

ST PAUL'S

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

The Conversion of St Paul 24th January 2016

Practising spontaneity

There's a certain irony in struggling to write a reflection on spontaneity. Surely it should happen with effortless ease? I say struggle, but perhaps I mean something more playful. Words have always fascinated me and I enjoy how the same words are crafted differently in the hands of diverse writers such as Jan Morris, Alan Bennett and Flannery O'Connor. The

priest is also charged with finding the right words and this is the charge of a lifetime. What words can be found to speak of the Word? I think it was D.H. Lawrence who spoke of 'poor talkative Christianity'. This probably explains why I've always been drawn to the contemplative traditions within the Christian faith. A spiritual seeker asks for a few words of wisdom from a venerable monk whose life was characterised by using as few words as possible. The response he received some may feel was a little terse: "If you are not edified by my silence, then I doubt you will be edified by my words."

Finding the right word then isn't as spontaneous as it may appear in the sense that the words themselves come from nowhere. I recall spontaneous decisions to invite a few friends to dinner at last minute and often these unplanned occasions can be great fun. It gives the impression that spontaneity just happens out of the blue and is unconnected to other events and conditions.

If the moral life is simply about making right and wrong choices, life becomes a tally of successes and failures. This is not something which fills my heart with joy. St Thomas of Aquinas, whose feast we celebrate this week, invites us to take a more holistic approach and think in terms of the movement of our whole life as a journey home to God from whom we

have come. The virtuous life therefore is one in which we are strengthened for this journey: practising the virtues of courage, temperance, prudence and justice carry us on this journey and the theological virtues of hope, faith and love give us a glimpse of the fullness of life promised to us in baptism.

Many of you will know the story of Maximilian Kolbe who willingly 'owned up' to stealing some items of cutlery in the Nazi concentration camp where he was imprisoned, in the knowledge that by doing

so the life of the culprit would be spared. It may appear that Kolbe acted spontaneously. In contrast to the fearful behaviour of the Nazi guards, his act alone was free. Words and action may appear to be spontaneous, but spontaneity needs to be practised. It may appear to be something random, but it is the glorious freedom to act in accordance with one's true nature, a person who lives out of the knowledge of the unconditional love of God.

Fr Louis Darrant



News & Events

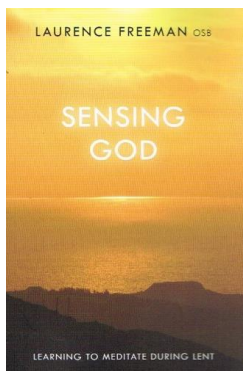
PCC

The Parochial Church Council meets on **Tuesday 26th January 2016** at 7pm.

MEDITATION TASTER SESSION

Last week, Fr Louis wrote about the establishing of a group in the tradition of Fr John Main and the work of the World Community for Christian Meditation. To find out more come along to a taster evening on **Wednesday, 27th January at 7.30pm** following the evening mass.

Those who wish to explore Meditation this Lent are encouraged to obtain a copy of 'Sensing God' by Laurence Freeman – which contains a general introduction and an exercise for each day of the 40 days of Lent.



THE MUSIC DINNER

Tickets for this year's MUSIC DINNER in the Ballroom of the Berkeley Hotel on Monday 22nd February are available from Felicity Cranfield in the Parish Office on 020 7201 9994. Once again the event is likely to be a sell-out – so please book quickly. Champagne reception at 19:00 followed by a black tie dinner, with music in between the courses performed by the musicians of St Paul's.



PARISH LUNCH

Please join us for the February Parish lunch in the hall in Kinnerton Street at 1pm after mass on **Sunday 7th February** – chef du jour, Tom Tull. The parish lunch is open to all and is a great way to get to know other members of the congregation. Someone cooks – everyone chips in to cover the cost. Please sign the Blue Book at the back of church as a guide to numbers.

SHROVE TUESDAY PARTY

You're warmly invited to the Vicarage on the evening of **Tuesday 9th February at 6:30pm** after the evening mass. A last blast before the austerities of Lent.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all those who gave up their Saturday morning yesterday to give the church a good spring clean – in readiness for today's Patronal Festival. To find other ways in which you can volunteer and get involved, please speak to Roland Brunner or to one of the clergy.

CATHEDRAL STUDY SESSION

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE: FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD – THE FOURTH GOSPEL with DAVID FORD

Saturday 20 February 2016 | 2 - 4.30pm

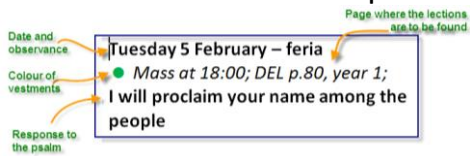
£15. The workshops will be at St Paul's Cathedral and details will be sent with bookings. Bursaries are available for those for whom the charge would make it difficult to attend. **To book visit www.stpauls.co.uk**

John's is the last of the Gospels, written after many decades of meditation. Often talked about as the most spiritual and poetic of the Gospels, it is also the most dramatic: almost all of it is vivid narrative about what Jesus does and says. And amongst all the action, John weaves theological commentary which challenges his first readers – and us – to engage with his revolutionary message about the nature of God: at the heart of his Gospel is the mind-blowing concept that the universe is centred on love.

David Ford is Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. He is writing a commentary on the Gospel of John, has given the 2015 Bampton Lectures at the University of Oxford on Daring Spirit: John's Gospel Now and is the author of The Drama of Living: Becoming Wise in the Spirit (Canterbury Press 2014).

The Ordo & Intercessions

There is a mass daily at St Paul's and all are welcome to attend. Service papers are available outside the Chapel or Chancel.



COLLECT FOR EPIPHANY 3

Almighty God, whose Son revealed in signs and miracles the wonder of thy saving presence: renew thy people with thy heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by thy mighty power; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Almighty God, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: grant that thy people, illumined by thy word and sacraments, may shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped and obeyed to the ends of the earth, who liveth and reigneth, now and for ever. **Amen.**

SERVICES TIMES

THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY, 18-25 JANUARY

Sunday 24 January: The Conversion of St Paul (tfd)

[Proper – Conversion of St Paul; DEL week 3, year 2]

♦ Masses at 09:00 & 11:00

Monday 25 January: feria of Epiphanytide

♦ Mass at 18:00; DEL p. 280 (year 2)

R: Your love, O Lord, is established for ever.

Tuesday 26 January: Timothy & Titus, companions of St Paul

♦ Mass at 18:00; EH p. 51

R: God's faithfulness endures from age to age.

Wednesday 27 January: feria of Epiphanytide

♦ Mass at 18:45; DEL p. 284 (year 2)

R: Your love, O Lord, is established for ever.

Thursday 28 January: Thomas Aquinas, priest, philosopher & teacher of the faith, 1274

♦ Mass at 18:00; EH p. 54

R: Let the words of my mouth, O Lord, be acceptable in your sight.

Friday 29 January: feria of Epiphanytide

♦ Mass at 18:00; DEL p. 290 (year 2)

R: Make me a clean heart, O God.

Saturday 30 January: Charles, King and martyr, 1649

♦ Mass at noon; EH p. 57

R: O Lord, give victory to the king.

We pray daily for:

- For our Bishop, Richard
- our sister parish, St Paul's K-Street and its new Rector
- our emerging mission link with All Saints, Nhamavila in Mozambique
- the unity of the Church
- Peace and justice in God's world

Among the sick and those in need:

Judy Beecroft; Geoffrey Wilcox; Barbara Farrell Wilson; Fabienne Frichot; Jamie Britten; Alan Lintott; Bishop Michael Colclough; Margot Stewart; Jane Elstub; Sal Allen; Clariette Wilmot; Elizabeth Gordon; Carole Taylor; Michael Cooke; John King; Alexandra Holesh.

We pray for all the recently departed,

Stephen Bantoft; Shauna Gosling

and for those whose year's mind falls at this time:

William Terence Digby-Seymour	26 January
Eileen Gosse	30 January
Frank Gosse	30 January
Kathleen Mary Cooke	31 January

ST PAUL'S

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

WHO'S WHO

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THE PARISH CLERGY



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Honorary Assistant Clergy



(l-r) Fr Nick Mercer; Fr Andrew Norwood;
Fr Graham Palmer; Bishop Michael Colclough
*A priest is available before or after the daily Eucharist
for confession and spiritual guidance, and also by
appointment. A member of the parish clergy is always
available in pastoral emergencies and we will be glad
to be contacted at whatever hour, seven days a week;
however, as a general rule, Fr Alan is unavailable on
Mondays.*

IN THE PARISH OFFICE



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THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT



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Deputy Churchwardens (Sidesmen)

Roland Brunner, Caroline Docker, Margaret Gadow, Gardenia Griffith, Nicoletta Lindsay, Aidan Linton-Smith, Jeremy Orlebar, Susie Thornton, Tom Tull.

Treasurer: Noel Craven

Lady Verger & Churchwardens' Deputy

Veronica Scott
veronicamscott@hotmail.com
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