



One of the Marc Chagall windows in All Saints' Church Tudely, Kent

A candle in...

THE

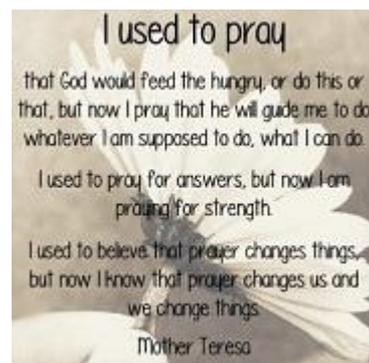
WINDOW

News and Views from the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames

Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith.

- St Francis

Charity is no substitute for justice withheld – St. Augustine



I used to pray

that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that he will guide me to do whatever I am supposed to do, what I can do

I used to pray for answers, but now I am praying for strength.

I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things

Mother Teresa

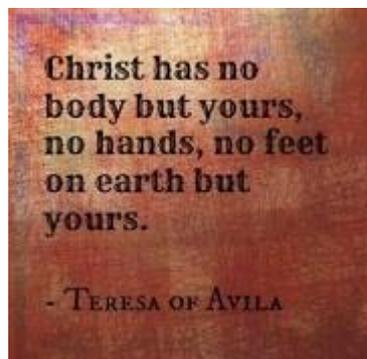
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All Saints!

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Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you. - St. Augustine



Christ has no body but yours,
no hands, no feet
on earth but
yours.

- TERESA OF AVILA

It is better to say one Our Father fervently and devoutly than a thousand with no devotion and full of distraction. - St. Edmund

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No Christian is solitary. Through baptism we become members one of another in Christ, members of a company of saints whose mutual belonging transcends death. All Saints' Day and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed on All Souls' Day both celebrate this mutual belonging. All Saints' Day celebrates men and women in whose lives the Church as a whole has seen the grace of God powerfully at work. It is an opportunity to give thanks for that grace, and for the wonderful ends to which it shapes a human life; it is a time to be encouraged by the example of the saints and to recall that sanctity may grow in the ordinary circumstances, as well as the extraordinary crises, of human living (see the [C of E website](#))

We are reminded in this issue of some exceptional people but also, on page 8 that ordinary people can be inspiring too. Sadly, page 18 reminds us that people who should inspire others can fall terribly short.

St Luke's Day

St Luke's Day was celebrated in the Parish on Sunday 18th October. Charles Mashedier preached at St Helen's and Beryl Clements preached at St Michael's. Here are edited versions of their sermons:

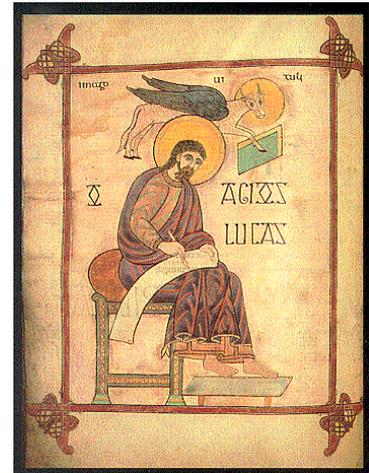
If I were to ask you what you know about St Luke, you could probably tell me that he is the Patron Saint of doctors, and as a doctor he was very interested in the miracles of healing, that he was the author of the third Gospel and the book of the Acts of the Apostles. He was a gentile and in his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles he sees Jesus in a very different light from the other three gospel writers. He was also Paul's companion on two of his missionary journeys.

I believe that this is a Gospel for our own time. Why? Here are some aspects:

There is a real emphasis on the place of women in Luke's Gospel which is absent from the others. In the first two lovely chapters, he centres the Gospel around the person of Mary. We also hear of her cousin Elizabeth and when they go to the temple when Jesus is 40 days old there is Simeon but also Anna. Later in the Gospel we hear about the healing of the widow's son at Nain. Luke clearly felt for that widow - no husband and now no son - nobody to care - but Jesus did care. We can also think of that story where the woman came in and anointed the feet of Jesus in the house of Simon the Leper - recorded in a particular way in St Luke's gospel giving emphasis to the woman who gives of herself. In these stories we see that Luke was well in advance of his time. But what about our own society. There have been great moves forward even in my own lifetime to find equality between men and women but my friends we are not there yet. Our society needs to move forward so that men and women are completely equal people. That is something that we should pray about and ask ourselves continually about whether there is sexual discrimination in our nation, in our society but also in the life of the church. I can recall that when I was theological student, it was almost as though the ordination of women was a joke. Well thank God we have moved away from 'joke' and if there is anything as good that has happened in the Church of England in my life of ministry it has indeed been the ordination of women. For that I rejoice and trust that you do too.

Luke also puts an emphasis on the foreigner, perhaps because he is himself a foreigner. Think about the story of the Good Samaritan in which the outsider, the Samaritan, was the one who actually made the effort to care for the man at the roadside. You won't find that parable in any of the other three gospels nor will you find the story of the healing of the 10 lepers in which Luke rejoices in the Samaritan who comes back. We hear about the Roman centurion being praised for his great faith - and Luke rejoices in this particular saying of Jesus: 'They shall come from east and west and north and south and sit down in the kingdom of God.' There is a universality about Luke's gospel. We then have to ask ourselves about the society in which we live - how do we treat foreigners? Is there racial discrimination? Once we've recognised it, do we attend to it? How do we respond to the black lives matter movement? There has been an attempt to get some sort of balance between the races amongst the church hierarchy. To some this might look almost forced and not real but nevertheless we have to address it. In our own lives we have to ask ourselves about our attitudes which we might mistakenly deny are discriminatory. Yes Luke is concerned - as we should be - in the foreigner.

Finally, Luke is interested in the poor and the outcast. Think about the parable, which only occurs in Luke's Gospel, of Dives the rich man and Lazarus sitting at his gate where dogs came and licked his sores - the rich man feasting sumptuously every day. Yes he is concerned about the poor. Consider too the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector going to the temple to pray. He shows that the outsider, the tax collector, is the one that can go home feeling that God loves him because he acknowledges his faults whereas the Pharisee stands and says 'I give thanks that I am not like that man over there...' Then at the heart of Luke's Gospel are other parables that you won't find anywhere else like the lost sheep and



the lost coin and the lovely story of the prodigal son – and his Father who goes out with his arms outstretched to meet him and welcome him home. Then what about the true story of Zacchaeus – a tax collector, the hated outsider for whom Jesus found time - ‘Come down from that tree I am going to eat with you today.’ And that made such a wonderful difference in Zacchaeus’ life - he was going to give back everything he had taken. Finally, in one of the lovely parts of Luke’s Gospel, the penitent thief turns to Jesus and says ‘Lord Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom’ and Jesus says so graciously ‘Today you will eat with me in paradise’. Anybody who has ever felt the love and forgiveness of God warms their hearts with that story.

So what of our own society? Are we an equal society? Today is antislavery day. You might think that Wilberforce did all of that for us – but that was the slave trade in a particular time. We thank God for Wilberforce and the others but to imagine that there is no slavery in today’s world would be absolute ignorance. It exists and it exists in our own country so we have to be concerned about that too and I rejoice in the fact that there is a day now set aside to concern ourselves with it. Then recently we have had the IICSA independent inquiry into safeguarding within the church. It is terrible reading. Some of it is historic and we can say that was ‘then’ but we have to ask ourselves ‘What is it like now?’ We have to put a real emphasis on the role of safeguarding in our parish, in our church, in our Diocese, in the national church - everywhere - we have to be really aware of those who suffer as victims.

So surely Luke’s Gospel is for the Church and for our society in today’s world. We ask ourselves: Is there discrimination against women? Is there racial discrimination? Are we concerned about slavery - the poor and those that suffer at the hands of others?

You could go away and say that was a most depressing sermon Charles but then I turn you to Luke who was a healer – the person who brought healing and wholeness to the fore in the Gospel and who brings out Jesus as the great healer. In the collect we prayed that the wholesome medicine of the Gospel may bring healing to people. So let us not be depressed by those things that are wrong in society and indeed within our church but let us be resolved that we will address them to the best of our ability and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and let us go forward in strength, in joy but most of all in love for all our fellow human beings.

Beryl Clements also spoke eloquently about the universality of Luke’s Gospel. The stories that Luke chooses to include emphasise that Jesus’ message of mercy and forgiveness is offered to everyone, as counter cultural today as it was then. The beloved physician, as Paul calls him, was a faithful companion to Paul on his journeys, and was the one person still with Paul when he’s under house arrest. Maybe it’s Luke’s medical knowledge and skill that help Paul survive as he suffers imprisonment, shipwreck and illness.

She also points out that there is so much in our liturgy that we have to thank Luke for – Mary’s song the Magnificat, Zechariah’s song the Benedictus, the Song of Simeon, Nunc Dimittis, Candlemas, the Ascension, Pentecost.

Mary’s song, the Magnificat, came to be seen as so subversive that the British East India company, heavily involved in slave trading, banned its inclusion in Evensong in the churches they owned, in case the words encouraged the slaves to rise up against their owners. More recently, Gandhi requested that it be read everywhere the British flag was lowered on the final day of imperial rule in India. In Argentina, the ruling Junta forbade its use after the Mothers of the Disappeared, mothers of sons who’d disappeared at the hands of the security forces, displayed its words on placards in the capital Plaza, and in the 80s the governments of Guatemala and El Salvador forbade public recitation of it, again fearing it would incite unrest. Mary would be amazed at the far-reaching effect of her words.

Beryl quoted a sonnet by Malcolm Guite, reproduced here, as is a new poem by Paul Sheppy.

Luke

His gospel is itself a living creature
 A ground and glory round the throne of God,
 Where earth and heaven breathe through human nature
 And One upon the throne sees it is good.
 Luke is the pillar of our healing,
 A lowly ox, the servant of the four,
 We turn his page to find his face revealing
 The wonder, and the welcome of the poor.
 He breathes good news to all who bear a burden
 Good news to all who turn and try again,
 The meek rejoice and prodigals find pardon,
 A lost thief reaches paradise through pain,
 The voiceless find their voice in every word
 And, with Our Lady, magnify Our Lord.

I heard a piano playing far away

I heard a piano playing far away –
 the stillness at its centre seemed to grow;
 my heart awakened to the break of day.

It sang of things that words can never say
 of ease from hurt and pain that will not go.
 I heard a piano playing far away.

Its sound was delicate, without display,
 yet found its path to me on sure tiptoe.
 My heart awakened to the break of day.

The music lingered and without decay,
 it echoed clear, dependable and slow.
 I heard a piano playing far away.

How can it be that sound should thus convey
 what otherwise we might not ever know?
 My heart awakened to the break of day.

A gold there is that we cannot assay,
 whose explanation we may never show.
 I heard a piano playing far away;
 my heart awakened to the break of day.

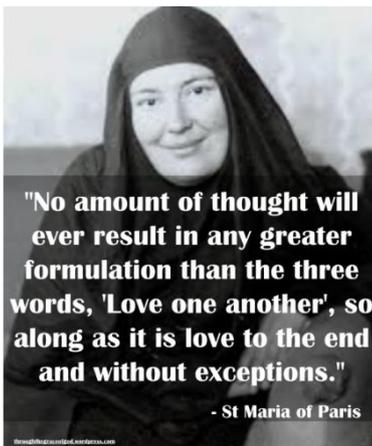
*Paul Sheppy: On hearing Emil Gilels play Rachmaninov op.32/11: prelude in B major
 You can hear it [here](#).*

The Life and Work of Mother Maria of Paris (1891-1945), *saint of the open door*

Jane Baum - based on the talk she gave at Faith Forum in September

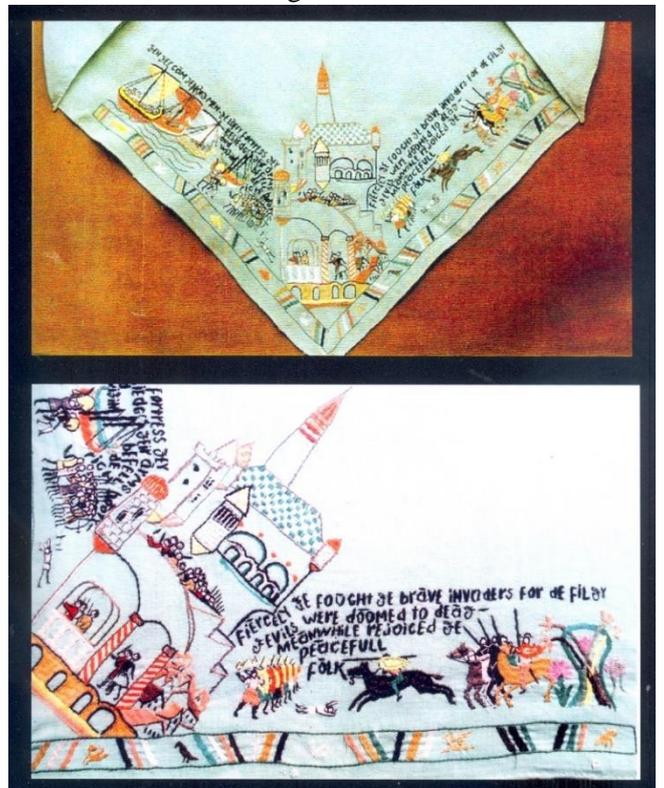
No amount of thought will ever result in any greater formulation than the three words, 'Love one another', so long as it is love to the end and without exceptions. And then the whole of life is illumined, which is otherwise an abomination and a burden.
(Mother Maria of Paris)

Piety, piety, but where is the love that moves mountains? (Mother Maria)



When Jen Brown invited me to contribute a talk on an Orthodox woman saint for this Autumn's Faith Forum series on 'Women, Theology, and the Church', my first thought was of the great saints of the patristic age, such as the desert mothers in third-century Egypt, or Macrina, the amazing sister of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa in fourth-century Anatolia. But I soon realised that the saint who could really speak into our strange pandemic situation was a Russian Orthodox nun much closer to our own time, Mother Maria of Paris. I have thought of Mother Maria more and more as the pandemic time of limitation, uncertainty, increased exposure to the mortality of others, and sensitivity to our own fragility, has stretched from weeks to months to more than half a year, with no end in sight.

For more than half of her relatively short lifetime of 54 years, Mother Maria was tossed and turned by events beyond anyone's control: two world wars, two revolutions, exile and emigration, radical social and political change, personal tragedy, including the deaths of her two daughters, the Nazi occupation of Paris, and finally arrest by the Gestapo, consignment to a concentration camp, and death in a gas chamber. Throughout it all, and to the very end, she was never bitter, but always open to, and grateful for, the lessons each experience had to teach. She wrote poetry, and essays on history, theology, literature and philosophy throughout her life, and also painted, drew, and created embroidered icons of amazing intricacy and vividness. Even in the Ravensbrück camp, starved and ill, she still managed to carry on a life of the mind, encouraging the other prisoners with lively stories, spiritual discussions, her radiant faith, and her undimmed compassion and sense of fun. Her last embroidered works were created there as well, using thread gleaned from workshops and unravelled from fabric by other inmates: an embroidered icon of Mary holding a crucified Christ child, now lost, and an astonishingly imaginative and lively representation of the Normandy landings in the style of the Bayeux Tapestry, stitched onto a camp scarf (see photo).



Mother Maria landed in the camps because of her humanitarian activity, most notably her involvement in helping Jewish Parisians to escape the Nazi occupation. Elizabeth Skobtsova (as she was then) arrived in Paris with her husband, three children, and mother in 1923, after two difficult years spent in difficult transit through Georgia and Yugoslavia. She would live in Paris for 20 years before her arrest, for 11 of those years as an Orthodox nun. Varied factors went into the decision to seek monastic tonsure, including the tragic death of her youngest child, Anastasia, at the age of 5 from meningitis. By 1932, she had become immersed in what became her vocation and life's work: the managing of a 'Noah's Ark' refuge in the midst of Paris. What began as a simple soup kitchen for destitute Russians soon developed into a safe haven, and a spiritual, intellectual and cultural centre. Surviving on donations herself, Mother Maria provided immensely practical welfare support, and cooked a hot meal for 100 people a day, doing all the shopping and cooking herself. Despite constant interruptions, she still managed to write, teach, host a theological and literary salon, draw, paint and embroider, kitting out a disused stables in the yard as a complete Orthodox chapel with her painted and stitched icons. Emulating her Good Shepherd, she went out in the streets of Paris, to the all-night bars, the drug dens, and the mental hospitals to seek the lost and offer comfort and support.

Like her Lord, Mother Maria was always going to the margins of society to seek the lost. Fearless, stubborn, impatient with pious convention, she shocked many among the Russian Orthodox émigré community. Save for the embroidery, few of her activities were what was expected of an Orthodox nun of her time. Her witness for our times is especially strong when we consider that nothing in her life was certain or easy—external events constantly disrupted her family and personal life and derailed her plans. She was 26 at the time of the Russian Revolution, and from that time to the end she was continually stripped of every earthly certainty and security in her life. She could take nothing for granted, but learned to live completely on the mercy of God and the kindness of others. She had periods of severe depression, exhaustion and doubt, but ultimately, faith and her vocation to serve pulled her through, to live a life that was full, generous, and creative, overflowing with grace and love. Truly, a saint for our times.

Books and websites on Mother Maria have proliferated in recent years, so it is now very easy to see her work, learn about her life, and sample her writings.

- 1) The website of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship is a good place to start: <https://incommunion.org/category/saints-of-opf/>
<https://incommunion.org/st-maria-skobtsova-resources/>.
- 2) <http://mere-marie.com/> is an enormous collection of resources, gathering together writings, poetry, photos, artwork, and articles by and about Mother Maria. The website is in Russian, but Google Translate does a serviceable job, and enables one to navigate the site to find the large galleries of photos and artworks.
- 3) Mother Maria merits her own chapter in Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: from the Philokalia to the present* (London, 2015).
- 4) The essential, very readable biography is Sergei Hackel, *Pearl of Great Price: the life of Mother Maria Skobtsova* (London: DLT, 1982).
- 5) Finally, in her own voice: [*Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings*](#), trans. Richard Pevear, Larissa Volokhonsky, intro. [Jim Forest](#) (Maryknoll, NY: [Orbis Books](#), 2003).

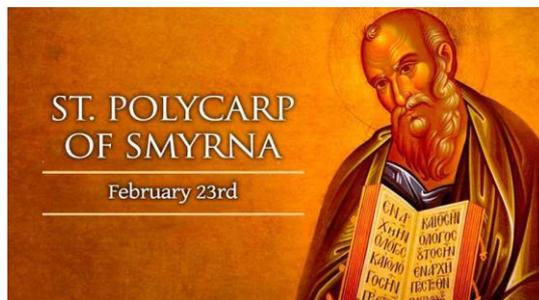


St Polycarp

Norman Dawson

When my mother was expecting me, the due date was April 1st! However because of her previous medical history, it was decided that I should be delivered early, by caesarean section, on 23rd February.

A happy consequence of this is that my Natal Saint is St Polycarp. Polycarp was bishop of Smyrna, and was martyred at the age of 86 around the middle of the second century.



He lived during the most formative era of the church, at the end of the age of the original apostles, when the church was making the critical transition to the second generation of believers. Tradition has it that he was personally made a disciple by the apostle John and that he was appointed as bishop of Smyrna (in modern Izmir in Turkey) by some of the original apostles. In his later years, he confronted heresies which arose in the early church and tried to settle disputes about the date to celebrate Easter.

His only existing writing, a pastoral letter to the church at Philippi, shows he had little formal education, and was unpretentious, humble, and direct. My friend Richard Bauckham, in his book *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* describes how Polycarp's contemporaries fondly spoke of his role in the transmission of the Gospels.

I sometimes think I should adopt his name, which is common in some Christian traditions. Do you think Norman William Fraser Polycarp Dawson has a certain ring to it?

Actually... I am named after a Bishop: In my grandfather's family there was a tradition of naming their children after famous people. I had great uncles Benjamin Disraeli Dawson, Latimer Dawson, Ridley Dawson, John Calvin Knox Dawson, Victoria Dawson – after the Queen - and my Grandfather, James Fraser Dawson. James Fraser D.D. was Bishop of Manchester from 1870 to 1885. He refused to live in the bishop's palace and did good works amongst the poor. There is a statue of him, not outside Manchester Cathedral but in Albert Square outside the Town Hall. The announcement of his death brought trading on the Manchester Cotton Exchange to a halt.

The name Fraser has been handed down through my father and myself to one of my grandsons.



What is this and why is it here?!

Well the truthful answer is that there was a space to fill but I had this idea that 'polycarp' had something to do with seeds. It turns out that it means 'bearing much fruit'.

It is the kinetic sculpture at Buscot Park. You will have to imagine it turning and spinning in the Autumn wind.

Now are these seeds or fruits? Discuss...

There is more about St Polycarp on page 13

RR

Can we all be Saints?

Sue Sheppy

Many moons ago, when Paul and I lived in Burnley, David Jenkins, the then Bishop of Durham, preached the sermon in St Catherine's Church for their patronal festival one year. He spoke about saints and began by saying that in the Bible all Christians were called saints. He went on to say that when we got home and looked in the mirror, we might think there has been some mistake, but that a saint is someone who knows God and shows God. Like all good preaching, it was very simple, and yet very profound; we have never forgotten it.



The ordinary and the extraordinary

Rob Rutherford

I was listening to radio 5 live on the Saturday just after the Queen's Birthday honours list had come out with its emphasis on people that had made a difference during the pandemic...

Chris Warburton was interviewing Jay Flynn who had been awarded the MBE. Jay had started an on-line quiz on a Thursday and Saturday night. It had been intended for friends and residents of nearby Darwen but by the wonders of social media, reached perhaps 500 000 people. The quiz was free but Jay encouraged participants to give to various charities, some NHS based. To date he has raised more than £750 000 for charitable causes.

In the course of the interview it came to light that 11 years ago, Jay had been living on the streets of London as a result of relationship breakdown. He described how he had been 'rescued' by outreach workers from St Martin-in-the-Fields. At some point he vowed that he would raise money to 'repay' his debt to them. He now can. This makes me wonder if sainthood is catching...



Can a rabbi be counted as a saint?

Elizabeth Simpson

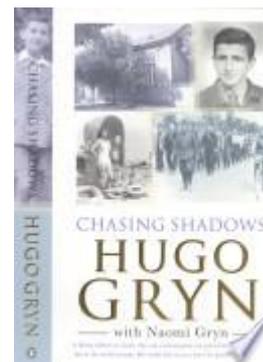


One of my heroes is Hugo Gryn, born in Carpathia in 1930; the country was annexed by Hungary under the Nazis in November, 1938. Hugo and his family were deported to Auschwitz when he was 13 years old. After the war he came to Britain with a group of child survivors, then went to America to train for the rabbinate. After serving a short time in Bombay, he returned to London and later became rabbi at the West London Synagogue, where he served for 32 years until his untimely death from cancer in 1996.

I first heard him speak in the 1980s on Thought for the Day; a five minute slot in the Radio 4 morning news programme. Hugo Gryn had a warm, beautifully modulated voice. He had a very clear way of speaking, touched with humour. He spoke of love, of goodness, of beauty, of caring, of respect, of relationships, of listening, of reconciliation, of forgiveness. He never sought to apportion blame, he always looked forward to living; to life. His brief few minutes were compulsive listening. He was so understanding of the human condition; his ability to speak to one's heart, through the medium of broadcasting, was remarkable.

He was also a regular member of the panel on 'The Moral Maze' on Radio 4. He has been described as the 'star of the show', for his ability to pronounce with such modest wisdom on matters of moment.

I was very sad, when I learnt of his death, that I would hear him no longer. But then in the year 2000, a book titled 'Chasing Shadows' was published by his daughter, compiled from her father's writings. From documents, files and letters Naomi Gryn has put together a remarkable account of her father's life. He writes of his happy childhood; his change of country without moving address; the gathering storm that followed; the terrible experience of Auschwitz and his miraculous retrieval from the gas chamber; the horrifying loss of all his family and much else.



Gryn writes that he often asked, 'Where was God in Auschwitz?' He writes, 'God was there Himself - violated and blasphemed. The real question is, where was man in Auschwitz?'

One reviewer wrote that the account shows, '...in Gryn's words that 'Evil is real.' So is Good. Much of this goodness is personified by Gryn himself.'

I had no idea when I listened to him on the radio that Hugo Gryn had endured such a dreadful first fifteen years of life. Such generosity and sweetness of spirit. For me he is a saint indeed.

Some favourite saints

Tony Richmond

Far be it from me to mock the fascination, the effervescence, that has grown up in connection with certain individual saints. Sincerely pious people continue to gain genuine inspiration from contemplation of various heroes of the faith - I do myself - but one can have quite a lot of fun researching various myths and legends about the saints that have developed down the centuries. And I'm quite sure that the good Lord in heaven shares a hearty chuckle at some of them. One of my own favourites is St Christina the Astonishing, who was born around 1150 and lived in Belgium. She was said to have died at the age of 21, but during her funeral she had a miraculous recovery, burst out of the coffin and, in a fit of religious ecstasy, she levitated, flew up and perched on the rafters of the church. (continued on the next page!)

Some favourite saints (continued from page 9)

Tony Richmond

The priest had to order Christina to come down again.

She told everyone that while she had been dead, she had visited the souls in Purgatory, and had been ordered by our Lord to share their pain and lead them to heaven.

And so, for the next 50 years Christina lived as a nun, inflicting the most severe tortures on herself – rolling in fire, standing in freezing water for hours on end – in order to share the pain of the souls in Purgatory, and to lead them to paradise.

Another favourite of mine is Blessed Dodo the Friesian. He was a Dutch friar who lived about 800 years ago. He just wanted to be alone, and lived in a cave, praying on his knees all day, sleeping on a plank of wood, eating only one meal a day and nothing on Fridays.

When he died he was found to have stigmata – the wounds of Christ – in his hands and feet and side – and he had never told anyone about it.

Favourite saints

Alexandra Green

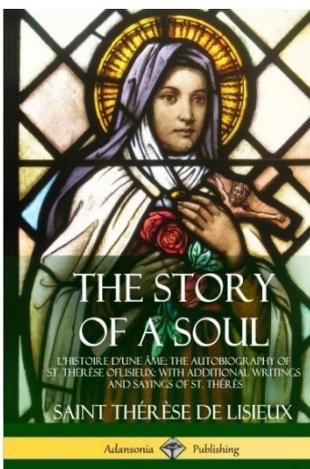
St Giles

I grew up in a church dedicated to St Giles. The patronal festival (September 1st) was one of the highpoints of the year. The incense was so thick you couldn't see the altar, there was always a visiting preacher and then a sumptuous feast in the parish hall afterwards.

St Giles would have found this very strange. As a hermit in medieval times he led a simple life, living on what nature provided. The main legend associated with him is that King Wamba was leading a hunt in the forest when Giles shielded an arrow aimed at a deer and took the arrow in his own hand. This is how many pictures and statues depict the saint. St Giles is the patron saint of lepers and beggars, which explains why many churches dedicated to him are at the gates or entrances of cities and towns. There are more churches dedicated to St Giles in the diocese of Oxford than any other diocese in England.



St Theresa of Lisieux



For my 4th birthday my parents commissioned David John Nash to sculpt a statue of St Theresa of Lisieux in wood with the proviso that it should be robust enough to withstand being thrown across the room in the event of a tantrum on my part. Fifty years on she is still in one piece.

Theresa had a short but holy life, entering a Carmelite convent at the age of 15, being one of four sisters to enter the same convent. She is probably best known for her short spiritual autobiography *L'Histoire d'une Ame* which has been translated into many languages. Her obedience to the gospel principles and to the rule of life of her religious community have been an example to many, both monks and nuns, and lay people. She died from tuberculosis at the age of 24. In art, as in my own statue, St Theresa is depicted in her Carmelite habit holding a bunch of roses in memory of her promise to 'let fall a shower of roses' for miracles granted.

St Nicholas

Caroline Cannon-Brookes

Nicholas was a 4th century Bishop of Myra in south west Turkey who became one of the most popular of Christian saints in both the East and the West. When Moslems, in the 11th century, threatened Myra and his shrine, his relics were brought to Bari into the care of the Benedictine monastery there. A new church, the Basilica di San Nicola, was built to house them and consecrated by Pope Urban II in 1097 becoming a major centre for pilgrims from East and West. Whereupon his cult spread and many churches were dedicated to him, there are at least 400 in Britain including St Nicolas in the centre of Abingdon. This ancient church, first mentioned towards the end of the 12th century, was built at the entrance to the great Benedictine Abbey of St Mary for its lay members and tenants. A question often asked is why St Nicolas is spelt without the 'h'? It has been suggested that the continual use of the French spelling has been carried over from pre-reformation and dissolution times and is quite common for churches dedicated to him in this country.

St Nicholas performed many miracles which led him to be chosen as patron of many causes. The charity of St Nicholas tells how he came to help a nobleman who was so poor he could not provide dowries and was obliged to give over his three daughters to a life of prostitution. On three successive nights St Nicholas threw a bag of gold through the nobleman's window to provide a dowry for each daughter which eventually became the basis of three gold balls as a pawnbroker's sign. The number three appears several times in the legends including his rescue of three sailors from drowning in a storm when he appeared overhead to calm the waters. Hence he is the patron saint of sailors. Likewise, three soldiers condemned to death were saved by Nicholas from being unjustly executed. He miraculously restored to life three boys who were murdered by an inn keeper and their dismembered bodies were salted down to feed his guests. The children are shown standing naked in a pickling tub while the saint in bishop's robes makes the sign of the cross over them. This is the miracle represented in the stained glass window in St Nicolas where he is the patron saint of children.

Originally this window was thought to be medieval but its story has recently come to light. A plaque, now on the south side of the chancel, records the window as "Given by Hester Bowles for the Glory of God and in memory of Frances Sellwood her grandmother who died in the faith, March 28th 1842". The Bowles family had many connections with Abingdon and this church, including a major benefaction from the Reverend Richard Bowles, a former fellow of Trinity College Oxford, which provided for a Fellow to do duty in the church on Sundays. This continues today with six sermons to be delivered by the current chaplain of Trinity. Hester was the second child of Thomas Bowles of Milton Hill who married Hester Sophia



Sellwood, the daughter of Samuel and Frances Sellwood who lived in the Old Abbey House behind St Nicolas. Fortunately for us the fourth child Emily has left her reminiscences compiled from both of their diaries. Hester, whose main interest was painting, had a low fever and cough and was advised by the doctor in Abingdon to be taken abroad to warmer climes for the winter. Before leaving, Hester wrote "Have written to Willement about my window, it is to be St Nicolas."

Thomas Willement was one of the most successful of England's 19th century Gothic Revival stained glass artists. He studied medieval glass reinventing their technique and developing the artistic method of arranging figures one to each single light surmounted by a decorative canopy. Armorial painter to George IV and by Royal Patent 'Artist in Stained Glass' to Queen Victoria he made the armorial glass for the windows in St George's Chapel, Windsor, and exhibited at the great Exhibition of 1851. On their return from Italy in July 1844, Hester writes "Up in good time for church, it was both a pleasure and a pain to return after so long to that accustomed old place, my window is beautiful". She sadly died later that year of consumption, aged 30, in the Old Abbey House in the care of her widowed mother.

Originally installed in the south chancel, Hester's window was later moved during the re-ordering of the church in the 1880s to a hitherto hidden window revealed behind the pulpit when the Blacknall memorial was moved back to the Blacknall Aisle on the north side of the nave. Luckily the St Nicolas window survived the fire of 1953 and in the restoration of the chancel the four light window at the East end was replaced with three lights. Hester's window which portrays St Nicholas as a traditional devotional figure in bishop's vestments of strong blue and gold, holding a crozier in one hand against a red diapered background with the other in a gesture of blessing, was relocated to the centre of the window above the altar to become the main focus on entering the church.

St Nicholas died on 6th December on which day St Nicolas' Church celebrates its patronal festival, and fitting for his feast day, holds a parish lunch at the Cosener's House which sadly cannot take place this year. It is a day connected with his reputation, already established by the 12th century, as a patron of children and the bringer of gifts. Children in Holland leave clogs or shoes out on the 5th to be filled with presents, and one may ask how is St Nicholas connected with Christmas? In Northern Europe, after the Reformation, stories about Saints and their traditions became neglected. However, when the Dutch established their colony in North America they took old stories of St Nicholas with them in their traditions of Sint Nikoklass or Sinter Klaas. Who was going to bring children gifts? The date was moved to Christmas and the Christ Child was in need of a helper!! Someone had to deliver presents to children and Sinter Klaas became Santa Claus or Father Christmas. In the Victorian era St Nicholas became popular and writers and poets rediscovered the old stories. In Clement Clarke Moore's poem of 1820 'An Account of a visit from St Nicholas' he describes him as a jolly and heavy man who comes down the chimney to leave presents for deserving children and drives a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer. Later, the cartoonist Thomas Nast added to the St Nicholas legend with a drawing of Santa wearing a red suit and white fur trim. Once a kind charitable bishop, St Nicholas had become the Santa Claus we know today.

RR adds that in 1948 Benjamin Britten wrote a cantata 'St Nicolas' about his life and ours. It was his first work for largely amateur musicians. It can be heard [here](#): and some of the words from movement 5 follow – Nicolas comes to Myra and is chosen as Bishop - from the libretto by Eric Crozier

Come, stranger sent from God!
Come, man of God!
Stand foremost in our Church, and serve this diocese,
As Bishop Nicolas, our shield, our strength, our peace!

I Nicolas, Bishop of Myra and its diocese,
Shall with the unfailing grace of God,
Defend his faithful servants,
Comfort the widow and fatherless,
And fulfil His will for this most blessed Church.

Polycarp stands firm

The Revd Sok Han Yong

Former Curate and Assistant Priest in the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames (2011-2014). Welcome back Sok Han!

Saint Polycarp (Greek: Πολύκαρπος Latin: Polycarpus; AD 69 – 155) - Bishop of the Church at Smyrna in Asia Minor (present day Turkey) and martyr.

Polycarp was a personal disciple of the Apostle John. Let us discover why he is my favourite saint, and why is he remembered and celebrated by Christians today.

Ever since as a young Christian, I always fond of St Polycarp. I can identify with him. As I, being a survivor of a family been through fierce persecution during the Communist regime in China, holding onto Christian faith. My great-grandfather was threatened, our whole family will be brutally killed, if he do not renounce his Christian faith. He would have to face with his own ordeal. The persecutor killed my great-auntie, a Christian Evangelist. Have you ever stood by a loved one witnessed the torturous death of your own daughter. I can imagine how much it hurt great-grandfather. As the head of the family, my great-grandfather was threatened to renounce Christian faith in order to save the rest of the family alive. The bravery, sweet aroma of my great-aunt an evangelist, martyr for Christ, her life continues to impact our family to stand for Christ. Never bow down to the power of darkness and authorities who silence us.

Martyrdom of Polycarp

Persecution against the Christian broke out and believers were fed to the wild beasts in the arena. The crowd began to call for the Christians' leader Polycarp. So the authorities sent out a search party to bring Polycarp in. They torture two slave boys to reveal where Polycarp was being hidden.

The authorities came in like posses, fully armed as if they were arresting a dangerous criminal. Polycarp's friend wanted to sneak him out, but he refused, saying, "God's will be done."

In the face of persecution, Polycarp exercise Christian grace imaginable, Polycarp welcomed his captors as if they were friends, talked with them and ordered that food and drink be served to them. Then Polycarp made one request: one hour to pray before they took him away. The officers overhearing his prayers (eventually went on for two hours) began to have a second thoughts. What were they doing arresting an old man like this? Polycarp was brought into the arena, the proconsul pled with him: "Curse Christ and I will release you."

Polycarp reply: "Eighty six years I have served Christ, nor has he ever done me any harm. How then, could I blaspheme my King who saved Me?"

The proconsul reached for an acceptable way out: "Then do this, old man. Just swear by the genius of the emperor and that will be sufficient." (The "genius" was sort of the "spirit" of the emperor. To do this would be a recognition of the pagan gods and religion.)

Polycarp reply: "If you imagine for a moment that I would do that, then I think you pretend that you don't know who I am. Hear it plainly. I am a Christian." More entreaties. Polycarp stood firm.

The proconsul threatened him with the wild beasts.

Polycarp reply: "Bring them forth. I would change my mind if it meant going from the worse to the better, but not to change from the right to the wrong."

The proconsul's patience was gone: "I will have you burned alive." Polycarp reply: "You threaten fire that burns for an hour and is over. But the judgment on the ungodly is forever."

The fire was prepared. Polycarp lifted his eyes to heaven and prayed: "Father, I bless you that you have deemed me worthy of this day and hour, that I might take portion of the martyrs in the cup of Christ...Among these may I today be welcome before thy face as a rich and acceptable sacrifice."

Polycarp died a martyr, bound and burned at the stake, then stabbed when the fire failed to consume his body. Polycarp stand there, legend tells us, a wind surrounded Polycarp. The smell of Polycarp smell like frankincense.

The Christians gathered his bone and buried Polycarp.

The world today is trying to tell us simply renounce your faith. Polycarp has given us an example to stand firm to the end. Christ "who bore our sins, who committed no sins, he endured... that we might endure in Him. Let us glorify Him. For he set us his own example. Polycarp able to stand, hold fast, he trusted in Christ. In this way, he is an example to us all. When we died, we rejoice in him, same hope, same righteousness.

Prayer:

Almighty God and Father, help us to stand firm in the midst of persecution. Grant us courage, always confess Jesus Christ is Lord. Knowing that Christ Jesus died for us on the cross, his resurrection bring us life, hope and triumphant victory in Christ. **Amen.**

The First and Last but not the Final Bishop of Dorchester

Rob Rutherford

Do you read the works of the Venerable Bede (672 to 735 AD)? No nor do I, usually, but if you want to find out about St Birinus, there is little else to consult. Here is what he says in Book 3 Chapter 7:

How the West Saxons received the Word of God by the preaching of Birinus; and of his successors, Agilbert and Leutherius. [635-670]

At that time, the West Saxons, formerly called Gewissae,¹ in the reign of Cynegils,² received the faith of Christ, through the preaching of Bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the counsel of Pope Honorius having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the farthest inland regions of the English, where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon at the bidding of the Pope he received episcopal consecration from Asterius, bishop of Genoa³ but on his arrival in Britain, he first came to the nation of the Gewissae, and finding all in that place confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the Word there, than to proceed further to seek for other hearers of his preaching.

Now, as he was spreading the Gospel in the aforesaid province, it happened that when the king himself, having received instruction as a catechumen, was being baptized together with his people, Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being present, received him as he came forth from baptism, and by an honourable alliance most acceptable to God, first adopted as his son, thus born again and dedicated to God, the man whose daughter he was about to receive in marriage. The two kings gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic,⁴ there to establish his episcopal see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his pious labours called many to the Lord, he departed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city; but many years after, when Haedde was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Venta,⁵ and laid in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

¹ The Gewissae 'the trusted ones' lived in the Abingdon and Dorchester area

² Cynegils was King of the Gewissae

³ but Archbishop of Milan

⁴ Dorchester

⁵ Winchester



Bishop Colin preaches his last sermon in Dorchester Abbey before laying down his crozier on the altar.

In his sermon he described his visits to primary schools and some of the questions he was asked. 'What is the best thing about being a Bishop?'

The people....

'What is the worst thing about being a Bishop?'

The people... the arguments, the squabbles... but know this: you'll never meet anyone God does not love!

St. Alban

Dorothy Donald

St. Alban is one of the earliest saints in our history. He was in fact a Romano-British pagan living towards the end of the third century in a town in Hertfordshire called Verulamium. At that time Diocletian was pursuing Christians and killing them. Amphibalus, a Christian priest was being sought and he obtained refuge in St Alban's house. During this visit Alban converted to Christianity and when Amphibalus was run to earth, Alban took his robe on to himself and declared himself to be a Christian. He was led forth to Holmhurst – the hill across the Ver and there was beheaded.

The Saint was buried where he died and the legend continues that miracles happened. Time evolved, persecution ceased and the Roman Empire became Christian. The remains of St Alban were exhumed and a small wooden chapel was built marking the spot. Interestingly a synod was held at Verulamium in 401.

Fast forward many centuries and a church of some substance was envisaged shortly before the Norman conquest. It was a Norman, Paul of Caen, who was appointed Abbot of St Albans by William who eventually built a great church on the site.

Over the centuries many changes have occurred. The building suffered at the English Reformation but the good townsfolk of St Albans came forward and purchased it as their Parish church. This happened in many towns up and down the country – including St Nicolas' Church in Abingdon. The lady chapel of St Albans became a school. It wasn't until 1877 that it was entitled to the rank of Cathedral, having previously been in the Diocese of Rochester in Kent.

I look back with nostalgia to my visits there when I lived in Hertfordshire. The building never failed to impress me and it was here I learned to appreciate our great buildings that have survived through the ages of Christendom putting us in touch with the Saints and Martyrs of old and bringing them alive to us.



Puppets help to recreate the story of St Alban on his festival day

A Postcard from Elizabeth

Elizabeth Simpson

In answer to Anon (issue 7) A Questioning Journey.

One of the accusations against the Church of England, is that it is too 'broad'; it accepts, encompasses, people with too many differing views. 'They don't know what they believe'.

Absolutists, those who cannot rest until they have unpicked every nuance in the meaning of the words we use in Public Worship, are necessarily going to wrestle with their understanding / frustration, when they become reduced to having to accept there are aspects in their/our experience of life that cannot be explained.

There is a vast amount in the Christian faith that I don't 'understand'. but I accept what Hamlet says to his friend, 'There are more things in heaven and earth Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy'.

But – is our faith based on the Church of England? Or is it based on God, manifested in the humanity of Jesus Christ, our Saviour? Do we go to church to feel good? From habit? For company? Or to worship God?

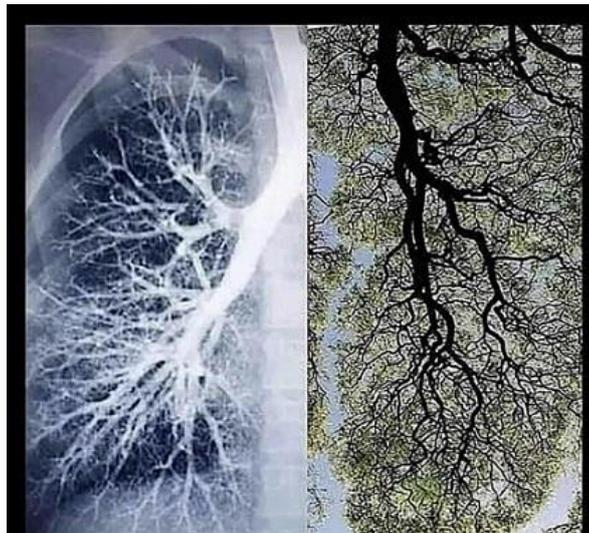
The Early Church Fathers saw the necessity of struggling with words to hammer out as briefly as possible, a statement of basic truths of the Faith, because there were so many different ways of thinking – as ever!

Dear Anon, you must never have to 'pretend' to believe anything – and don't leave your friendship community. Keep wrestling. Think of Jacob, in Genesis chapter 32, who having run away from home, wrestled with the angel, was wounded in his hip and yet he prevailed because he submitted – to God. And remember St Augustine, who wrote a very helpful sermon about the 'dark night of the soul', based on Mark chapter 9. 'Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief'.

Too much to write on a postcard. Small group discussion might helpfully be the next step.



Interesting Image



We breathe in what plants and trees breathe out, and they breathe in what we breathe out. All life is interconnected.

Ministry to families and children

Sue Pemberton on behalf of the Junior Church leadership team

Here is an update on things that are happening and things that are in the planning stage. It is really good that we shall soon be offering more activities to children and their families.

Junior Church

We continue to meet and keep in touch via our Facebook group. We began October by celebrating Harvest, as did the rest of the Church. We gave thanks for our food, and for all the people involved in producing it at getting it to us, all over the world. It is important to share the Harvest with others who are in need. The children were invited to make Harvest plates of things they would like to say thank you for. For the rest of the month we have been exploring Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. It has some very relevant messages for us today – themes have been letting go of worries, being a good example and caring and gentleness.

Christingle

No, we won't be having the usual jam-packed service this year! However, a small group has been exploring how we might celebrate Christingle, either online, face-to-face or a mixture. We were then made aware of a Church in Abingdon initiative to enable every primary school child in Abingdon to receive a Christingle. I have just agreed to represent St Helen's on the group planning this, together with Rosalind Rutherford. We look forward to finding out more!

St Helen's Baby and Toddler Group

These groups are now allowed to operate, with strict controls, under the banner of 'support groups'. Some of us who were involved in running the group up until lockdown have just met to discuss how we can restart the group and are confident we can make it work. It will be very different and will only be able to cater for a small number of families on any one week, but it is exciting to be able to offer something. Thanks are due to Jenny Shouler for driving this forward. A group is also exploring if and how we could offer the group's traditional nativity event online.

Saints

A poem by Matthew R. Brown, suggested by Tony Richmond

It is the glory of the Church that it cannot name all the saints.
 It is the glory of the Church that it cannot remember all the saints.
 It is the glory of Christ that we cannot count all the saints.
 Saints are found behind all the rocks of the mountain.
 Saints are found among the trees of the wood.
 Saints hide in blossoms, ride birds, top clouds; follow passages under the earth.
 They sweep the floors of the universe.
 They take out the garbage of the cosmos.
 The seeds they scatter soften and green the hillsides;
 leaves open their hands; joyful beasts wander among trees, cling to grassy slopes.
 The faithful cling to the roots of the saints, growing up from the ground.

When saints are not saintly

Rosalind Rutherford

William Temple may not be given the title of saint, but he is remembered in the Church of England on 6th November. There are many reasons for thinking back to the words and actions of William Temple at the moment, and his concern to ensure that a Christianity demands we work for a just society that cares for all its people. However, a phrase for which he is remembered struck me forcibly in the last few weeks as three significant reports linked to sexual abuse by members of the clergy and the appalling way the Church of England has dealt with this have been published.

"The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members."

The final IICSA report on child abuse and failures in safeguarding in the Church of England (IICSA stands for the 'Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse') was issued a few weeks ago. It is important to remember that at the heart of this report are individuals who were abused and damaged by people representing the church, and then further damaged by others in the church who seemed to treat them as of less value than those who had abused them.

This report is not comfortable reading. Nor is the report published two weeks later about those abused by Victor Whitsey, now dead, but who were ignored by others in the church for years. Nor is the report, about the murder of an elderly church member by a deputy church warden a few years ago. But they all happened, and as members of the church that allowed such actions to happen over such a long time, I think we need to be aware of what the experienced reviewers of these cases have said.

This is what the IICSA report said about the church :

"The culture of the Church of England facilitated it becoming a place where abusers could hide.

Deference to the authority of the Church and to individual priests, taboos surrounding discussion of sexuality and an environment where alleged perpetrators were treated more supportively than victims presented barriers to disclosure that many victims could not overcome."

Which is where I remembered the words of William Temple, because a common thread in all three reports was that the Church of England, particularly those in senior leadership, had become too much like a club. A club which chose to protect its members, the clergy who had abused, rather than the children and adults who were outside the club. A club with a culture of secrecy (not the same as confidentiality) and the avoidance of talking about sexuality, which created a place for abusers to hide or exploit. At their best, parish churches of the Church of England are there for everyone, even those in the community who choose not to come into the church building but still value a churchyard, and the links the church makes with the life of a community, and whose congregations genuinely welcome and include anyone who wants to worship with them. But these reports have made clear that this is not always the case.

Is a church called to be a club, or to be a community that is always looking to find ways of including those who don't fit in, as well as those who do? As Charles Masheder reminded us in his sermon on St Luke's day, Jesus spent much of his ministry with those who were regarded as outsiders for one reason or another. A challenge, particularly in these times when we can't leave the doors of a building open, is how we become a community that is open and for the benefit of those who are not its members.

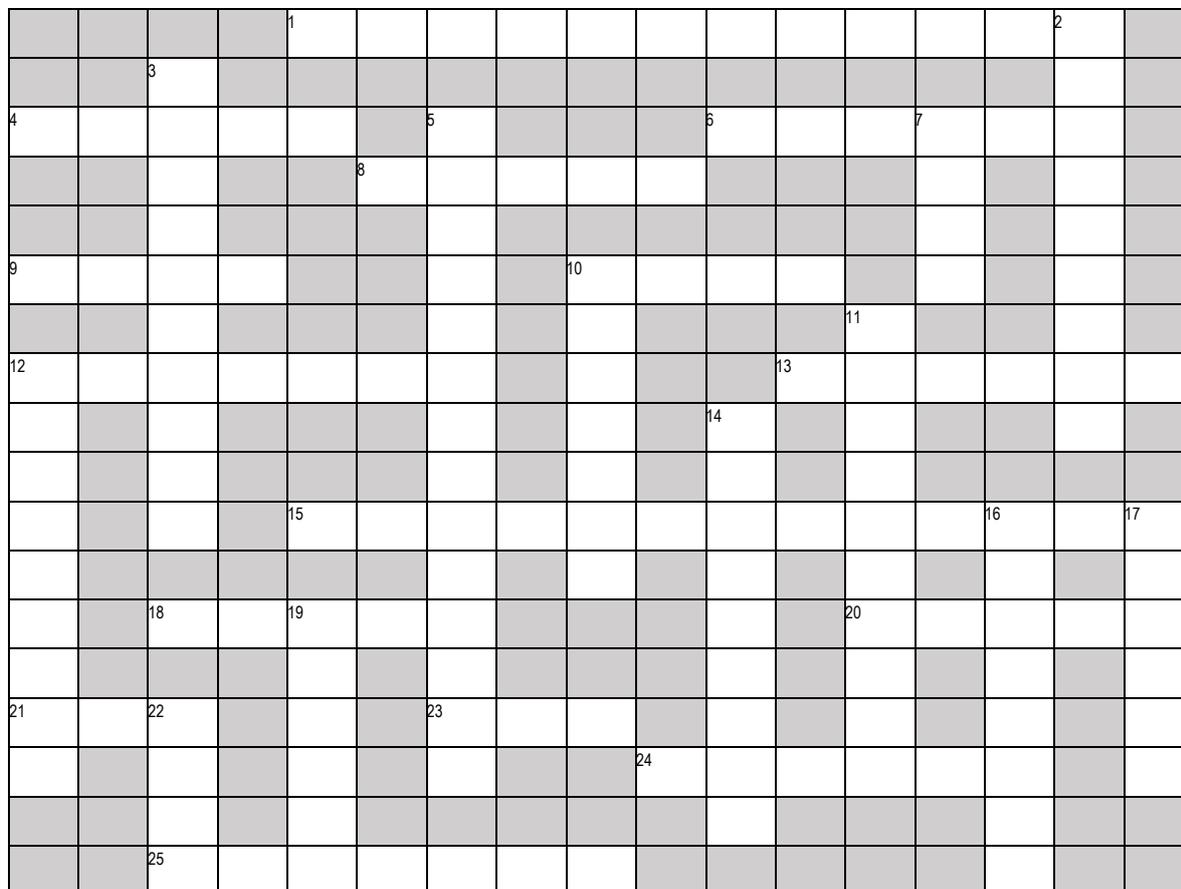
It could be true

Boris Johnson is insisting that scientists pronounce the words 'molecules' and 'particles' as though they were heroes of Greek mythology. So start practising 'moleculeez' and 'particleez'. Oh and Covid has to rhyme with Ovid.

Remember, Remember

Kryptonite

The answers of this crossword relate loosely to November or Autumn



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Not a good time of month for 6 in USA (12)
- 4 **and 9 ac.** Great prize in Mexico and Brazil (5,4)
- 6 European country or bird (6)
- 8 See 7 down
- 9 See 4 ac.
- 10 November 5th onomatopoeia (4)
- 12 Supply water to the family for golden vegetable (7)
- 13 Attach a string to this to hear win (6)
- 15 Secret boy brat mixed up with conspiracy (6, 7)
- 18 Seed which hurts the foot (5)
- 20 Schools and choirs might be practising this most years ready for December (5)
- 21 Pot back for snooze (3)
- 23 Steep without head for supplier of 18 (3)
- 24 Clip abstruse and sort for autumn colour (6)
- 25 Add tea to cause for crime of 2 and 15 (7)

CLUES DOWN

- 2 Man with cutlery, we hear was found incriminatingly in the cellar of 3 (3, 6)
- 3 Talking shop in Westminster (10)
- 5 Non-binary e-clue disturbed leads to 'For the Fallen' poet (8, 6)
- 7 **and 8 ac.** Both sixth and first in line for assassination attempt (4, 5)
- 10 Good French shoot for outside heat
- 11 Grown for charity this month (9)
- 12 Change over job holder in USA (9)
- 14 Almost choose two pronouns, one by ear, for kind of tree (9)
- 16 Dance exactly to compete for the glitter ball (8)
- 17 Shout in pain for this autumn colour (6)
- 19 Shake one rag for autumn colour (6)
- 22 Intrigue in the garden (4)

Saints Wordsearch

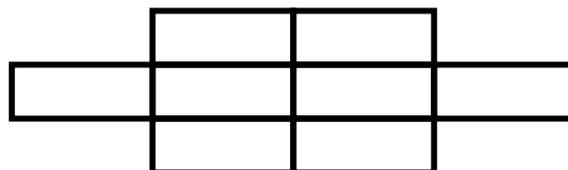
Eluned Hallas

See how many you can find! We think there are 18.

A	E	T	H	E	L	W	O	L	D	D	M
S	L	T	E	L	S	T	A	N	F	C	K
E	T	F	F	D	P	L	A	C	R	P	A
R	E	S	R	N	E	M	K	I	I	R	T
E	W	A	E	I	A	R	S	T	D	A	H
H	B	L	R	G	C	P	D	C	E	C	A
T	E	B	I	R	I	N	I	U	S	Y	R
H	A	A	E	N	U	L	F	A	W	L	I
G	Y	N	I	M	N	A	E	F	I	O	N
A	C	A	D	A	F	U	R	S	D	P	E
S	N	E	W	M	I	C	H	A	E	L	B
N	I	C	O	L	A	S	F	G	Y	P	N

Number Grid

Can you put the numbers 1 to 8, one digit in each box, in such a way that no consecutive numbers are next to each other horizontally, vertically or diagonally



Crossword answers

									N	O	S	A	E	R	25T		
		L				S							G		O		
W		T	E	S	S	U	24R			N		N		L		T	
O		C		E		O		K	A	23O		A		22P	A	21N	
L		I		H		U				Y		R				E	
L	O	R	A	20C		D				N	R	19O	C	18A		D	
E		T		A		I		E		I						I	
17Y	B	16S	E	T	A	C	T	R	E	B	O	15R	T		S		
				S		E		I		E			N		E		
	S			U		14D		F		C			E		R		
R	E	K	N	O	13C			N		N	I	K	P	M	U	12P	
	K			11M				O		E				A			
	W		G		G	N	A	10B		R		X	I	R	9P		
	A		N							U			L				
	F		I					S	E	M	A	8J		R			
	Y	E	7K	R	U	6T				5L		D	A	N	R	4G	
	U													3P			
	2G	N	I	V	I	G	S	K	N	A	H	1T					



GBBO or should it be GABO

Originally a recipe in a family bible then via Joan Trinder to a cook book produced by Oxfordshire WI. Lately passed on by Ann Marie Pratley via Susan Scott
Please decode, bake and send a picture for the December edition of A Candle in the Window!

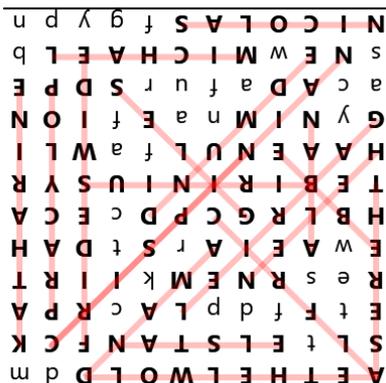
Bible Cake

½ lb. Judges 5-25
½ lb. Jeremiah 6-20
1 tbsp. 1 Samuel 14-25
3 tbsp. Jeremiah 17-11
½ lb. 1 Samuel 30-12
½ lb. Nahum 3-12, chopped
2 oz. Numbers ch.17 v.8, chopped
1 lb. 1 Kings 4-22

Season to taste with:
2 Chronicles 9-9
A pinch of Leviticus 2-13
1 tsp. Amos 4-5
3 tsp. Judges 4-19 (last clause)

Follow Solomon's prescription for a good boy and you will make a good cake (Proverbs 23-14). The recipe has been copied from the old family bible.
Joan D. Trinder, Chipping Norton WI

Wordsearch answers



Aethelwold	Abbot of Abingdon in 954 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86thelwold_of_Winchester
Alban	See this edition https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Alban
Aelfric	Aelfric of Abingdon - Also a monk of Abingdon Abbey became Archbishop of Canterbury in 995 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86lfric_of_Abingdon See also Ælfric of Eynsham https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86lfric_of_Eynsham
Amand	Street name in S Abingdon, possibly after St Amand https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amandus
Birinius	First Bishop of Dorchester https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birinus
Crispin & Crispinian	Window in St Nicolas https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crispin_and_Crispinian
Ebbe	After whom Abingdon may have been named ('Hill of Æbbe') https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86bbe_of_Oxford
Edmund	of Abingdon, https://stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/stedmund.html
Elstan	St Elstan of Abingdon, a monk at the abbey and friend and successor of St Ethelwold. https://celticsaints.org/2014/0406b.html
Frideswide	Established a religious site later incorporated into Christ Church in Oxford https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/blog/shrine-st-frideswide https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frithuswith
Gabriel	Window in St Michael's
Giles	See this edition https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Giles
Helen	
Katharine	Aisle at St Helen's dedicated to St Katharine
Michael	
Nicolas	
Polycarp	See this edition https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polycarp
Theresa	See this edition https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Th%C3%A9r%C3%A8se_of_Lisieux

Number Grid Answers

This is one possible answer. There are others.

	4	9	
7	1	8	2
	3	5	

Communion of the saints

Tony Richmond

Some saints have ordinary names
Like, Matthew, Mark, Luke and James.
Names we know, like Mary, John,
Eluned, Andrew, I could go on

Wikipedia names 33 Saints called Paul
And 10 called Charles, good Christians all,
Korean St Charles Cho Shin-chol, for starters,
Or St Charles Lwanga, and the Ugandan martyrs.

Some well known, like Helen, Michael, Santa Claus,
San Francisco, while others may make us pause:
Christina the Astonishing (don't call her Chrissie)
And have you ever heard of St Mac Nissi?

Or Irish saints, Cynibil (say it with feelin'),
Breaca, Caoilfhionn (Pronounced "Keelin"),
Bega, Briga, Brigid and Cedd.
But now you may need to take a deep breath

As you look up the Welsh saints, you may want to weep
At names like Llwchaiarn, Illtyd, Bieuzi, and Veep,
And if your'e astonished at Elvis and Dogmael,
Try Gollen, Tigernath, Wrw and Ishmael.

Cornish saints like Cuby, Euny and Erth,
Rumonus, Tetha and Tudy are worth
Study, that we may learn from them and
Become more Christ-like, within the communion band

Not forgetting the Scots, like Fergus or Finan,
Mungo (who is really Kentigern) and Inan,
Psalmody (a good old Scottish name) but he
Was very sadly lost at sea,

And John Henry Newman, an Englishman, free from taints,
Who last year joined ten thousand Roman Catholic saints
Blesseds, Venerables, and Servants of God
Some of whose names may seem to us odd,

Like Blessed Augustinose Thevarparampil
Or Mariam Thresia Chiramel Mankidiyan, but still
We thank God for their courage and strength
And trust that, like them, we all will at length

Prove true to our calling and join them, we pray,
With our dear Lord in heaven – and by the way
Nobody says "Dan" of St Daniel Comboni,
And Anthony of Padua will never be St Tony!

Useful Weblinks:

To take part in the Diocesan services led by the Bishops and to find live streams from other churches:
<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19/livestream/>

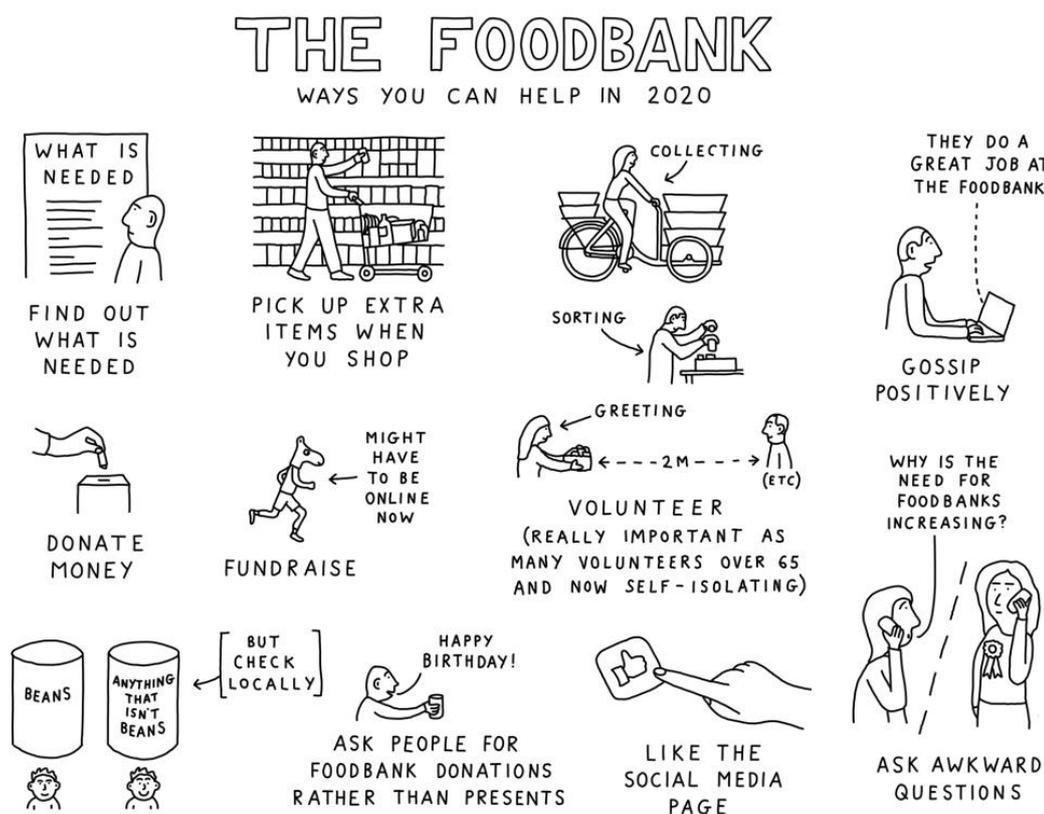
Parish Resources: for worship and for reading
http://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/Parish/P_resources.html

Page for Church of England links: services, daily readings etc
<https://www.churchofengland.org/>

For details of services, see the church websites:
<https://www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/>
<https://www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk/>
<https://www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk/>

FOOD BANK. The Abingdon Foodbank is still very busy and anxious to keep up the support even though churches are closed. **Northcourt Road (Christ Church) is open to receive donations on Tuesday and Friday mornings between 9.30 am and 1.00 pm.** Their immediate need is for tins of ham, cuppa soup, tins of carrots, tins or long life cartons of custard, laundry tablets/pods. You can also make donations by sending a cheque made out to *North Abingdon PCC Christ Church*, clearly marked 'for Food Bank', you can also donate via CCA website at <https://cca.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/njbejebi/foodbank> or the Parish office have details if you want to donate via online banking.

And finally, from Dave Walker.of Cartoon Church:



CartoonChurch.com

Thank you to all contributors and to you for reading.

In December the theme will be 'Comfort and Joy' so we want it to be poignant but fun too.

The following issue will be in February.

Please get thinking and email ideas and contributions to Candle@abingdonparish.org.uk