

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

The Churchwardens would like to thank everyone for their support and prayers over the last 14 months since the start of the interregnum and particularly during the recent appointment process. Our thanks must go to all the candidates who offered themselves to All Saints Clifton and for their enthusiasm for the position as priestly leader of this community. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our Archdeacon Ven. Christine Froude and our Area Dean Revd. Mark Pilgrim, for their care and discernment in helping us appoint our next parish priest.

Fr Kim Taplin is Chaplain at Clifton College and he has ministered and taught at that community for 12 years. He is of course no stranger to All Saints having celebrated regularly at weekday Masses during the interregnum and being one of our 'team' of priests presiding and preaching on Sundays and festivals. We are very fortunate indeed to have had such a wealth of priestly support during this time and it is with a sense of great excitement that we look forward to the future under Fr Kim's guidance. Due to his current commitments he and his wife Chryssa will not officially join us until July but we are reassured that we will continue to be supported and nurtured by our ministry team now and into the future with the added bonus of having Fr Kim at the helm following his installation and licencing on 9th July.

It is also great news that Fr Charles is to be licenced on 7th February as Assistant Priest to All Saints. The licencing itself is official recognition of Fr Charles' role at All Saints granted by the Bishop of Bristol. Fr Charles has supported us so much during the interregnum particularly organising the rota for weekday, Sunday and festival services. No mean feat! But there is so much more than just keeping the rota going and it is with much gratitude that we formally welcome his new position as Assistant Priest.

We have a great deal to be grateful for as we continue our journey of faith. The parish retreat takes place this month bringing with it an opportunity for prayerful reflection and new growth. We look forward to welcoming Fr Alan Finley Dean of Clifton Cathedral as our guest preacher on 16th February. And February also sees the launch of the Organ appeal. Again our thanks go to all those who are committed to keeping All Saints as a lively, witnessing community in all aspects of our Christian family life.

With very best wishes as we move confidently forward within the loving presence of God.

Philippa and Andrew

Date for your diaries: Wednesday July 9th 7.30pm. Installation and Licencing of Revd Kim Taplin as Vicar of All Saints Clifton.

Mass 'Intentions'

Within our Catholic tradition, the practice of having '*a mass said*' for a particular purpose is a regular occurrence. It is often the case that the '*intention*' is a response to a recent bereavement or anniversary, or a birthday or special event.

At the centre of the '*intention*' there is always a person (or persons). This is because of the direct link with the concept of the '*communion of saints*'. The notion that all the faithful, our brothers and sisters here on earth, those already in heaven and those in places we cannot see or understand, are all part of one community. This is the communion of saints, the ultimate expression of our communal faith in the Lord and His promise of eternal life and the forgiveness of sin. Consequently, since the fullest expression of our membership and belief is found in the Mass, then a Mass offered for a particular intention has additional meaning.

In Tradition

Intended Mass has been a tradition within the Church from the earliest of times. Inscriptions discovered on tombs in Roman catacombs of the second century evidence this practice: for example, the epitaph on the tomb of Abercius (d. 180), Bishop of Hieropolis in Phrygia, begs for prayers for the repose of his soul. Also, Tertullian (c. 200) attested to observing the anniversary of a spouse with prayers and sacrifices, at the Mass: "Indeed she prays for his soul, and requests refreshment for him meanwhile, and fellowship with him in the first resurrection; and she offers her sacrifice on the anniversaries of his falling asleep". Additionally, the *Canons of Hippolytus* (c. 235) explicitly mentions the offering of prayers for the dead during the Mass. And, St. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), in one of his many catechetical discourses, explained how at Mass both the living and dead are remembered, and how the Eucharistic Sacrifice of our Lord is of benefit to sinners, living and dead.

The Purpose

Every Mass is offered for the whole Church and the salvation of the world. And in our worship we follow the traditional pattern of the '*Rules and Order of the Christian Year*'. Consequently we celebrate the Principal Feasts, Major and Lesser Festivals, and Other Celebrations in common with our Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world. Within this structure there are a few extra variations for more local celebrations, such as dedication festivals or particular local saints, or relevant themes (mission or unity, etc).

Additionally, there is the opportunity for a Mass to have a particular intention. Very often these are private; each one of us can, in our heart and mind, intend a Mass for the benefit of another. This is in much the same way as a very specific and focused prayer. Also, in a similar manner, way

recognise specific topics on a daily basis (and these are printed in the Parish Magazine) for which we may pray and/or intend the Mass.

And again we have the opportunity to say Mass, publically, for more specific intentions that relate to us at All Saints. We did this, for example, through November with the Requiem Masses, and also on a regular basis for the Walsingham Cell.

The Tuesday Evening Mass

During this year, we shall have one Tuesday a month during which the Mass will be intended toward a particular group at All Saints. The purpose of this is partly recognition; but very much to celebrate with them, give thanks for their work and contribution to the life of our church, to pray for and with them, and to benefit them through our action.

Over the next three months we will include the PCC (14 January), our Administrants' Team (4 February) and the Daily Office Team (4 March). At these Masses it would be great if team members were able to attend (obviously this is not always possible) and also others to offer their support and prayer (and who may be interested in becoming members of the team).

The Parish Prayer Lists

Our Intercessions

Just as a starter, let's remind ourselves that intercessions are about the act of 'interceding' between two parties and pleading on behalf of one of them. In our prayers we mainly ask for the intervention of Christ, as God and man, on behalf of people or events. As we read in 1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator o God and men, the man Jesus Christ."

Also, of course, we ask for the intervention of the Blessed Virgin, of Angels and Saints. The foundation of this lies in the doctrine of the 'Communion of Saints'. This is the knowledge that all the faithful, in heaven and on earth, are part of one mystical body, with Christ at its head. This means that what is of interest to one part is of interest to all; and that where one needs help the others provide the support in prayer, word and deed.

In a quick summary of this, we offer prayer in two ways; one is direct to God and upon these it is only God who can act. In the second we pray with the saints, individually or collectively, (and meaning all the faithful = the Communion of Saints) not for God to hear our prayers through them but that our prayers can be more efficacious.

The All Saints Prayer List

Our prayer list is really important – as are the prayer lists that each of us has and uses in our own worship. And just as our own lists seem to get longer and become overwhelming, so too our Parish List grows and occasionally need to be refreshed.

Our intention is to do this in the period before Lent, so that after Ash Wednesday the list is up-to-date and accurate. Obviously the current list will remain as the basis and we shall go through the process of making sure it's up-to-date and accurate. So please, if you see or hear any errors let me know, or if you feel anyone is left-out or needs to be added then also let me know.

Many thanks

Fr Charles.

Baptism and the Identity of the Church

The proposed changes to the Church of England's baptism rite matter. Why? By making theological content simpler but more vague and general, the changes confuse generality and universality. The theological and liturgical centre of the Church is Christ in infinite particularity as the universal identity of humanity. We try to stay true to that particularity through the unique physical signs of liturgy, and people marginalized from society and the Church assume central importance, affirmed in their particularity as Christ's unique and universal identity is given to us personally and collectively in sacraments and praise.

I think describing the changes to the baptism ceremony entails considering our relationship to the divine. As I read it, the new rite asks that we promise to resist evil rather than renounce the devil (nobody is asked to repent of sin) and that we confess faith in the Holy Trinity and in Christ rather than confess faith in the Holy Trinity and submission to Christ as Lord.

The situations we describe ourselves as entering in the new version are less personal. This is of course in line with the general swell of opinion favouring 'spirituality' and doubting the personal aspects of God. Is this apparent dichotomy theologically tenable? Rather than approach the question from the point of view of doctrine as such, I would like to consider it from a bottom-up perspective since living out theology is what all Christians are called to do.

This perspective seems specifically germane to the problem of the liturgy and accessibility. The changes introduced in the new version of the baptism rite seem to try to clear away unnecessary complications in the ways we describe the structures of life. Sin is removed in favour of evil and serving Christ is replaced by having faith in him.

Individual, personal commitment is less important in the new version. But this does not mean that collective, ecclesial identity is more important. The goal I have often heard mentioned is accessibility: while general evil is easier to credit than a personalized evil named the Devil and faith in Christ is more palatable than following Christ as his servant, how do these changes—and the earlier wording they supplant—appeal to the outsider, the person marginalized from the Church?

At first glance, the simpler, new version seems appealing to the disenfranchised; it seems to do away with subjugation to Christ and depersonalizes evil, meaning all sorts of social injustice are to be confronted. At another level there seem to be problems. Without Christ as Lord, human power takes over. The marginalized are the ones who lose out when human absolute power takes over. If the marginalized, along with everyone else—who is to say quite who is marginalized and how?—are not asked to make promises that acknowledge the frailty of all humanity, there is every chance we will lose sight of the precious singularity that God seeks as our redeeming lover. This liturgical revision does not change what God does, but it could change what we do.

It seems that the goal of accessibility could be reached—or approached—by updating (some of?) the language of the ceremony without undertaking changes to the description of spiritual reality. It is true that liturgy is surprisingly difficult to write and that we should offer supportive suggestions. But to be truly inclusive, we must not condescend to those marginalized from Church and secular society by assuming they are categorically different from 'us' who take part regularly in the life of the Church and are comfortable in society. We must not assume 'they' cannot grow in the life of Christian redemption as people have done for two thousand years. And so we must take words seriously and try harder to make the language of liturgy both a bridge towards heaven and a gate that people admire and walk towards. For the marginalized are not marginal to the liturgy. Jesus was repeatedly marginalized and spoke for and with cripples, prostitutes, and children. We always forget that. And Christ's death was that of a petty criminal on a cross, flanked by two petty criminals, denied all dignity.

People excluded from economic, social, and physical wellbeing experience the sanctity of life as embodied. Our common condition of body with all its frailties is the opening to grace which we find together as church open towards all on earth as in heaven.

Steve D'Evelyn

Communication

The All Saints Communications and Public Relations Committee has been working hard to review how we keep in touch with and inform our worshippers and visitors.

We now have secure e-mailing lists for worshippers both at 11:00 and at 9:30. One for those who attend out Arts events, the concerts and exhibitions we host, is under development. If you would like to be included on any of those lists, or can think of anyone who you know who might like to be, do please inform us via webmaster@allsaintsclifton.org.

The 11:00 pewslip is now circulated round the worshippers' list, the 9:30 one will be when that list is more complete.

In addition, as many sermons as we can squeeze out of our preachers will now appear on the website at <http://www.allsaintsclifton.org/sermons.html>.

The committee is not of course endorsing electronic communications as a substitute for bodily presence in church for those who are able to be with us. We aim to keep you in touch when unavoidably absent.

All Saints Communications and Public Relations Committee

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY

There will be the usual two opportunities for special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the coming year.

Saturday August 16th

Bristol Catholic Societies Assumptiontide Festival

1200 noon Bristol Cathedral

Procession of Our Lady and Solemn Concelebrated Mass

President & Preacher: The Rt Revd Roger Jupp SSC

Superior-General, The Confraternity of the Blessed

Sacrament

3.00 pm The Lord Mayor's Chapel

Vespers of Our Lady and Solemn Benediction

The choir of St Mary & St John, Bathwick, will sing at both services

Saturday September 13th

Festival of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

All Hallows Church, Easton

1200 noon Concelebrated Festival Mass

Preacher to be announced

3.00 pm Evensong, Procession & Benediction

All are welcome to all of these services. Further details from Chris Verity in due course.

Chris Verity

The Sermon on the Mount – a blueprint for the Christian life?

I remember, when I made my first Confession, nearly thirty five years ago now, being given a useful booklet to help me prepare for it. One piece of advice in it suggested reading beforehand the Sermon on the Mount - Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7 - with the further suggestion to ponder what citizenship of the kingdom of God is, and let it inform me how far I fall short. Well I did, and it did. I have read The Sermon on the Mount in one go many times since then. It encapsulates in the words of Jesus himself what life lived in the kingdom, the Christian life lived in its fullness, is about. In other words it's about discipleship. Earlier in Matthew's gospel Jesus has proclaimed "Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near". The Sermon on the Mount is what repentance looks like.

These words of Jesus have been extolled by believers and unbelievers alike as 'great (or even the greatest) moral teaching' but to understand it that way only is to miss the point, or rather to miss

several points. Similarly we are not to read it, or hear it read, and be discouraged because we can't possibly take on board its impossibly radical exhortations. Teaching it most certainly is, but it is not a code of practice. It's really not a matter of do this, tick the boxes and you'll get good marks - to say nothing of swift absolution in the confessional - and it's certainly not a yardstick by which we can believe ourselves entitled to judge others. It's different from the teaching contained in the parables of Jesus. It's much more direct and unequivocal, and for that reason probably far more uncomfortable to take on board.

Starting February 9th (4th Sunday before Lent) we have three passages from the Sermon on the Mount for the Sunday morning gospels. The first week is the verses concerning our need to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. There is also Our Lord's assertion that he had come not to abolish the law and the prophets but to fulfil them - and indeed it is clear from Matthew's account that we are meant to make the connection between the Sermon on the Mount and the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai in the Book of Exodus. The second week we hear the teaching concerning anger, adultery, divorce and swearing. No doubt by then it becomes crystal clear, if it wasn't already, why the Sermon on the Mount is a seminal passage for intending penitents!

What it does is to address what is at the very core of our being and to show us how we may be transformed into the gloriously full human beings God intended us to be. He created us in his image and he has revealed himself to us in his son Jesus Christ. It is a huge stumbling block for many who either haven't yet come to faith or have given up on what they perceive as the unequal struggle to maintain it. Or, as one writer put it more humorously, "I've tried turning the other cheek, Lord. What is your next absurd suggestion, please? Cutting off my right hand, perhaps?"

The use of hyperbole, of exaggeration, by Jesus, is a popular rhetorical device used for emphasis. It makes what is being said memorable, as witnessed by many of the sayings having been absorbed into the repertoire of proverbs and folk wisdom of contemporary culture, such as 'turning the other cheek' and 'going the extra mile'. (It's debatable, of course, whether these are the common currency they once were.) More importantly, it makes us realise that these truly are mighty matters, that forestalling temptation and dealing with potential problems before they become actual or chronic is an imperative part of a disciple's calling. The way we respond and behave as individuals is of paramount importance. One temptation which can be insidious, and seems to be becoming more widespread with high speed communication, is imagining that by joining forces with others to defeat the evils of this world we are somehow exempt from looking into our own hearts. It is not that the uniting in a common cause is itself a bad thing - certainly not - but that it may persuade us that by 'doing good' we are good and the two don't necessarily tally.

The Sermon on the Mount makes abundantly clear the individual disciple's responsibility for acknowledging and dealing with sin. Unresolved anger has immeasurable repercussions because it

nearly always ends up being directed at those who don't deserve it. Look at what happened to Our Lord himself, brought about by the anger and insecurity of both the occupying forces and the indigenous population in an unstable country. Look also at how he dealt with it, turning the other cheek as he himself preached, refusing the way of anger and dying under its burden. Be reconciled, says the Lord. Deal with anger straight away and don't let it fester. This, he warns, must take precedence even over worship. So simple and yet so difficult and costly, such that most of us make a very poor fist of it, (so to speak.) Deal with sexual temptation right away before the initial impulse gives way to lies and hurt and betrayal and devastation. The world may tell us otherwise but '*my kingdom is not of this world*' as the Lord would later say to Pilate. Going against worldly wisdom may indeed feel like having a limb amputated, but we might think of it as 'pruning' – getting rid of that which is unproductive and harmful so that vigorous new growth may be generated. God himself is ever faithful and, being made in his image, we too are to be faithful in relationships. Disciples should be known as people who are truthful and keep our word, mean what we say without needing to give undue emphasis which calls our integrity into question. Or, as Shakespeare put into the mouth of Hamlet's mother, "The lady doth protest too much, methinks."

If we feel daunted by the Sermon on the Mount, well then so we should. Whoever said discipleship was easy? Certainly not Jesus! "*In the world you will have trouble*", he said. But we are to imitate his example in trusting God to give us what we need. Our needs will be different from his because he was without sin. The anger he expressed was righteous anger. There is such a thing and we do see it in action. The elderly lady who once weighed in with her handbag on a gang of men rifling a jeweller's shop could be said to be exercising righteous anger. She didn't stand to gain personally by her action and there was a considerable risk in taking it. When all is said and done, though, righteous anger, like proper pride, is comparatively rare.

How, then, do we take on this bracing and challenging teaching? Well, we could do worse than look again at the Collects, (which we can easily do if we take home our pew leaflets.) The one for the 4th Sunday before Lent has the words '*Grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations.*' In our frailty we do fall prey to temptation and need not only to pray for strength, protection and grace, but to believe that God, who desires that we grow more and more like him, will grant us what we need to do it.

In Matthew's gospel, when Jesus had finished teaching, the crowds followed him down from the mountain and he began to heal – starting with the leper, the centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law, followed by a host of others. Demanding and difficult as the Sermon on the Mount is, we mustn't fall into the trap of thinking that it's the gospel in a nutshell, because it isn't. If I may return again to the Confessional, measuring ourselves against what we need to do and be to attain citizenship of the kingdom of heaven are not the only criteria. What we can also fail to do is to realise how much God loves us and longs for us to turn to him for healing. That must also inform our self-examination. It's not about beating ourselves up but being open to his love. "Take time to just be with God and let him love you" as one confessor put it. Making ourselves responsible for our

personal sins is a fundamental requirement of discipleship, but 'There's a wideness in God's mercy ... there's a kindness in his justice', as Faber's hymn puts it. We need have no fear of turning to God in repentance; we need only look forward to his gracious forgiveness. Imagine for a moment what it might be like if we really did all take responsibility for our own sin. Why, the kingdom would be very near at hand - wouldn't it?

Jessica Smith, Parish Lay Minister

The Organ Appeal

New Year, New Challenge!! That's how we felt in the Rudd household when we heard about the plan to raise £125,000 to repair our beloved All Saints organ! The organ is a unique instrument, having been designed especially for All Saints, and has become famous amongst organists and music-lovers all over the world. It is an integral part, not only of the church, but also of the Bristol musical community as a whole. After nearly 50 years of playing such a central role, however, the instrument needs a complete overhaul, and over the course of the year, we need to add to the money already raised, to fund the restoration.

Above all, we couldn't continue to enjoy the wonderful music from Norman at the 9.30 and John and Eric at the 11.00, without trying to help as much as we could to give the organ a new lease of life.

So we have thrown ourselves into the fund raising effort and are looking forward enormously to the Launch Event on **Friday February 28th at 7pm.**

Hopefully we will raise lots of money as we have had a great response to the invitations. We've also been delighted by the generous promises of gifts and services for the auction, including:

- Sides of salmon
- Cases of wine
- Cooking dinners,
- Babysitting
- Dog-walking
- Holiday cottage lets
- A made-to-measure 3-piece suit

And of course, we are so lucky to have the services of Bristol's most renowned Auctioneer..... But most importantly, it will be a great chance for us all to get together and enjoy a fun evening.

We are starting at 7pm with a drinks reception in the atrium with fizz kindly sponsored by a local wine merchant. Andrew will oversee a fun auction of promises and we will then be serving Moroccan chicken followed by a special Fr Charles pud! The girls are very excited about helping with front of house, serving drinks and of course collecting donations!!

Please let Andrew Morgan or Helen Sutton know if you can make it (andrew@hollismorgan.co.uk; helen@helensutton.com or charity hotline: 0117 933 9522) and we look forward to seeing you on the night!!

Karen, Izzy and Lottie Rudd

From Liz Badman, Parish Reader

Over the past few years I have had talks with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands about exploring ordained Ministry. For a time I was feeling a pull towards the Permanent Diaconate, in spite of strong support for Priestly and episcopal ministry for women.

I have now had a meeting with the assistant DDO and we have organised that I should go on placement to St Alban's to observe their parish and how they work with a woman vicar. This will be the start of a process to discern where I believe my ministry lies.

This is not a new thing for me, I first had a feeling that about this when I was seven years old – though obviously I didn't understand what it meant then.

I shall be at St Alban's during Lent and therefore absent from All saints during that time. However, I shall still be in the office on Thursday and Friday mornings. I shall be back again in time for Holy Week

May I ask for your prayers as I make steps forward along this Path.

May we all have a good and productive Lent

Liz Badman

Bishop's Message for February – Turning the Battleground back to a Playground

This month Bishop Lee focusses on education and Church of England schools: the opposition, the aspiration and the facts.

“Distinctive, Inclusive, Effective” – across the Diocese of Bristol and nationally, these are three qualities which we want people to increasingly associate with Church of England schools.

The scale of our commitment to education is itself distinctive and not widely appreciated. We currently have 68 primary and secondary Church of England schools (including academies) affiliated to the Diocese with some 4400 primary and 220 secondary schools serving 1 million children nationally. Including after-school and holiday activities, clergy give 1 million hours each year to working with children and young people in schools while 22 500 Foundation Governors are recruited, trained and supported by Dioceses across the country.

These figures may be impressive but there are constant attacks from largely secularist groupings who claim that church schools indoctrinate, ‘cherry pick’ their pupils, and foster segregation and division in society. As Bishop John Pritchard has observed, it seems that such groups have effectively made schools a kind of ideological battleground for the role of religion in society.

In an article published two years ago, the *New Internationalist* magazine featured a debate between the Chief Executive of the British Humanist Association and a Catholic feminist theologian at the University of Roehampton. The theologian, Tina Beattie, pointed out that in their hostility to faith schools secularists seemed to be using education to make everyone conform to their own ideals with an imperialising zeal reminiscent of Christian missionaries in past eras! Moreover, secular liberals’ main concern seemed to be about safeguarding freedom of choice by protecting children from religious faith – the implicit assumption being that this is inherently bad for society.

If the arguments around indoctrination can be placed on the other foot, Church schools have had to work on admissions policies which demonstrate they are inclusive and do not get better results from choosing pupils from more advantaged backgrounds. Most Church of England affiliated schools now admit children solely on grounds of having brothers or sisters at the school or living a certain distance. One quarter of secondary school pupils come from British Minority Ethnic backgrounds – equivalent to the number in non-church schools – and the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals is the same in both at 15%.

Segregation and division can be a problem in any secondary school as pupils choose with whom they want to associate. However, the values and understanding of human nature underpinning Christian faith are inclusive as well as distinctive and provide Church of England schools with a strong foundation for tackling such issues. In Bristol Diocese, our purpose of ‘Creating Communities of Wholeness with Christ at the Centre’ articulates this well and is expressed day to day in the work our Board of Education and Department for Children and Young People do with schools.

Distinctive and Inclusive – what about Effective? My guess is that the chief reason parents want their children to attend a Church of England affiliated school is simply because it does a good job. The most recent figures confirm this with 81% of primaries and 76% of secondaries rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. But as Tina Beattie observes, education is not simply about ‘the consumption of ideas’ but guiding children and young people to find and explore the paths of wisdom. I would want to add to this with a reminder that for Christians wisdom is not so much a ‘what’ as a ‘who’. The apostle Paul expressed it to the Corinthians this way: ‘Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God’ (1 Cor 1: 24b). It is in living this out that our Church Schools will be truly effective, transforming individuals and local communities for the better.

+Lee