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June 2021

The Trident



The Parish Magazine of


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All the information here is correct at the time of going to press, but as you know, the situation we find ourselves in changes on a daily basis, so if you need **any further help or you're not sure whether the church is open, you can email us** at st.thomas.office@btinternet.com

The Lord Bless You with Hope

May the Lord show you the greatness of his goodness, that you overflow with thanks every day. May the Lord bless you abundantly with rest for the heart, power for virtue, wisdom for life, and patience in suffering. May the Lord bless you with joyful hope, and one day with the inexpressible joys of eternal life.

Amen

Opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Church, the Vicar, the editors or the PCC.



From our Vicar

Dear Friends

Many of you will now be aware that I have been 'signed off' by the Bishop while I undergo treatment for the

cancerous masses that have been found in and affecting

my intestine. As I write this I am awaiting results from the Royal Marsden Hospital as to the exact nature of the cancer and therefore, the most appropriate treatment.

All this has felt like months, but is in reality less than three weeks. Ealing Hospital have been excellent, and the parish wonderful.

In the vicarage we have been very touched by the cards, good wishes, occasional food packages, and, of course, prayers. Do please continue to remember us.

Over these couple of weeks I have been longing for normality, and **impatient and frustrated with how such a sudden thing can turn one's** world upside down. I am having to learn to allow others to do things for me, and to not be in charge of my own diary etc as I fit into the rhythm of the NHS.

Of course what this is, is the chance to find peace and trust.

St Paul reminds us that Jesus did not cling to equality with God, but humbled himself to be like us. The one who breathed life into the world, the Creator, was now experiencing the life of the created. The fancy and unusual Greek word St Paul employs is *kenosis* meaning self-emptying; God emptied himself. This deliberate action at once shows the depth of divine love, but also how God experienced the fullness of human life.

This image (theology) has been very important to me over the past couple of weeks as I move from hospital bed to home and vice versa. The God who emptied himself is with me, and *knows*. God is ever present, as well **as the one who has walked the same path before me. Thus, I don't ask "why me?", but try to rejoice in the mystery of love which says. "why God?". Why would God experience this? Why? Because he is love, the fullness of love.**

It is in that love that I trust and find peace, and it is in that love that I continue to pray for you and for a swift recovery. What God shows us is that love is a shared thing, it is purified in the reality of life, and not removed from it.

As you continue to journey and worship in my absence for a few weeks, may you know that love and find peace and trust in it.

Like an Ecclesiastical *Terminator*, **"I'll be back"**.

Your friend and priest

Fr. Robert



Parish News

In my absence the Churchwardens and Vice-Chair of the PCC are taking on many responsibilities. Others too are contributing, so thank you. Ben, who lives in the Vicarage is doing an amazing job fielding calls, emails, finding service cover and all whilst also doing his day job as a barrister. Can I just say a huge **thank you to all who are doing more than 'keeping the show on the road'. Thank you for your love and support, it a huge comfort.**

Please do be aware of the date of the APCM (our AGM) on 23rd May after Mass in Church. It will, rightly, go ahead! Thank you to everyone who has submitted their reports to Sue.

Finally, a reminder that Ven Catherine Pickford, the Archdeacon of Northolt, is coming to preach at our Patronal Festival Mass on 4th July.

Fr Robert



A prayer for June

Lord Jesus Christ, by your patience in suffering you hallowed earthly pain and gave us the example of obedience to your Father's will. Be near me in my time of weakness and pain; sustain me by your grace, that my strength and courage may not fail; heal me according to your will; and help me always to believe that what happens to me here is of little account if you hold me in eternal life, my Lord and my God. Amen.

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DailyHOPE

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reflections and prayers

9th June

Ephrem the Syriac, prolific hymn writer

If you have ever been touched by the words of a song, this is a saint worth knowing about.

Ephrem the Syriac was born 306AD in Nisibis, Turkey. Baptised in 324, he joined the cathedral school in Nisibis, where it was soon obvious that he had an outstanding gift for writing both music and lyrics.

Ephrem would have agreed with St Paul about the value of using music to express our faith in God. In an age of widespread illiteracy, he saw that hymns could be powerful carriers of orthodox Christianity, even when sung by uneducated people.

And so Ephrem wrote – and wrote. His poetry was so powerful, and his melodies so evocative, that soon his hymns were spreading far and wide across the Roman Empire. And wherever they went, his hymns took the Christian gospel along with them.

Some of Ephrem's hymns were written to refute heretical ideas, while others praised the beauty of the life of Christ. To Ephrem, everything around us could become a reminder of the presence of God, and thus an aid to worship.

Ephrem became the most prolific and gifted hymn-writer in all of eastern Christianity. His hundreds of hymns influenced the later development of hymn-writing in both Syriac and Greek Christianity.

Ephrem was also a well-respected Christian theologian and writer, always keen to defend orthodoxy from the widespread heresies of the time. Ephrem stressed that Christ's perfect unity of humanity and divinity represented peace, perfection and salvation.

After Nisibis fell to the Turks in 363, Ephrem fled to Edessa, where he continued to work. But plague struck the city in 373, and while nursing others with the plague Ephrem finally died of it himself on 9th June. But his music lives on - more than 500 of his hymns still survive today.

Bishop of London

Charles James Blomfield 1828 - 1856

The Right Reverend and Right Honourable Charles James Blomfield was born on 29th May 1786 in Bury St Edmunds, the eldest son of Charles Blomfield, a schoolmaster, JP and chief alderman of Bury St Edmunds, and his wife Hester, daughter of Edward Pawsey, a Bury grocer. Without an ecclesiastical, aristocratic or landowning background he was therefore unusual in becoming Bishop of London.

He began his education at King Edward VI Grammar School in Bury St Edmunds, and turned down a scholarship to Eton. In 1804 he matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was tutored by John Hudson, mathematician and clergyman. Blomfield won the Browne medals for Latin and Greek odes, and the Craven scholarship. He graduated in 1808 with a **BA (3rd wrangler) and 1st Chancellor's medal in classics, then went on to** achieve an MA in 1811, BD in 1818 and DD in 1820. A wrangler is a Cambridge University student who gains first class honours in the final year **of the University's degree in maths.** The highest scoring student is senior wrangler, the second highest is second wrangler, and so on.

On 6th November 1810 Blomfield married Anna Maria Heath at Hemblington, Norfolk, and they had 6 children, 4 of whom died in infancy and 1 aged 6. Anna died in 1818. The following year he married Dorothy Cox, a widow, and they went on to have 11 children, 1 of whom died in infancy. 5 of his babies were named Charles, like himself - the first 4 died in infancy, and the 5th emigrated to Canada at the age of 27. His other children all reached adulthood, and he became the grandfather of the poet and hymn-writer Dorothy Gurney, the architect Sir Reginald Blomfield, and the palaeontologist, geologist and malacologist Francis Arthur Bather.

Blomfield was elected to a fellowship at Trinity College in 1809. At first he devoted himself entirely to scholarship, writing about Prometheia (Prometheus), Septem contra Thebas (Seven against Thebes), Persae (The Persians) amongst other classical Greek plays. But once he was ordained priest in 1810 he moved on, and held a curacy at Great Chesterford in Essex, then was rector at Quarrington, Lincs, followed by Dunton, Bucks, Tuddenham, Suffolk, and Little Chesterford, Essex. Whilst at Dunton he educated George Spencer (later Ignatius Spencer), and the two corresponded for several years after. In 1819 he was nominated to the

rich living of St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate, London, then became Archdeacon of Colchester, and finally was raised to the bishopric as Bishop of Chester, where he carried through many much-needed reforms.

It was 1828 when Blomfield was appointed a Privy Counsellor, and translated becoming Bishop of London, a post he held for 28 years, making him the 3rd longest-serving post reformation incumbent. His **energy and enthusiasm did much to extend the church's influence.** He was one of the best debaters in the House of Lords, and took a leading position in the action for church reform, which culminated in the ecclesiastical commission. Members of the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation used to say that they trimmed their quill pens before his arrival! He was genial and kind, and was an invaluable mediator. He made a number of changes at Fulham Palace, including planting a large number of trees which remain today.

Between 1833 and 1841 he consecrated four of the Magnificent Seven cemeteries of London. **For hundreds of years, most of London's dead** were buried in small parish churchyards, which soon became dangerously overcrowded. In the first 50 years of the 19th century **London's population more than doubled, from 1 million to 2.3** million. Overcrowded graveyards led to decaying matter entering the water supply and causing epidemics. There were incidents of graves being dug on unmarked plots that already contained bodies, and of **bodies being defiled by sewer rats infiltrating the churchyards' drains** from the relatively central Tyburn, Fleet, Effra and Westbourne rivers which were used as foul sewers by this date. Architects such as Sir Christopher Wren deplored this practice, and wished to see suburban cemeteries established. **But it wasn't until British visitors to Paris,** including George Frederick Carden, were inspired by its Pere Lachaise Cemetery, that sufficient time and money were devoted to canvass for reform, and equivalents were developed in London. In 1832 Parliament passed an act encouraging the establishment of private cemeteries outside central London. Over the next decade 7 were established:

- Kensal Green Cemetery - originally known as the General Cemetery of All Souls - the oldest of the 7 and still in operation.
- West Norwood - the first cemetery in the world to use Gothic style
- Highgate Cemetery - divided into East and West

...cont

Abney Park - the main burial place of English non-conformists
Brompton Cemetery - owned by the Crown, and managed by the Royal Parks

Nunhead Cemetery - originally known as All Saints Cemetery
Tower Hamlets - also known as Bow Cemetery. It closed to new burials in 1966 and is now a park.

By 1856 Blomfield's health had deteriorated and he was permitted to resign his bishopric. He retained his Fulham Palace residence, and was offered a pension of £6000pa. He died in August the following year. He is buried in the churchyard of All Saints Church, Fulham, and a memorial to **him by G. Richmond can be seen at St Paul's Cathedral along the south wall** of the ambulatory.



The man who invented the saxophone

It was 175 years ago, on 28th June 1846, that Belgian musical instrument maker Adolphe Sax patented the saxophone.

Born Antoine-Joseph in 1814, Sax quickly became known for his brilliant inventiveness and his abrasive personality, but also – to the despair of his mother – for his brushes with death as a child. He fell from a height of three floors and was believed dead, drank a bowl of dilute sulphuric acid thinking it was milk, swallowed a pin, and received serious burns from a gunpowder explosion. He also fell on to a hot cast-iron frying pan, was struck by a cobblestone and fell into a river, then several times narrowly escaped poisoning from sleeping in a room where varnished furniture was drying.

He also contracted lip cancer in the 1850s but made a full recovery.

It was surprising then, that he lived until his 80th year, dying in poverty in Paris despite his many musical instrument inventions, which did not bring him wealth because they were copied by others, despite his patent.

As well as the saxophone, which received huge support from classical composer Berlioz, he also invented the saxatromba, saxhorn and saxtuba. He himself played flute and clarinet. His parents were also instrument designers.

The beginnings of Boots the Chemist

Jesse Boot, the British pharmacist and philanthropist, died 90 years ago, on 13th June 1931. He turned the Boots Company started by his father John – a former agricultural worker – into a chain of chemists branded **‘Chemists to the Nation’**.

The 1st Baron Trent, as Jesse became in 1929, sold his controlling interest to American investors in 1920, but Boots continues to be a familiar name to all Britons. Ironically John Boot had offered his close friend and business associate John Harston the opportunity of going into business with him, but Harston had felt it was not a good investment.

Jesse Boot was a great benefactor to the City of Nottingham. He gave land for what is now the University of Nottingham and was presented with the Freedom of the City of Nottingham in 1920.

He met his wife, Florence Rowe, in a Wesleyan Chapel in Jersey while he was recuperating from illness. She was also an astute businesswoman, who helped to develop the Boots business, and her home island of Jersey **benefited from the couple’s generosity. After her husband’s death she** commissioned the glass artist René Lalique to refit the Anglican church of St Matthew there as a memorial to him.



Where are our birds?

British birds are in big trouble. 80 per cent of our most popular species are in severe decline, according **to recent data from the RSPB’s annual Big Garden Birdwatch.**

The world’s largest wildlife survey has found that 16 out of the 20 most spotted garden birds have been in decline since 2020. There are now concerns about the greenfinch and chaffinch, which were seen in their lowest ever numbers this year.

The top five birds seen in people’s gardens were: house sparrows, blue tits, starlings, blackbirds and wood pigeons. Only robins, blackbirds, carrion crows and the song thrush grew in number in 2020.



Home alone, wanting a gnome

Do you yearn for a garden gnome? You are not the only one.

Since last year's lockdown, garden centres have been reporting a 'massive upswing' in ornament sales, due to people being forced to spend more time in their gardens. Gnomes top the list of most-wanted ornaments, with a near 100 per cent increase in sales over the past two years.

There was even a gnome crisis a while back, when the Suez Canal got jammed, and thousands of gnomes on their way to UK gardens could not get through!

Copy Dates!

Copy date for July is on Sunday June 13th

Copy date for August is on Sunday July 11th

Copy date for September is on Sunday August 8th

Copy date for October is on Sunday September 12th

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Give a compliment

We all like to receive a compliment from time to time. As Robert Orben, **former script writer for President Gerald R. Ford once said, “A compliment is verbal sunshine.”**

Another American, Leo Buscaglia once observed: “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn someone’s life around.”

At a funeral service, nice things are usually said of the deceased. While these comments are comforting for the relatives, did the same folks ever bother to say these kind things to the person themselves, when they were alive, to show them how much they were appreciated?

Sadly, not everyone seems able to compliment others. Perhaps they never received compliments when they were young, or perhaps they feel that to compliment someone else is to somehow put themselves down. For whatever reason, such people miss out on a whole lot of pleasure in life.

Whenever we see something that is worthy of a compliment, why not give **it, and bring ‘a little verbal sunshine’ into someone else’s life!**

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From the Ealing Foodbank.

Firstly, thank you so much for your support, especially if you have been able to help us during the pandemic. Ealing Foodbank has partnered with a food charity called Bankuet.

This offers you an alternative way to get donated food to us at Hanwell, if you are unable to shop in person and/or bring your donation to Hanwell. You can access Bankuet by going to <https://www.bankuet.co.uk/givenow>.

You can then select how much money you would like to donate, either as a one off or on a monthly basis. Ealing Foodbank then orders specific items from Bankuet. Bankuet purchases the food and delivers it to Hanwell on a Wednesday morning. Bankuet deducts a small fee from the donated money to recover some of their costs, but this is minimal.

You can, of course, continue to shop in stores, and leave donations in the baskets provided or deliver food yourself to Hanwell. Please see the foodbank website for more details.



Important Foodbank update:

Thank you for continuing to support the foodbank. Due to the current pandemic, and the need to reduce our carbon footprint, we have been assessing the best way of supporting the Foodbank. So can you please :

- . If you go to your local supermarket leave your donations there as they will have a Foodbank box on their premises
 - . If you order online it is possible to click the right button to make a donation for the Foodbank
 - . If neither option is available to you then you can continue to leave your donations in the boxes left in the church porches. But there will be some delay in transferring it to the Foodbank warehouse.
 - . Another alternative is to give cash or cheque (payable to Foodbank Trussell Trust) to Nicole who will pass it on regularly.
- Thank you for all your support and cooperation.

** please remember that our magazine is produced in May for June so while we publish the most up to date list at the time of going to press, **there will be a different list for May. For this reason, it's always best to** check the current list on the Foodbank website or twitter.

<https://ealing.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

Twitter: @EalingFoodbank.

THE MAY SHOPPING LIST **

Ready made custard - tins or cartons, UHT milk - (semi skimmed or full fat, not skimmed), long life fruit juice & squash, instant coffee, chickpeas & kidney beans, tinned fish, vegetarian chilli & curry, jam, honey & peanut butter, size 4 & 6 nappies, sanitary towels - (not tampons or panty liners), shaving foam & razors.

Thank you, but the foodbank has plenty of pasta at the moment.



From the Editors.

We join with everyone sending our thoughts and prayers to Father Robert and all at the vicarage. We are all thinking of you, Father Robert.

Julia + Sue

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