

Fr Hoyal Writes

Now NEXT!

I do hope that as many as possible will be with us for our Parish Conference on Saturday 8 October – see elsewhere for details.

It is a timely opportunity to reflect on where All Saints currently is and how we are doing. For in the light of what we note, we need to look forward and try to discern God's future for All Saints.

Locally and nationally, the Church of England is changing fast, and so is society. We need to see our parish situation in Clifton against that background and ask questions about what we are and what we do. In each case, I would suggest, we need to ask our questions in relation to four areas: our Worship, our Witness, our Mission and our Service.

Suggested questions are:

- What must *not* change, because it *de fide* – is part of the 'everlasting Gospel' and the 'Faith once for all delivered to the saints'?
- What most certainly needs to change, because it has ceased to be relevant or effective, and so much so that it is holding us back?
- What challenges must we embrace, and what responsibilities must we not shun?
- What opportunities and advantages have we that we should be making better use of?

These suggestions are, of course, merely illustrative.

To my mind, our imminent conference follows naturally from the theme that underpinned our 140th anniversary celebrations three years ago. That was: THEN – NOW – NEXT.

We rightly pay full regard to our history – where we have come from – it is an inspiring story.

We rightly seek to assess our current situation – what is good and valuable, and what is perhaps less so – and this needs doing carefully, or we shall make some bad mistakes.

And we rightly pray for guidance from God as we look about us and discern what we need to be aiming for if our future is to coincide with his purposes for us. We shall need just the right mix of obedience, boldness, humility and faith.

There is just one thing I would add. A glance through this issue of our magazine reminds us that there is a world out there bigger than our immediate parish concerns.

A glance at current notices about forthcoming events reminds us of a bigger picture which, beside matters of obvious church interest, embraces music and the arts; crime, punishment and reform; wholeness and healing; science and technology; ecology and the future; Christianity in the developing world; inequality and society. It's not just about *us*!

If, with a wealth of opportunities like this, we are not really connecting, then perhaps something is amiss. There are neighbours out there to associate with and love as well as within our congregation and amid our social acquaintance.

The one that challenges me most is the invitation that has come from the chaplain of HM Prison & Young Offenders Unit

Ashfield (Pucklechurch), a prison for young male offenders between 15 and 18. An open evening on "Exploring Prison Ministry" is being held at the prison on Monday 17 October.

This is a chance to find out about volunteer Christian ministry in prison (lay and ordained) and how the Church in the community can help those in prison. Do we have one or two people who might be right for such work, I wonder? I hope so.

Do read the porch poster about this and the letter from Ashfield (copies in the atrium). Those wishing to attend will need to send in an Attendance Response Slip before the day, and come with photo identification (eg passport or driving licence).

Of course, this might not be you at all. But something else may be, whether an opportunity at church or in the community; and the conference may just point you towards it, as well as help us all go forward. So do attend if you can.

Please God, our conference will trigger a strengthening of our connections – with him, with one another, *and* with society more generally.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Hoyle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

18th September Finance update

In 3 weeks time we will have our Parish conference when we will discuss our future as a living, working and witnessing Christian community.

One of our biggest challenges is how we keep going from a financial point of view. You may have looked at the notice board in the atrium which sets out a few facts and figures. Some of this may already be familiar for those who are on the PCC or who have attended the APCM but please do look at the information or ask the Wardens or Treasurer if you have any queries.

This is a beautiful building, but it is not just the building that we have to maintain even though it stretches our financial resources to keep it open and welcoming. We are part of the wider Church of England and need to contribute financially to support our priests, bishops, the diocese and the wider Anglican Church.

Our Parish Share is a most important call on our commitment to God and our membership of the Church of England. As a congregation we belong to the Church of England and therefore have an obligation to make this commitment a priority. For the past two years we have failed to contribute the amount of £67,000 requested of us. At the end of 2010 we even had to put out an appeal to balance our books despite the fact that we did not pay our Parish Share in full. In 2012 we are being asked for a contribution of £68,000. Clearly we cannot go on with one off appeals. We have to meet this ongoing challenge if All Saints is to have a future at all.

Please consider carefully whether you can commit to an increase in your financial contribution to this place of prayer and witness. An extra £5 per person per week would generate an additional £26,000 based on 100 people in the congregation. This isn't a matter of 'wouldn't it be nice if we could'. It is essential if we are to continue as a viable Christian community. Not everyone can afford such a sum

but those who can should consider whether there is some small thing that can be given back to God for all his generosity and love.

“A CLIFTON SALE”

I am sure that you have all seen the sold board on 70 Pembroke Road which was a particularly nostalgic sale for me as, like Tim Stanley, I spent a good deal of my childhood in that building where someone attempted, unsuccessfully, to teach me chemistry on the top floor whilst feeding me unhygienic lunches in the basement! So how and why did the property come to the market?

Roger Hopkins, Norman Drewett, Martin Robinson, Anne Bradley and Linda Trude are the trustees of what is known as “All Saints Clifton Endowments” an Endowment Trust able, though not exclusively, to make grants to All Saints church.

Over the years The Trust has acquired, mostly by bequest, a very small portfolio of properties including 70, Pembroke Road which was used for a variety of purposes including housing the clergy and some school classrooms.

Over the years the church’s need to provide this sort of accommodation has diminished and the trustees were faced with a decision either to spend vast amounts of money upgrading and managing the properties to provide suitable accommodation in a competitive residential market, or releasing the capital to be re-invested. Following professional advice, the trustees have made the decision to sell their property holdings over a period of time in order to save unnecessary expenditure on old property, and to effectively manage a planned income.

A purchaser was found, at Public Auction, for £850,000 which was a spectacular figure considering The Trustees have retained all of the rear garden to not only maintain the unique ambiance of the area, but also to keep all future options open for possible parking and access etc. The Trustees have, therefore, achieved a good result by selling what they didn't want and retaining what they did want!

It is a great temptation in these circumstances to assume that money can be spent on a "wish list" of desirable building works etc. for the church. As responsible Trustees of an Endowment Fund this type of expenditure is just not possible and the capital must be invested prudently to provide a regular income for the future and to be able to fulfill their function as a grant giving body. In addition "the family silver" can only be sold once! I am sure that you will all realize that in these volatile and, mostly depressing economic times, prudence is very much the keyword.

You will obviously appreciate from the above names that we are indeed fortunate to have Trustees who are so concerned and involved with the future of All Saints church. You will also appreciate that without their past support, maintenance problems could well have brought about the demise of the church and we would certainly be facing a bleak winter now, without any heating, as the PCC could not possibly afford to replace redundant boilers!

At present, The Trustees house and fully maintain accommodation for our Priest in Charge, the church gardens and the trees in Alma Vale Road – so they are already making a major contribution towards this part of Clifton as well as heavily supporting the Diocese and, consequently, also supporting All Hallows and Christchurch in the City by housing

their priest. In recent years they have also paid for all major maintenance in the church. They work closely with the current church wardens and are willing and, hopefully now able, to consider requests from the PCC for essential repairs and possible improvements throughout the coming years.

It should be made clear that PCCs are fully responsible for the maintenance of church buildings and cannot ignore these responsibilities. All Saints is extremely fortunate, therefore, in having the support of The Trustees to alleviate some of the problems of raising money for maintenance of the buildings and, in my opinion, this leaves the PCC with no excuse, to ignore its commitments to support the Christian Community in this area by supporting the Diocese via The Quota and to be more than instrumental in its mission to spread the word of God at home and abroad.

Andrew Morgan

Clerk to the Trustees.

Parish Conference 8th October 2011

Agenda

Mass is at 9.30am in Church. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

The conference will continue in the Parish Room at 10.10am

1. Introductions and housekeeping
2. The story – ‘Why do we come to All saints?’

3. What do we hope to achieve today
4. Group discussions – session 1
 - Leadership and Organisation
 - Growth
 - Children and Young People
 - Mission
 - Finance – what are the questions you want to ask?
 - What is important to us
5. Group discussions – session 2
Choose a different group
6. Tea/ Coffee
7. Group discussions – session 3
Choose a different group
8. Group discussions – session 4
Choose a different group
9. Lunch – this will be a sandwich lunch which will be provided when we can continue our discussions. (Please sign the list so that we know how many people are coming).
10. Plenary session and feedback
11. Summary and next steps.
12. Close at 2.00pm

The Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary

The Guild - a society for Church of England servers - was founded in 1898, and is open to any communicant Altar Server who “unreservedly accepts Catholic Faith and practice.” The Guild is a member of the Catholic Societies of the Church of England, and bears witness to the Catholic faith as received by the Church of England.

Various area Festivals are held throughout the country, and there are two national Festivals: the Easter Festival, incorporating the AGM, always held in London, and the Autumn Festival, which takes place in another part of England or Wales.

This year the Autumn Festival is being held in Bristol. There is a Solemn Concelebrated Mass in Bristol Cathedral at noon on Saturday 8 October, at which the preacher will be the Dean of Bristol, and the Guild Office will be sung in the Lord Mayor’s Chapel at 3.30pm, followed by Benediction.

Although this is a Guild “event”, I must emphasize that both are public services, and that everybody is welcome to either - or both - services.

Further information on the Guild may be obtained from the Secretary-General, Mr Terry Doughty, sec-gen@gssonline.org.uk, or Chris Verity.

Chris Verity

HARVEST CHARITY 2011 – GIVE POVERTY THE BOOT

Our Harvest Charity for this year is FARM Africa. This charity provides training and support to poor rural communities.

80% of people living in remote or rural areas of Africa rely on the food they grow and the animals they keep in order to survive.

Families are directly supported to help work themselves out of poverty through improved ways to manage their crops, livestock and water supplies

GIVE POVERTY THE BOOT is FARM Africa's harvest logo. Wellington Boots are the theme and there will be more information and displays in due course. Watch out for details

Our young people at All Saints will be challenging us with wearing our most colourful 'wellies' to church and more importantly filling them with money!.

www.farmafrica.org.uk

CAN WE FORGIVE?

Sermon preached by Fr Hoyal at Solemn Mass Sunday 11 September
(10th anniversary of 9/11)

Gospel: Matthew

18.21-35

Isn't it hard to forgive people when they've offended you in some way! Even if they had no intention of upsetting you, even if they're people we are friendly with, and even loved ones perhaps. As someone who hears confessions, I have to say that 'I just can't forgive so and so for what she did' crops up again and again. Truly forgiving someone can be really difficult.

When I was a young priest in Barnsley, I used to take Holy Communion to a delightful old man. Then in his nineties, he had been brought up as a Quaker and a pacifist. He'd had a good basic education. In earlier life he'd been a miner. That's how it was. This charming man was devout and he loved his Communion. He'd converse amiably on practically any topic. But there was just one subject when it was different. If you got him on the general strike of 1926, his face would lock hard, his eyes would fix, and speaking of the pit owners he'd say in a slow fierce grinding tone: 'I'll never forgive them, Father, for what they did to us in the great lock-out of 1926. I'll never forgive them.' It was a chilling transformation. Of course, his is no isolated case, is it?

Unfortunately there is simply no way of getting round that awkward section of the Lord's Prayer which says: Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And just so we don't evade the issue, we have our Lord telling Peter that there are no limits. If my brother sins against me (that's what the original text actually says, *brother not a member of the church* – it's not just about church. *Brother* covers everyone, just like *neighbour*, and so it even includes an enemy) – if my brother sins against me I must forgive him not seven times but seventy times seven, and that means always! Very tough.

We are hugely in debt to God, hugely (and not least those who go through life thinking they're pretty all right – 'I thank thee Lord that I am not as other men,' says the Pharisee). We are hugely in debt to God - if you think otherwise, I'm not quite sure why you are here - we are hugely in debt to God. For his part, he is glad to be merciful and forgiving. He gladly covers our debt through the fearsome price that was paid on the cross for our forgiveness.

But there is that condition. He requires us to be merciful. He requires us to be forgiving to those who are in debt to us, and whether it's something fairly small or something rather big, a few denarii or many thousands of talents.

It's a tall order. It's something that needs working at all our lives, and there are often setbacks. But perhaps we can gain inspiration and perspective and determination from three instances that I have read about recently.

Nelson Mandela spent years imprisoned on Robben Island because of his political opposition to the government's unjust treatment of non-whites. Picture the scene. It is the monthly Eucharist. Mandela and half a dozen other prisoners are attending. The priest gets to the point where all are invited to shake hands as a sign of sharing God's peace. In the room is a typical hard-bitten old-school Afrikaner warder with no love for Mandela's cause. He is called Christo Brandt. Mandela interrupts the service. "Brandt, man, you're a Christian, aren't you? Well then, you must join us for our service. Come over here." And Mandela shares the Peace with his captor. That is forgiving those who trespass against you.

Another situation. It is Harare, Zimbabwe, in April 1990. Fr Michael Lapsley is being wheeled frantically on a hospital trolley. A short while before, he started to open a packet – he thought there was a book inside. But it was a letter bomb, and it blew off both his hands. He is in desperate pain now, but the doctors can't give him anything – they have to keep him conscious until they have got him ready for surgery. Friends of Michael are trying to comfort him. They have to shout because both his eardrums have been shattered in the explosion. You might think he would be cursing whoever has done this awful thing to him. But he cries out to Phyllis, one of the friends standing close, "Phyllis, pray with me." She doesn't know what to

say. So Fr Michael asks her to say the Lord's Prayer. In the pressure of the moment she is struggling to remember the words." Our Father", she starts. She gets to "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive... and goes on as far as "and deliver us from evil. Amen." Fr Michael immediately shouts, "Go on, don't stop there!" "But that's where it ends," replies Phyllis – she is used to the shorter version. "But you can't stop there, " protests Fr Michael. You can't stop at evil... you have to go on: for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory." No, we mustn't stop with the evil. We must learn to forgive, even very cruel enemies. We must learn to go on ... to celebrate the kingdom, the power and the glory.

A final scene. The scene is a Cape Town black township in 1996. A 70 year-old woman is testifying before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A corrupt policeman had come with others one night and in front of the woman had shot her son at point-blank range. Two years later the same officer returned to arrest her husband. He didn't come back, so she thought he must have been executed. But some time later the policeman returned, and he took the woman to a place where he showed her her husband, still alive. But as her spirits lifted, the policeman doused her husband with petrol, set him on fire and killed him. Archbishop Tutu listens to the poor woman, desperately trying to control his emotions. "What would you like the outcome to be of this hearing?" he asks her. After a long pause, she replies: "Three things. First, I want to be taken to the place where my husband was burned, so I can gather up the dust and give his remains a decent burial. Second, my son and my husband were my only family. Therefore I want this police officer to become my son, to come twice a month and spend a day with me, so I can pour out on him whatever love I still have remaining inside me. Finally I want this officer to know that I offer him forgiveness, because Jesus Christ died to forgive me. Please would someone lead me across the hall so I can embrace him and let him know he is truly forgiven." Completely

overwhelmed, the police officer faints. As officials help him the women's friends and neighbours, most of them victims of the same sort of violence, begin to sing softly: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me..."

If that doesn't show us what Jesus means when he asks us to forgive those who have trespassed against us, I don't know what does. Please God, he will make us brave and good so that we learn to take reconciliation and forgiveness more seriously. Often it is so hard, isn't it? But it is so precious. And it is nothing less that Jesus asks of us.

Possibly someone here may be thinking: 'Doesn't he know what day this is? Isn't he going to say something about 9/11?'

Well, I have, really, haven't I?

PARISH RETREAT 2012

Our Parish Retreat will be from 5 pm on **Friday 2 March to 4 pm on Sunday 4 March 2012**, at Abbey House, Glastonbury.

The Retreat Conductor will be Canon Ray Brazier.

We have had to change the date of this retreat because Abbey House will closed during February for essential repairs to the heating system.

Please make a note in your diaries of these dates, and we look forward to seeing you.

WHITHER ALL SAINTS?

WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

[Adapted and deciphered from an undated memo found with Fr Peter's papers. Read it, Digest it, come to the Parish Conference and Talk about it!]

Why do you come to All Saints rather than your own parish?

All Saints from its foundation in 1868 has always been eclectic – the original parish bounded by Oakfield Road and All Saints Road, yet the church was built to seat 1200! – partly to cater for fashionable visitors.

Objects:

- 'musical service of a high order' (Mr Sargent of Merton)
- 'full Catholic teaching of C of E, outwardly as well as inwardly expressed' (Randall)
- daily Mass from the start
- publicly recited Offices – sung – Choir School closed 1962
- sung high celebration
- vestments from 1869 Easter
- incense and reservation from early in Canon Bromby's time

MASS – MUSIC – TEACHING

Persecution:

- no curates licensed 1873 – 1889
- no confirmations until 1889
- under a ban until 1920 because of reservation
- move to prosecute Randall in 1877 under the 1874 Public Worship Act

- Consistory Court case 1964 re perpetual reservation and place of reservation

MASS

- daily Mass maintained even in war, even the morning after the Church was bombed

MUSIC

- originally plainsong
- wobbly under influence of H A Wansborough later Vicar of Walsingham
- Gounod's Messe Solennele for Queen's Jubilee
- congregational settings of Mass and hymn singing
- cf All Saints Margaret Street

TEACHING

- sermons
- catechizing
- Parish Magazine
- Guilds – St Augustine, Holy Cross, All Souls, Men's Society
- Parish Missions 1871, 1877
- Octave sermons

'ANGLO-CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL OF THE WEST' (John Norton)

(1)

- Catholic Movement – C of E since beginning of revival in 1833 has gone through various phases. 'Anglo-Catholicism' was an old fashioned term when [Fr Peter] was a boy inter war and post war, (Bristol Anglo-Catholic Congress 1949)
- Vatican 2 and ascendancy of liberal theology in C of E
- 'Catholics in Crisis' (Francis Penhale)

- Largely negative, opposing Anglican Methodists; Covenanting (Lost leadership of liturgical revision); ordination of women

Often said that the Catholic Movement has achieved its aims

- centrality of Eucharist
- vestments
- reservation in most Cathedrals

But only partly true in [Fr Peter's] opinion:

- Mass seen just as a service, not as focus of a Eucharistic life, a life of thanksgiving, sacrifice and service of fellow men
- decline of weekday masses and observance of Festivals in week
- collapse of discipline: fasting and abstinence, regular private prayer, Confession

(2) All Saints has acquired a parish, first S Mary's Tyndall's Park 1962 – 1976, then S John's in 1978 (?largely moribund); no feeling of All Saints as parish church of area; All Saints doesn't look like typical C of E parish church.

Problems: still basically eclectic – any change and people leave – Christ Church just as eclectic but more popular.

But there is responsibility for geographical parish.

THE BASIC PURPOSES ARE THE SAME

- to be a centre of worship, maintain the daily round of Mass and Office, keep the church open for private prayer, liturgical excellence, good music but with congregational participation
- to be a centre for teaching, day conferences like one of Mary [a recent conference used as an example?] but need to concentrate on basics

Great weakness

- lack of infra structure

- lack of groups for discussion and fellowship
- Contact Groups never seem to have got off the ground
- nothing to feed newcomers into

How to fulfil our responsibility to the parish?

- to serve – problem of identifying needs – Mother & Toddler – problem of meeting them – no doubt loneliness
- to draw others to Christ.

WHY DO YOU COME?

WHAT HAVE WE TO OFFER?

HOW CAN WE SHARE IT MORE EFFECTIVELY?

nd Canon Peter Cobb

edited Anne Bradley September 2011