

LITTLE S. MARY'S, CAMBRIDGE

March 2023: No. 609

NEWSLETTER



*This newsletter contains:
Prague churches; Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament; A
Personal View of: Marriage & Schism; Garden News; plus
daily intentions for prayer and more.*

There is no Vicar's Letter this month.

Notable dates in March

Lent Group on Zoom

7.30-8.30pm Monday 13th, Thursday 23rd, Monday 27th

Reading Rowan Williams' *Meeting God in Paul* & Praying the Rosary

Bible Study

10.30am on Wednesdays 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th March, 5th April

Studying the six chapters of Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Eucharistic Adoration

5.30 – 6.30pm Thursdays 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th March

5.30 – 6pm silent prayer 6-6.30pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 19th March

Fourth Sunday in Lent – Mothering Sunday

Preacher at High Mass: The Rev'd Dr Jamie Hawkey,
Canon Theologian, Westminster Abbey

Monday 20th March

Feast of S. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*transferred*)

Low Mass 12.30pm

Sung Mass of Healing 7pm (*with laying-on of hands & anointing*)

Wednesday 22nd March

12noon Funeral Mass for Daphne Foreman

Saturday 25th March

Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary

High Mass 10am Preacher: The Rev'd Dr Lizzie Shipp

Holy Week preacher: The Rev'd Charlie Annis CR

We welcome Fr Charlie, who studied English and Theology at Oxford; trained for ordination at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield; was Assistant Curate of Oldham, Diocese of Manchester; and since 2020 has been a Novice and then a professed Monk at the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield (an Anglican Benedictine religious community in West Yorkshire).

Six churches in and around Prague

by Ben O'Neill

In the summer of 2022, I came to the end of two very happy years at Stamford Schools, Lincolnshire, where I had been teaching German and serving as Assistant Chaplain. Leaving Stamford on a warm July morning with two oversized (and to my chagrin, overweight) suitcases, I headed to Birmingham Airport – destination Prague. Long-term readers of this magazine may remember that this is not my first time living and working abroad, I having served as pastoral assistant at the Anglican chaplaincy in Vienna in the academic year of 2018-19. I now find myself teaching German and Latin at an international school close to the centre of the Czech capital. The school was founded in the 1990s, just as Prague (and the wider Czech Republic) was emerging from decades of communism, opening itself up to ‘western’ ideas and education.

When your Editor asked me to write a short piece for this month’s magazine, not wanting to bore you with a day-by-day account of my life in this UNESCO world heritage city centre, I decided that I would share something of my experiences through the lens of six churches that I think, between them, can tell something of the story of the Czech Republic.

The first has to be the Church of Our Lady before Týn; right at the heart of the Old Town of Prague; its twin towers visible from much of the city centre, and a fusion of Gothic and Baroque, it features on many tourists’ photographs and postcards. According to the most recent statistics, the Czech Republic is a largely irreligious country, with (in the latest census) only 11% of Czechs professing the Christian faith; that is not to say that the Czechs are an atheist nation but rather that, it seems to me, for many the sense of the ‘spiritual’ trumps organised religion.



That being said, the secular and religious calendars are intertwined (with bank holidays for Saints Cyril, Methodius, Wenceslas and Jan Hus), the country's architecture reflects a rich religious heritage, and high days and holy days are large public spectacles. My first Mass in Czech was at this church for the Solemnity of the Assumption; this was celebrated by the previous Cardinal Archbishop who had himself been arrested for illicit celebrations of the sacraments in the 1980s, a poignant reminder that for many religious communities in this part of central and eastern Europe, persecution and oppression are recent memories from only one generation ago. Many in the LSM congregation will undoubtedly have their own recollections of the 1980s, the days of *perestroika*, of an increased openness, of greater freedom, culminating in the fall of the Berlin Wall (and with it, the Iron Curtain) at the end of the decade, and a decade in which the shape of Europe shifted dramatically.



Church number two requires a trip due south along the river Vltava (or Moldau) to Vyšehrad; it is perhaps the most detailed interior of any church in the city. In its early years, Prague was bookended by two castles, and this rocky hill fort was the more southern of the two – those familiar with other Slavonic languages may indeed recognise *hrad* as meaning a castle. It is connected, by legend, to the very founding of the city, and the first Czech ruling dynasty. The church is perhaps more famous for its adjoining cemetery, in which many famous Czechs are buried, from composers Dvořák and Smetana to the celebrated Art Nouveau artist Alphonse Mucha. The basilica of SS Peter and Paul was first constructed in the 11th century, but was rebuilt between 1887 and 1903. This period was dominated by the Czech national revival movement, which sought to celebrate the uniqueness of Czech architecture, music, culture, and literature, and this desire to find what is ‘uniquely Czech’ shines through in the architecture of this grand basilica.



The third church (it had to make an appearance sooner rather than later, given the target audience) is the church that is used by the Anglican chaplaincy in Prague; it is actually the second oldest church on the right bank of the Vltava, after Vyšehrad. Its dedication to Saint Clement is fitting, given its proximity to the shore. The current church dates from the 14th and 15th centuries, but replaced an earlier Romanesque building. The interior is simple, barring some rather beautiful medieval wall paintings in the quire and sanctuary, including one of Zacchaeus viewing Christ from his arboreal vantage point. Although used for weekly Anglican worship, the building belongs to the Evangelical Czech Brethren, a denomination founded at the start of the 20th century to unite Reformed Christians of Lutheran and Calvinist/Presbyterian traditions.



I am taking a slight liberty with church number four, which is not actually in Prague at all, but in the town of Třebíč in the Vysočina (Highland) region in the south of the country; I enjoyed a trip here a few weeks ago, on one marking-free weekend. There is much that links it to Prague – I'm not just talking about the trains and buses, but also the fact that both are UNESCO world heritage sites. In the case of Třebíč, this is due to the medieval Jewish quarter and the basilica; or more specifically the evidence of close collaboration, cultural exchange, and harmonious coexistence throughout history, that represents something of the Czech Republic as a whole, its geography allowing for the fusion and meeting of cultures and peoples throughout the ages. The basilica was consecrated in 1109, but continued to expand through the 13th century. I was there for Mass on a particularly snowy Sunday morning in January.



We will return to the capital city very shortly; but first, for church number five, a trip to Karlštejn; similar to Vyšehrad, this castle found itself in a state of disrepair, having been attacked by the Swedes during the Thirty Years' War and subsequently neglected, but was renovated as part of the Czech National Revival movement of the nineteenth century. The castle was built, chiefly, to house the crown jewels of the Holy Roman Emperor, themselves a relic, and featuring a verse from Proverbs, *Per me reges regnant* ("The rulers rule through me"), a verse on which all in positions of authority today do well to reflect. Though the jewels are now held in Vienna, they return to Prague Cathedral during national elections, including those that have just taken place in the Czech Republic.



And so we move to church six, which is the last one for this edition; perhaps there could be a second instalment to follow, who knows? The most modern of all of the churches mentioned so far, from the 17th century, the Jesuit Church of St. Ignatius of Loyola finds itself on Karlovo Namesti (Charles Square), dedicated to the great founder of the Jesuit order, who had commissioned the first group of Jesuits to come to Prague, just before his death. To my mind, this church is the finest example of Baroque

architecture in the city, which its architect Carlo Lurago modelled on the *Gesù* in Rome, and comes into its own during the celebration of the sung Latin Mass, Sunday by Sunday. Followed perhaps by a large, hearty Czech soup and a sample of the city's other culinary speciality – in liquid form.

Ben worshipped at LSM while an undergraduate at Peterhouse and was a member of our Social Responsibility Group. He has since lived and worked in Stamford and Prague, where he now teaches German and Latin - though has enjoyed the occasional return visit to Cambridge, often to preach at our neighbouring church of St. Botolph. Ben led our lockdown Bible Study for a few months in 2020, when all of our church activities needed to move online. He counts travel, opera, classical music, literature and good food among his interests, as well as enjoying the many cultural offerings of the Czech Republic.





Calendar and Intentions

for

March 2023

The list of Thanksgivings and Intercessions offers a focus for our daily prayer, both at the Offices and Mass, and in our personal times of prayer.

The Vicar would be glad of suggestions or additions to the list of daily intentions.

Calendar for March

WED 1st *S. David, bishop*
THU 2nd *S. Chad, bishop & missionary*
FRI 3rd *Ember Day*
SAT 4th *Ember Day*

SUN 5th **SECOND SUNDAY of LENT**

MON 6th *S. Tibb, virgin*
TUE 7th *SS Perpetua, Felicity & Companions, martyrs*
WED 8th *Edward King, bishop*
THU 9th
FRI 10th
SAT 11th

SUN 12th **THIRD SUNDAY of LENT**

MON 13th
TUE 14th
WED 15th
THU 16th
FRI 17th *S. Patrick, bishop*
SAT 18th *S. Cyril of Jerusalem, bishop & doctor*

SUN 19th **FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT – Refreshment Sunday**

MON 20th **S. Joseph, Husband of the BVM**
TUE 21st *Thomas Cranmer, archbishop & martyr*
WED 22nd
THU 23rd
FRI 24th *S. Oscar Romero, bishop & martyr*
SAT 25th **THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD TO THE BVM**

SUN 26th **FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – Passion Sunday**

MON 27th
TUE 28th
WED 29th
THU 30th
FRI 31st

March Daily Intentions & Anniversaries of death

Renewal of Religious Life in England	1 st
That we may let the light of Christ <i>Ivy Hinchcliffe</i>	2 nd
Christian renewal in Europe <i>Ceta Cherry, Harold Auckland</i>	3 rd
Homeless provision in Cambridge <i>Stephen Barnard</i>	4 th
Our Parish & People	5th
The Church in Japan <i>Roger Knight, Mary Rowlings</i>	6 th
The Faithful Departed	7 th
The sick <i>Geoffrey Clayton, Archbishop</i>	8 th
Papua New Guinea Church Partnership <i>Jessie Rolph</i>	9 th
Benedictine Nuns <i>Carl George</i>	10 th
Jesus College, Cambridge	11 th
Our Parish & People	12th
Lent <i>Elsie Murrell, Helen Dex, Beryl Oliver, Hugh Wilcox, pr.</i>	13 th
Those preparing for Holy Matrimony	14 th
<i>Elizabeth Lampe, Violet Barnard, Michael Ogden, Alan Gustard</i>	15 th
CamTrust <i>Teresa Pike, Jean Gustard</i>	16 th
Courage among Christians <i>Richard Henry Boulind, Ann Robinson</i>	17 th
Better understanding of the Virgin Mary among Christians	18 th
Our Parish & People <i>Mary McDougall, Eileen Barnard</i>	19th
Fathers, Stepfathers & Foster-fathers	20th
Prayer Book Society <i>Constance Hennings, Margaret Bottrall</i>	21 st
Society of Mary <i>Emily Glennie, Nellie Edwards, Merlin Rotherham-Brown, Ken Topley</i>	22 nd
Our keeping of Lent	<i>William Powell</i> 23 rd
Parish Music	<i>George Head</i> 24 th
Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham	25th
Our Parish & People	<i>Philip Hall</i> 26th
Whitworth Trust	27 th
Greater devotion to the Lord's Cross	<i>John Gilling, pr.</i> 28 th
Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield & Fr Charlie Annis CR	29 th
Samaritans	30 th
Our parish staff	<i>Pamela Horne</i> 31 st

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament

by Iona Morphet



The first duty of Christians is to pray. But often, at least if you're anything like me, prayer is difficult. It is a discipline and a routine as much as it is the 'heart in pilgrimage,' 'angel's age' or 'heaven in ordinary' of George Herbert's wonderful poem on prayer. When prayer is hard, I find refuge and comfort in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In its simplest form, it involves simply spending time in prayer in the presence of the 'exposed' Sacrament of the Altar (this is why it is also called 'Exposition'; the Host is exposed, and we adore!). It asks nothing of us but to *be*, in silence and in stillness, simply resting in the presence of God.

Adoration shows us what prayer is, which is nothing more or less than spending time with the Lord. He is present for us here on the altar in the simplest of forms, a thin piece of bread, just as He was born at Bethlehem

– which means House of Bread – in the lowliest of places, a stable, and laid in a manger, an animal’s feeding trough, for He comes to us as food. Food to be eaten, to be sure, but also to be gazed upon, to gaze and know that we are loved infinitely and without hope of return. And yet, in Adoration, we do return that gaze: we show our love for God simply by being there, and by letting ourselves be clothed in His love as He looks at us and we look at Him.

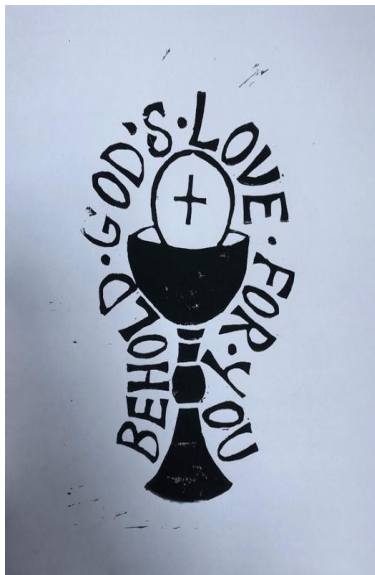
Another way to think about Adoration is as the Mass on pause. It is the moment when the priest holds up the Host to us and says ‘Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to His supper.’ Behold God’s love for you, in other words. Behold the One who sacrificed Himself to redeem you, who in His sacramental presence is here with you now. When we go to Mass, it can be easy to slip into going through the motions – saying the words and performing the liturgical gestures – without really considering what it is we’re doing and who it is we’re worshipping. There is value, of course, in doing all of these things even when we aren’t ‘feeling’ God’s presence; but what Adoration gives us is the chance to slow down, to behold the Lamb of God for a little longer, and to speak, if we wish, in a wonderfully visual, intimate and direct way, all of the petitions and confusions and struggles on our hearts, and if not, simply to listen for his voice.

It’s not that we can’t do that in private prayer, but that in the Eucharist we find, as Evelyn Underhill puts it, an embodiment of ‘the homely and transcendental paradox of Christianity; the universal divine action, and the intimate divine approach to every soul; the food of daily life, and the mystery of eternal life, both given at once; the historical memorial perpetually renewed, yet finding its fulfilment in a real and enduring Presence unfettered by the categories of time and space. Here,’ she continues, ‘the most naïve worshipper finds an invitation to love and gratitude, and a focus for his devotion, which he can apprehend though never explain; and the contemplative finds a door which opens upon the ineffable mystery of God.’

You can pray before the Sacrament in whatever way you choose. If you find it helpful to have a structure for extempore prayer, here is one format I like to use:

- 1 - Realise who is present. Consciously place yourself in the presence of Christ, who calls you by name and makes you His own.
- 2 - Give thanks: for His presence here with you now, and for all the blessings in your life.
- 3 – Ask for forgiveness. Express your sorrow for your own sins and those of the world.
- 4 – Intercede. Pray for the intentions on your heart, and those of the people around you, entrusting them to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- 5 – Rest. Simply bask in Christ’s loving gaze, and in a movement of silence, try to listen to the voice of God.

LSM is offering Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Thursday at 5:30pm during Lent, as well as every Sunday year-round as part of the service of Evensong and Benediction. I invite you to come and encounter this ineffable mystery, praying that it may be for you as nourishing and awe-inspiring an experience of God’s infinite love and mercy as I have found it to be.



Iona is a long-time member of the congregation who began discerning a vocation to ordination at LSM. Iona is currently training for the priesthood at Westcott House. She returned to Cambridge in September after a wonderful year as pastoral assistant at All Saints', Hove and is enjoying studying in the Divinity Faculty once more. This is also Iona's artwork illustrating her piece.

**A personal view on:
Marriage in light of the schism of the GSFA**
by Katherine Apostolacus

The logic of Protestant “orthodoxy” is endless fracture until one “pure” remnant wins out. The Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches (GSFA) recently announced its departure from the Anglican communion, after the Church of England passed a rather *milquetoast* resolution to bless same-sex unions. Fractious and sad as this is, it comes as no surprise to American Anglicans such as myself.

One of the signatories of the GSFA’s statement of schism is “Archbishop” Foley Beach - head of the schismatic Anglican Church of North America (ACNA). Since its inception, ACNA has not been recognised as part of the Anglican Communion. When the American Episcopal Church had discerned that the ordination of women and the sacramentality of same-sex marriages were both valid, the Church of England determined that the ACNA had departed from the Anglican Communion, not the American Episcopalians. ACNA sought to establish episcopal legitimacy by appeal to the highly conservative GSFA. Consequently, the GSFA has been the benefactor of schism since at least 2009.

Conservatives and progressives *can* converse productively together on the issues surrounding same-sex marriages and relationships. But they can only do so when each is willing to listen to the other. The moment one stops listening - as GSFA and ACNA sadly have - conversation becomes impossible. (It’s at times like these that one wishes for the strong backbone of papal authority, though this too would introduce complications for my Anglican friends of all stripes, and a laugh of irony from my Roman Catholic friends.)

Anglican rhetoric about marriage - whether from a supposedly “traditional” perspective or a more “modern” one - are fraught with fear. On one hand, we hear worries about the dissolution of society and orthodoxy; on the other, simplistic pleas for “inclusion.” The Church of England is in a position to be self-reflective and creative by offering, not only a liturgy that is fitting for a same-sex couple, but also a theology that enriches the Church’s treatment of marriage as a vocation.

Indeed, the Church of England seems to have put the cart before the horse by developing a liturgy *before* a compelling theology of marriage has been established that explicitly validates same-sex relationships. I contend that marrying a gay couple should be allowed, not merely for “harm reduction” or capitulating to social mores which have now come to reign. Rather, it should be allowed because there is a genuinely holy good in these relationships which the Church is enriched by, and which reveal (as sacraments do) the glory of the presence of God in our world.

If we are concerned about normative standards for procreation, we may say that gay marriages have a slightly different material teleology. Not in rejection of procreation as a heterosexual norm; gay marriages are oriented - like the New Covenant - to adoption.

But who can even begin to hear this who is seething at the mouth about the destruction of orthodoxy and collapse of civilisation? The “orthodoxy” contended in some circles will be a farce and a mockery of “love,” if it precludes knowledge of the gay other and her friends. And now the Church of England may consider herself freer to discern how to love her gay members without controverting—or actively militating against—their existence in the name of “unity”.

Katherine is a visiting student in the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge. She is working on a PhD in Philosophy at Villanova University, an Augustinian university in the USA. She was Roman Catholic until 2021 when she entered the Anglican Communion.

The Electoral Roll

by Ann Auger

We are approaching the time where we will revise the Electoral Roll in preparation for our Annual Meeting in April. Parishioners on the Electoral Roll are entitled to vote in the election of churchwardens and PCC members, and to stand as PCC members themselves.

If you have been worshipping at Little St Mary's for six months or more, you are entitled to be entered on the Electoral Roll and there is a simple application form to complete. Forms are available at the back of church and also electronically on our website:

www.lsm.org.uk/about/electoral-roll

Completed forms can be given to me on Sundays or left in the 'A' pigeonhole.

The closing date for applications for this year's Electoral Roll is **Passion Sunday, 26th March**. Any forms received after this date will be processed after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

If you're already on the Electoral Roll but any of your details have changed over the past twelve months, this is an excellent opportunity to ensure that the Church has your up-to-date details. You don't need to fill in another form; but email me on ann.auger@cantab.net or leave me a note in the pigeonhole.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions.

Hamlin Fistula

Three times a year blankets knitted in the UK are sent to the Hamlin Fistula office in Halesowen from where they are sent on to Hamlin Fistula, Ethiopia. Here are three that LSM knitters sending.

All patients in their hospitals are given one. They have come to symbolise the warmth, comfort and care that those patients receive.

Since the 1950s when two doctors arrived from Australia to help women suffering from terrible childbirth injuries over 60,000 have had their health and dignity restored.



Garden News



In recent months we've set our mind to refreshing our much-loved churchyard garden, stripping out some of the more out-of-control elements and replanting the beds with new plants sympathetic to the garden's wild character. On 18th February a special working group of friends and volunteers got together to continue this work, clergy included. Do look around the garden some time to see how it's all coming along. And if you'd be interested in helping (with labour or donations - both are needed!), do drop us a line.

