or cjplai@googlmail.com) in readiness for the parish meeting. Forms are now available in church or from Caroline.

If All Saints is “your church” and you qualify to go on the Electoral Roll, do please see you return an application form without delay. It encourages us to know that people officially identify with us and “belong”; it also gives rights – the right to vote, for example, and extends to non-residents the rights which

residents of the parish have to the services of their church and clergy.

At All Saints, church wardens usually serve for four years. This year Anne Bradley steps down, having discharged her duties with exemplary dedication and ability. We are hugely in her debt. Our other warden is Roger Hopkins who, if electors are wise and he agrees, will continue in office for two more years.

Given the wide range of responsibilities that fall to church wardens, this year we are hoping to establish a small group of church members willing to take on the role of assistant warden, sometimes deputising for wardens when appropriate, and perhaps offering expertise in particular areas. This could be of considerable benefit to heavily committed wardens, and would also allow a wider group to understand all that has to be considered and dealt with by our lay officers.

The PCC (Parochial Church Council) has legal standing and directs and oversees a good deal of church business, advised by the PCC standing committee which always includes the priest in charge, the wardens and the treasurer.

PCC members are usually elected for a three-year period, though can stand for re-election if desired. Up to about third of elected PCC members end their term every year, giving the opportunity for time out from PCC commitments and also allowing “new blood” to come onto the council.

Understandably enough, many worshippers enjoy the benefits of church worship and fellowship but are barely aware of the important and frequently essential work done on behalf of all by our wardens and PCC members.

May I ask that, this Lent of “Making All Things New”, we renew our appreciation for all that is done by wardens and other PCC members? Please make an effort to learn more about the many responsibilities they carry on our behalf. Please pray with gratitude for all involved. And please, if you are eligible, do be willing to come forward and offer your services if the little voice within or trustworthy voices without are calling.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Hoyle".

The lantern and the flame

It is always good to gain a fresh or another perspective. Often, through outsiders, we can see things more clearly; and just occasionally discover new insights or perceptions.

Since the opening of our current Visitors' Book in March 2008, we have welcomed many people throughout the last twelve months from near and far – a few very close indeed - and others from as far away as Japan, Estonia, Italy, Portugal, Poland, Brazil, Finland, Holland and Greece. Some have visited for the first time and others have fondly returned to All Saints after decades of absence.

Many have kindly and most generously recorded their impressions for others to read long after they have gone. This is what some of those visitors who have written have said about All Saints' Clifton:

“Lovely and warm on a cold Easter Day.

What a beautiful and calm place.

A loving calm presence.

I come into the church often when I need sane time or calm.

A wonderful tranquil place.

A truly beautiful and inspiring place.

All Saints will always be in my heart and part of good memories.

This church is so beautiful and peaceful.

It is pleasant to see that English Catholicism is alive.

It is a beautiful church and the spaces are good for prayer.

Beautiful - the old and the new.

So interesting, colourful and peaceful.

One of the most beautiful and uplifting churches I have ever seen. The building is most inspiring and happy. I'm so glad I came.

It was really cool.

A lovely space, a living church, a wonderful experience of light and colour.

Lovely flowers and beautiful presentation of artefacts – thank you.

Beautiful windows by John Piper and a lovely feeling of space in the church.

Beautiful and prayerful church.

A lovely church – a delight to be here.

A wonderful return after 50 years.

My first visit here in 30 years.

Thank you for being so beautiful.

I came here and met with Jesus. I experienced his peace and found him in the prayers of the Saints. Thank you Lord.

The peace, warmth and special feeling always welcome me when I visit here – sadly not as often as I'd like.

God is all around you.

Lovely service.

Thank you for having open doors to allow me to light candles and pray.

Thank you for this beautiful church dear Lord.

On my first visit here I can feel the grace and love.

I liked the nativity scene and the pictures.

So beautiful.

The church is a lantern: the altar the flame within it.

Lovely atmosphere: thank you for being open.

Lovely church.
The acoustic was brilliant.”

Quite some advertisements! How can we use them?

Alan Rundle

IN THIS MONTH ... MARCH 1982

Excerpts from the final Sunday sermon preached on 31st January by Fr George Bennett, Curate at All Saints' from 1976 – 1982.

I first heard the name All Saints' Clifton at my ACCM selection Conference in 1971. Eighteen months later I found myself in Bristol at the Church Army Hostel, doing a year's placement as Assistant Warden before entering theological college. I came to know All Saints' and soon found myself drawn to worship here regularly. Drawn like a magnet to the beautiful liturgy in its fine modern setting, from the Eucharist celebrated there I was able to draw sustenance for the week's work ahead. Then in 1976 the unbelievable occurred; by one of those miracles which God gives us all from time to time I returned as a newly-fledged deacon.

I have been immensely blessed in these first years of my ministry at this great church. But I am aware of the moments when something might have been said or done rather differently, aware of the poverty of my life of prayer, the inadequacy of my ministry in so many respects. Thank God, we preach not ourselves but Jesus Christ – risen, alive, reigning and glorious.

Counting your blessings is always a salutary exercise. When I do it there is always the petition, “And thank you for sending me to All Saints' Clifton”. What a wealth of experience I have gained here. What a great debt of gratitude of kindness I owe to you all for your kindness,

forbearance, sympathy and example. It is I who have spoken from the pulpit, but you have spoken in lives of splendid eloquence of the mystery of Christ working in human lives, shining in human faces.

In a new era [*with Father Jeremy Younger*] our worst reaction would be to sit back and assume that the Catholic faith and its expression were something entirely static. Above all, a church like this is noted for its atmosphere because it is a holy place because people have filled it with their prayers. During my short time here how many men and women of prayer have died, to continue their ministry elsewhere? Is this house of God still a house of prayer?

Secondly, there is the danger to be slightly superior about ourselves. We can sometimes be spiritual snobs, mistaking the glory of the world for the glory of God, remarking, “We go to All Saints’ Clifton” in the same way we might say “We shop at Harrods”. All Saints’ is brimful of talent and expertise. It seems to me that more might be shared with other parishes. Let us share our good fortune and not keep it to ourselves.

There is the danger in a church where worship is the top priority that overemphasis on the trappings of worship will lead to that strange sub-culture which retired majors complain of when they use the word *ritualism*. Ceremonial is important. But if the church becomes a shrine with no prophetic ministry and no social involvement, we are like the men of Judah in Jeremiah 7:4 who chant, ‘This place is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.’ Jesus says of true worship, ‘God is spirit and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.’ (John 4: 24). The most beautiful ceremonial, the most enchanting music, is dust and ashes without a loving response to the father and his love in Christ our Lord.

All Saints’ will be great, not when it chants, “We are All Saints’, Clifton, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord”, but when it cries aloud, “Glory to Christ our Saviour.” For all its glory, this beautiful church is just a piece of equipment for pilgrims, and the beauty of the liturgy just the merest shadow of the glory to come.

[Father George went from All Saints' to be Team Vicar of S John's Newbury. From 1993 to 2006 he was Incumbent of Llwynderw in the Diocese of Brecon. He is now Incumbent at S Peter's Newton and residentiary Canon of Brecon Cathedral.]

Lent Charities 2009

The monetary saving from our Lenten self-denial are, as usual, going to two charities, one at home and one overseas.

The Julian Trust is our home charity. It offers a bed for the night for up to 15 people, and hot meals, showers and other comforts to 75 more per night, five nights per week. It is run entirely by volunteers and is always in desperate need of money for maintenance and repairs, as well as for routine bills. Vera Sanders and Chris Paul are both seasoned volunteers and would be willing to tell anybody more about aspects of the Trust's work.

<http://www.juliantrust.org.uk>

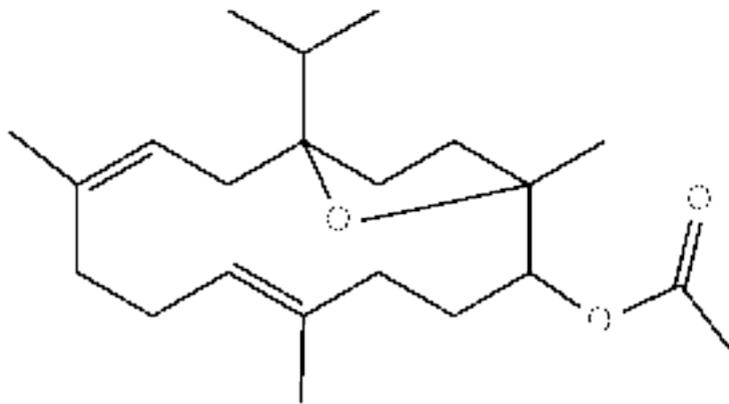
The Archbishops' Zimbabwe Appeal is our overseas charity. Launched on Ash Wednesday, and administered by USPG, it aims to make a difference to the 70% of the population who are without work and the 63% who are in imminent danger of starvation. It will also offer help to those affected by cholera and HIV.

All Saints has an excellent record of responding to need and emergencies. Please make sure Lent 2009 beats all records, personal and corporate.

http://www.uspg.org.uk/article.php?article_id=509

Molecule of the month: incensole acetate $C_{23}H_{38}O_3$

Opium for the people?



Incensole acetate, a member of the terpene family and made up of isoprene units, is a byproduct of the burning of frankincense, the resin of *Boswellia sacra*. We are brought up to believe that incense has a symbolic meaning, but it is now thought to have far more than that. Moussaieff *et al.* 2008 have proven it proven to reduce anxiety and cause antidepressive behaviour in mice. Their international team from Johns Hopkins University and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem administered incensole acetate to mice. They found that the compound significantly affected areas in brain areas known to be involved in emotions as well as in nerve circuits that are affected by current anxiety and depression drugs. Specifically, incensole acetate activated a protein called TRPV3, present in mammalian brains and also known to play a role in the perception of warmth of the skin. When mice bred without this

protein were exposed to incensole acetate, the compound had no effect on their brains.

If burning incense is of benefit to church mice, what might it not do for churchgoers? There could be a whole PhD project in investigating the incidence of depression in incense-using and incense-eschewing congregations.

Moussaieff, A et al. 2008. Incensole acetate, an incense component, elicits psychoactivity by activating TRPV3 channels in the brain. *FASEB J.* , **22**: 3024-3034.

ALL SAINT'S ARTS

As you will all be aware there were a number of very enjoyable musical and artistic events throughout 2008 and to continue and build upon this success the PCC has approved the formation of a new committee to be specifically responsible for promoting and staging artistic events at All Saints in the future. This committee will be named "All Saints' Arts"

This is a tremendously challenging and exciting opportunity which, if we can make it successful, will enrich church and local community life. Committee meetings will be kept to a minimum but there will be plenty of exciting events and good fun.

If you are interested in helping please contact Andrew Morgan
Tel 9741056 (home) 9467100 (Office) e-mail Andrew@morgan-beddoe.co.uk

POLITICIANS, PRIESTS and PROFESSORS ...

Imagine, as you listen to the Today programme on your radio tomorrow morning, that news is coming through of a terrible plane crash at Bristol Airport, in which over 250 people are killed. How do you react I wonder? Probably with a range of emotions; you would, perhaps, be shocked, bewildered, angry or very sad. Many might be inclined to demand a public enquiry.

In the UK alone, there are more than 100,000 deaths from sudden heart attacks every year. Do your maths. The equivalent of a planeload, today, tomorrow, the day after... that's the scale of heart disease. It does not discriminate. We are all vulnerable - yes politicians, priests and professors included! And heart disease affects women as well as men; 1 in 3 women who die this week will be killed by heart and circulatory disease.

I am one of the lucky ones - not a plane crash survivor - but having recovered, thanks to highly skilled surgery, from a highly successful quadruple heart bypass operation at the end of 2006. I have now decided to take on another marathon challenge, by becoming a Heart Runner in the London Marathon on April 26th to help raise vital funds for **the British Heart Foundation - the nation's heart charity for pioneering research that saves and improves the lives of vulnerable adults and children.**

Please be as generous as you can and help me to raise £5,000. Marathons don't get any easier: the next two months are going to be very hard going indeed with many hours of gruelling weekly training in and around Clifton and Bristol. Your most generous support will not only help me in these preparations

but on the day itself. Your thoughts and generosity will get me round, I promise you.

Now the easy bit! You can donate online simply by clicking this link: www.justgiving.com/alanrundle. Alternatively, you can post a cheque made out to "BHF" to me at Rundle Brownwood Ltd, Leigh Court, Abbots Leigh, Bristol BS8 3RA. Or fill in the form on the Atrium table and I will catch you later! And if you are a taxpayer, don't forget to Gift Aid your donation. It's worth an extra 28p for every £1 you donate.

Thank you for your kind support.

Alan Rundle

**“MAKING ALL THINGS NEW”
TRY SOMETHING NEW**

We often refer to ourselves as the All Saints Family, as indeed we are, but we could also be described as a family with four branches. This Lent, why not try something new and perhaps meet parochial second cousins twice removed that you never knew existed? I can suggest three ways to do this, and there may well be more. Surprise me.

It might feel like visiting the other hemisphere, especially on a dark spring morning, but if you are an 11 o'clock person, visit an earlier service. The 8 o'clock is a select, even elite band of people prepared to rise early and brave the darkness and the frost. Birdsong, the early morning light, foxes and the constant tussle for possession of our forecourt between magpies, jackdaws and occasionally a jay will greet you. The service is a no frills Eucharist; it is my impression that the congregation are not there to avoid bells and smells, but for positive reasons connected with space and spirituality. The 9 30 Family Service (Mass on the 2nd and 4th Sundays and sometimes others as a nice surprise) is not intended to offer a peaceful ambience. Children are welcome, and clearly feel that way. Older people are welcome and seem to enjoy the shorter service, the interaction of ages and the comfortable hour. Per contra, if you always go to one of these services, and have never dipped a toe in the full on Anglo-Catholicism

of the 11 o'clock, it's time you tried it, if only so that you can understand references to 'all that smoke' and how loud the organ was and the unattractive colours of Fathers' frocks. And the drama and the choreography and the worship of God with incense and music and lights. Evensong is a quiet end to the day, almost always with the wonder of Benediction. And if you kid yourself that you won't know anyone at these strange alien services, remember, the clergy and us churchwardens are there too.

At a more domestic level, this Lent there are several Home Groups meeting at a variety of convenient (code for 'you have no excuse') times and places. Hosted and attended by more parochial friends and relations, their purpose this year is to dissect last Sunday's sermon. Regard this as licence to offer constructive criticism, and the opportunity to extract the juice from the orange. Notices are in the atrium and in the porch.

Even more domestic, the fun element of helping to set up the set piece services is this year offered to all. We need posies for Mothering Sunday and we need Palm Crosses. One of the major life skills is learning to fold a palm leaf into a cross, and you'll love to learn it.

Posy making: Mar 21 Saturday: Mothering Sunday posy workshop, Randall Room 10 – 11 30 am. Talk to Liz Badman, she needs YOUR help.

Palm Crosses: Mar 22 Sunday Palm Cross making between Mass and the Parish lunch, upstairs in the Randall Room: this is a competitive occasion, table vs table. Talk to a Warden or Jean the Sacristan or just turn up.

Happy Lent,
Anne

PS When you try your new service, and I repay you by looking confused, be kind to me, I have a simple mind accustomed to tram lines.