



The Server



SS. Peter & Paul, Wymering

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Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary

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From the Editor's Desk.



Spreading the word. In my own Chapter we have a policy of visiting several churches each year with which we have no connection, sometimes we see some of their congregation, sometimes the incumbent and very occasionally a server or two. Last year we visited an old Saxon church in a country parish, in fact it was part of a joint benefice and the Reader there told us that they were part of a group of five churches which were originally five different parishes. Within this group they had no servers in any of the churches, imagine my surprise when recently I received an email from the Reader (the Benefice is in interregnum) asking where the parish could buy reasonably priced servers albs, which must mean that they now have Servers. This really is great let's just hope when we next visit this church as a Chapter, which is in the coming year, these new servers will attend and maybe be encouraged to join us.

Is it me? But as I go through the various Chapter reports I seem to read more and more often that a Mass was celebrated and not the Guild Office sung. I would be the first to agree that a variety of services and forms of worship is a good thing and indeed in my own Chapter I try to keep this in mind. But I do wonder are Chapter Secretaries aware of the Rules of the Guild, the one I am referring to is the one that states that the Guild Office must be sung a minimum of five times each year by each Chapter and as far as I am aware this does not include Festivals etc. So maybe a little house keeping might be in order in some areas otherwise we are in danger of becoming a Mass Guild and not a Guild for Servers and Acolytes.

A version of an Alternative Guild Office is still an on going project, BUT we would like to hear from you. What form would you like an Alternative Office to take? How different would you like it to be? What suggestions do you have? Please let me or the Secretary- General know.

May I, on behalf of all the Officers and Councillors wish each and everyone of you and your families and loved ones a very Blessed and Happy Christmas.

Yours

Peter

Welcome to New Members

Full Members:

Kenneth Bruce, Hazel Clements, Reginald Hamblin, Lesley Wraxall,

Probationers:

Lucas Clements, James Farmer, John Irwin, Terence Laybourn, Isabelle Murray, Marjorie Richer,

Priest Associates:

John Collins, Richard Costin, John Lee, David Smith,

The Faithful Departed:

David Bentley, Bernard Dawson, Wally Divers, Terry Grumbridge, Alan Roberts,



The Chantry Book



Brian Saltwell, (C.Eng. M.I.E.E.) 1936 – 2009. was born in Portsmouth and whilst in the Royal Air Force he gained a degree in electronics and engineering. He worked in Shoreham designing electronic systems. He started his own company making high voltage power supplies for the electronics industry. He was known to help people no matter how busy he was. He was a passed editor to the parish news and a server. Moving to Middleton-on-Sea, Brian became involved in the community. He was a devoted Christian and, worked at S. Nicholas' as a server, Eucharistic Minister, and Web-Master. He regularly attended GSS meetings but following heart surgery in 2007 he never fully recovered. As we go through life there are those like Brian enrich our lives. It was fitting and appropriate that his GSS medal was placed on the coffin.

Fr Peter Tabernacle. 1922-2009 died in July; his funeral took place at S. Mary's, Wellingborough on the 31st and was conducted by Fr Farmer, with the Bishop of Richborough in attendance along with 20 clergy and a congregation of 400. Fr Peter started as a server at Potters Bar in the 1930's and in 1938 moved to SS. Peter and Paul, Enfield Lock. During his wartime service in the Royal Navy he was licensed as a Lay Reader. After the war he became Sacristan for many years, church warden, parish treasurer, scout leader and a punctilious trainer of servers. He was ordained in 1975 and served as a NSM curate at S. George's, Enfield whilst working in the insurance industry, before being appointed to a full-time ministry in Corby and then S. Mark's, Wellingbrough. After retiring he attended All Saints, Wellingborough and latterly S. Mary's, Wellingborough. He was the Chaplain of the Chapter of S. Luke for many years until he retired due to failing health but remained as Assistant Chaplain. Fr Peter will be remembered for his attention to detail and his sense of humour. His fund of jokes seemed to be endless.



Iris Audrey Olive Lee was born in 1926 in Ely and died in July in S. Michael's Residential Home, Clacton. The family moved to Clacton as her father was in the Royal Navy, at Brightlingsea, She worked in a chemist's in on leaving school, then attended S..Andrew's College in 1954 to train as a Parish Worker. She was appointed Lay Worker at S.Luke's, Victoria Docks from 1958-73 and Lay Worker at S. Andrew's, North Weald Bassett from 1974-1976. She became a Deaconess in 1976 and continued at S. Andrew's until 1987. She retired in order to be made Deacon in 1987. She moved to S.James's, Clacton-on-Sea and also became Chaplain at Clacton Hospital 1990-1995. In 2002 she retired due to ill health and moved to S. Michael's Home. She was a member of the S. Cedd Chapter, the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, the Guild of St.Raphael and the Guild of All Souls.

Frederick Wyatt died in August aged 92. He was a founder member S. Hugh and Blessed Edward King Chapter, Grimsby in 1954, was its first secretary and attended meetings right up to his death. He was born in Grimsby and lived there all his life and served in the Sherwood Foresters. On leaving school he worked for a firm involved in the fishing trade then in the dock office for British United Trawlers from whom he received a long service gold watch in 1973. He met Peggy and they were married in 1946; in 1953 Margaret was born and in 1955. Fred was a quiet, gentle man, dependable



and well respected and could keep a confidence. He liked steam trains, collected stamps and was fond of music. He had great faith and was a member of S. Aiden's, Cleethorpes having served as choir boy, server and church warden. Up until a week before he died he attended Chapter meetings. In 2004, Bishop Edward King Chapter celebrated its fiftieth anniversary the picture (overleaf) shows Fred cutting the celebration cake. Rest in peace Fred and rise in Glory.

Richard Mathers funeral took place at S. Anselm Church Hatch End in September. Bro. Richard moved to Wokingham 4 years ago, but never found another parish in the tradition of Hatch End. Bro. Richard joined the Guild as a young man when he lived in Pinner; his membership lapsed but he rejoined and then served faithfully for some 40 years so his total membership being 64 years. Richard is survived by his wife Freda and 2 sons.

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The Tale of Christmas

A candle is lit to dispel the darkness



For many years we have had friends in Sweden, we have never been there for Christmas but I thought you might be interested to learn of a typical Swedish Christmas, so I have asked a few pertinent questions.

When the first of four Advent Candles is lit in Swedish homes and church there are three more weeks until Christmas on December 24th. Candles and the concept of light are central to the Swedish Christmas celebration, because the festival falls when "it is not day and it is not night so it balances between the two" Originally, pagan Swedes celebrated the Midwinter feast around this time wanting to bring out the sun again through sacrifices and drinking to the memory of the gods. As Christianity made its way into Sweden, the feast was overtaken by the celebration of Christ's birth, the bearer of light, and the original pagan tradition became entwined with Christian customs. Christmas, "Jul" (Yule) in Swedish, is their most important holiday and is preceded by many preparations.

The Christmas tree must be collected and decorated, the food cooked and the Christmas gifts wrapped. The Christmas tree is a symbol of the burning bush in which God revealed himself to Moses, and is therefore decorated with burning candles. In Sweden the tree is most often a freshly cut spruce, which is decorated

with a variety of glass balls and ornaments a few days before Christmas Eve. Actually, the tree tradition is a fairly recent one; it was adopted from Germany at the end of the 19th century. Before this, "Christmas straw" was the most common practice at Christmas time. The custom was that household members would have to lie on the straw at night, as the beds were reserved for the dead who would come to visit their families.

The Swedish Christmas table is loaded with delicacies and attractively decorated, quite a sight for the foreign eye. This dinner is usually eaten on Christmas Eve, the most important day of Christmas in Sweden. If you take a look at a Swedish Christmas table, you will see many pork dishes, which might seem peculiar to the uninitiated. Normally pigs were slaughtered in autumn, and only one or two were saved for Christmas. From the autumn to Christmas, the Swedes would settle for cured meat and were thrilled to eat fresh meat at Christmas. In olden days, slaughtering preceded the meal, baking, brewing, candlemaking and cleaning would ensure a good New Year. The Christmas Eve meal begins with the "smorgasbord", a mix of pickled fish and other small dishes such as fried meatballs, eel and liver pate. The main dish of the meal is boiled ham that is covered with beaten egg and breadcrumbs and then roasted. Christmas Eve is often referred to as the "dipping day", which alludes to the fact that people were allowed to dip their bread into the broth from the ham. Some households also eat dried ling, (a type of fish) which has been soaked in lye and water. This is a dish that stems from when fresh fish was hard to get, but fish was still essential to mark the end of the long Christmas fast of repentance. No Swedish table would be complete without rice porridge, which is eaten as a dessert. Non-Swedes may think that this does not sound very appetizing but once, it was the main dish in many poor homes and is, now a reminder of those times. Several games are associated with the pudding; an almond is hidden in it, and whoever gets it has to invent a rhyme, often alluding to some gift. Christmas gifts are the highlight for the children. Much to their anguish the presents are opened late, after the Christmas Eve meal. "Julklapp" is the Swedish word for Christmas gift and literally means Christmas knock According to folklore, people would knock on your door, throw the gift in, then run away, in the past the family members, especially children and servants, would receive bread, cheese and a candle. "Jultomten" is the central Father Christmas figure in Swedish homes. He is their version of S. Nicholas. Swedes have integrated the white-bearded S. Nicholas with the small elves that, according to myth, protected the farms. Custom says that one should put out some porridge for the elf to keep him in a good mood, and then Jultomten would come into the house and handed out

the gifts. Today, he arrives after dinner with a bag of gifts and distributes presents from under the tree. He is dressed in red and often exclaims, "Are there any good children here?" which fills the children with fear and excitement! The Christmas goat should also be mentioned when talking about St. Nicholas. According to tradition, the saint was accompanied by the devil. In Sweden he was symbolised by the "Julbock" (a straw goat with horns) still seen in Swedish homes. Strangely, the goat took over S. Nicholas' role as the bearer of gifts, when Lutherans excluded the saint from the church. Church-going has become less frequent in Sweden but many people still attend the early service on Christmas Day, which begins at seven o'clock in the morning when it is still pitch black outside! In the past, people would arrive at church like Orsa church on the left in torch-lit horse sleighs and they would be met by the sight of a church flooded with candlelight both outside and inside, brilliantly reflected by the white snow with the back drop of acres of pine forests.



From : The Pelican

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News from the Chapters



The Incarnate Word with S. Alban and S. Edward. At the Festival of Mary in May a new statue of Our Lady of Hanworth was dedicated by Bishop Mercer during a Solemn High Mass at S George's. Other Guild members and Fr Lew joined chapter members and Fr Verrill from the Dominicans gave the sermons (morning & afternoon). After lunch in the hall, the new statue was processed around the church grounds then Benediction was given in Latin. S. Paul's Nork celebrated their patron saint at a High Mass our members joined the existing servers to provide a crucifer, banner bearer and torches. The Chapter has joined the Friends of Alton Abbey. A minibus was arranged from S James' Malden, and we arrived at the Abbey just after 10am for the S. Benedict's Day celebrations. This gave us all plenty of time to look around the Abbey, shop at the various stalls and ensure they had a good seat for the service at 11.30am.

S. Mary of Margam: In January we visit Margam Abbey where our chaplain celebrated a Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany. February's meeting was at S.Catherine's, Neath where we sung the Guild Office. We went to S. Teilo's, Tonmawr in March where our chaplain celebrated Mass. We had an Easter break in April. May's meeting was at S. Illtud's, Neath, where we had a Votive Mass to Our Lady. June's meeting had to be cancelled. July's meeting was at Margam

Abbey and was a Guild Office. Each meeting was followed by a reception, provided by the hosting church, for which we send our thanks. We send our good wishes to our chaplain as he departs the Chapter to take up a new position in Llanelli in August and thank him for his time and friendship during his Chaplaincy and at our July meeting we made a presentation to him - he will be greatly missed. We now have to find a new Chaplain.

S. Julian, Frome. Our March meeting was at Christ Church, Frome where we joined the congregation for Stations of the Cross and Compline. The April meeting was a return visit to S. John the Baptist, Frome for our Easter Mass. S.Peter's, Westfield was the venue for our Chapter Mass in May. In June we held a Chapter Mass at S. Lawrence, Rode and our Social Evening in July was preceded by a Mass in All Saints, Nunney. Our theme for this Mass was in remembrance of John Keble.

S. John the Baptist, The Torbay Chapter. Spring and Summer have been very busy for the Chapter, a wide variety of interesting venues have encouraged a consistently high number to attend. In April and May we were welcomed at . Lukes Milber for a S. George's Day Mass and then for May Devotions at which the celebrant was Bishop John Ford. Later in May we visited S. Mary the Virgin, Marychurch Torquay for a sung Mass. At S. George and S. Mary, Cockington we were delighted, after sung Mass, to be instructed in some of the rich history of the church, including the pulpit salvaged from a ship (The Rosary) which was part of the Armada. In July at St.Peters Shaldon we were joined by members of the Holy Trinity Chapter for Guild Office and Benediction. Later in the month we were invited to S. Martin of Tours, Barton for their Dedication Festival; Fr Gorran celebrated Mass and the Preacher was the Reverend Meyrick Dean of Exeter Cathedral. After a months break we reconvened on 9th September at All Saints Babbacombe for sung Mass.

Saint Oswin, Northumbria. The chapter sang the Guild Office at S. John's Seaton Hirst in Ashington in February. The March meeting was at S. Bede at Newsham. The dedication is unusual in that Bede was only canonised in 1899 and most Anglican dedications are to the "Venerable" The AGM followed the singing of the Office. S George's Cullercoats was the setting for our annual visit to sing the Guild Office. Our midsummer meeting was at Petertide at S. Peter's Wallsend where we sang the Guild Office. The church which is paired with S. Luke also in Wallsend was holding a flower festival as part of their patronal festivities and this greatly increased the attendance.

In July we joined the parish of S. Benedict, Cowpen in celebrating their patronal festival. The concelebrated Mass was followed by the veneration of a relic of S. Benedict kept in a reliquary. Solemn Guild office, during which we admitted a new member, followed a Festival lunch provided by the Parish.

Saint Godric of Finchale. County Durham. The Chapter's area has many parishes with servers who are not members of the Guild. In an attempt to recruit them the guild office was sung in S. Aidan Grangetown n a Thursday night as opposed to the traditional Saturday afternoon and also in May at S. Hilda in Whitby. The annual festival was held in May in the grounds of Finchale Priory, where Godric had his Hermitage. The Warden was the celebrant at the High Mass held in the ruined nave adjacent to the Shrine, of S. Godric. After a picnic the Guild Office was sung and we concluded with a procession.

Northern Chapters Festival. The Bishop of Durham dedicated S. Oswald, Hartlepool in 1904. It was designed by Ralph Hicks in the "Medieval" Gothic style and was built at the behest of Sir Ralph Gray a local shipyard owner and his daughter in law in memory of his son and her husband. The building is a masterpiece with woodwork, stonework, stained glass and ornaments of the finest. It boasts a peel of ten bells plus a tuning bell, and a carillon both in regular use. The day started at noon with a procession of more than 40 robed servers and clergy, with banners, from the hall to the church. The Angelus preceded a Solemn Concelebrated Pontifical Mass, led by the Rt. Reverend Paul Richardson, Assistant Bishop of Newcastle who also gave the address. After the Mass the Bishop blessed and anointed in the manner of the Byzantine Melkite Euchologion, a newly commissioned Ikon of Our Lady and the Saints of Northumbria. The artist and her family were present and swelled a congregation of over 100. Lunch followed, provided by the ladies of the parish, and the afternoon finished in the Church, with the Sung Guild Office followed by a procession during which the Ikon was carried and displayed.

Holy Cross, South Somerset: The March meeting was held at S. Swithun's, Bridport when Fr. Edwards the Incumbent led Stations of the Cross. It was followed by our A.G.M. when all officers were re-elected. Fr. Sutcliffe, the Chapter Chaplain thanked them all and he in turn was thanked for his leadership. The meeting ended with the Grace. In April our meeting was a Mass to Celebrate S. George's day at S. Michael and all Angels, Yeovil. In May we met at the Good Shepherd, Chard for Evensong and Benediction to mark their Patronal Festival. In June we visited S. Mary Magdalene, Cricket Malherbie for Guild Office and we welcomed David Penny as a full member.

Our Lady and St. Richard, Chichester and Bognor Regis. At the end of April we learned of the death of Brian Saltwell, for some years, a keen member of our chapter. Brian was a server at S. Nicholas, Middleton-on-Sea and he will be sorely missed. He suffered a heart attack two years ago and never really got over it. In this quarter, we visited S. Mary's Littlehampton, SS.Peter & Paul, Rustington, and S. Mary's, Barnham. At Barnham, both the Portsmouth and Bognor Regis chapters met together and sang The Guild Office, the service was well supported with over twenty servers and six Priests in attendance. A fine selection of drinks and nibbles were available afterwards. We are planning a social evening in August.

Mansfield & Nottingham Chapter Of Our Lady & St. Jerome: The first picture was taken at our June meeting at Southwell Minster. It was a privilege to sing our Guild Office and receive Benediction in such surroundings; we hope to make this an annual event. The second picture was



taken at the Church of S. Laurence Long Eaton in July 18th when at a Joint meeting with servers from

Wednesbury & Wolverhampton. Mass at noon was followed at 3p.m. by the Guild Office and Benediction.

S. Etheldreda, Cambridge. In May we visited S. John, Stansted Mountfitchet. We try to meet here every other year; although a long way it is well worth a visit. After a long absence we made a return visit to S. Mary the Virgin, Sawston. There was a good number and we were made welcome by Fr. Partridge. Our youngest server became a probationer during this service. Our July meeting was in S. Mary, Godmanchester for Guild Office and Benediction and our August meeting was held at Selwyn College chapel, where our Chaplain, Fr. Brian Macdonald-Milne, gave an interesting talk on Bishop George Augustus Selwyn of New Zealand and Lichfield (in whose memory the college was dedicated) and the first bishop of Melanesia, John Paterson. Fr. Brian lived in Melanesia for many years and has written a book on the history of the Melanesian Brotherhood. On September 17th we sang the Office at S. Andrew's, Cherry Hinton. Fr. Linney gave an address on the Triumph of the Cross. Then a week later, at a last minute change of venue, we found ourselves in the delightful church of S. Mary the Virgin, Withersfield. Here a choir from Mildenhall sang a Schubert mass for our Solemn Sung Eucharist and we were made most welcome.

S. John the Divine, Leicester. The annual Corpus Christi Festival of the Catholic Societies in Leicester was held at S. Aidan's, and the Principal Celebrant and Preacher was the Rt. Revd. Martyn Jarrett, Bishop of Beverley. At the end of the Sung Mass there was an outdoor procession of the Blessed Sacrament followed by Benediction. Amongst the 80 present were 23 chapter members and we provided the serving team. The usual grand buffet was provided in the church hall; our thanks to Fr Lumby and the people of S. Aidan's for hosting the Festival and for the excellent refreshments. In July we joined with the Coventry Chapter at S. Catherine's, Burbage. The Guild Office was followed by an address by Fr Bob Stephen, Procession and Benediction. 21 members were present together with several of the Coventry chapter members and members of S. Catherine's congregation. Our August venue was S. Wistan, Wistow Fr. Colin Southall celebrated Sung Mass according to the Book of Common Prayer and also preached. 23 members were present and we were joined by supporters and members of the Wistow Benefice. After Mass refreshments were provided by the people of the Wistow Benefice to whom we were most grateful. In September we joined with the Kettering Chapter at SS Peter & Paul, Uppingham for Guild Office & Benediction. Fr Colin Southall sang the Office and Fr David Maudllin gave the address and Benediction. 19 members of our chapter were present and, together with the Kettering members and people from SS Peter & St Paul we numbered over 40.



Chapter of the Holy Grail. Saturday 11th July marked the Centenary celebrations of the Chapter when members and supporters gathered at the church of S. Francis of Assisi, Hammerfield, Hemel Hempstead, for a Solemn Mass at noon. The celebrant and preacher was our Chaplain, Fr Gordon Adam SSC. In his Homily, Fr Gordon included four important points that servers should keep in mind. A good server is in being unobtrusive facilitates worship, servers must know what they are doing. Reliability—to be invited to become a server one must also accept responsibility in fulfilling what they have promised. Be prayerful and seek the support of the Spirit both before and after a Service. After lunch, we sang the Guild Office using new laminated copies that had been generously presented as a memento of the occasion to the Chapter members and supporters by David Froud. Our celebrations concluded with Benediction. Grateful thanks are extended to all who contributed on the day, as we gave thanks for 100 years of the Chapter.

Corpus Christi Chapter, Essex. For the first time in years our meeting in July

failed to take place. Our venue was the Greek Orthodox Church, we all turned up, but no one from the Orthodox Community appeared! All had been arranged with their Secretary before he went off to the Middle East and the Secretary was assured that all details had been passed on and apology from the Greek Orthodox Community was received. I will list the evening as an experience I do not want to repeat, but have been assured that we would be welcome on another occasion.

Holy Resurrection, Brighton. In June Cllr Roger Emery and Colin Squires the Chapter Secretary visited Walter Leney, in the nursing home where and presented him with his certificate, acknowledging over 50 years Guild membership. He was a choirboy at S Anne's, Lewes, before becoming a server, then sacristan and verger St Anne's was his life, A bachelor, Walter worked at the Lewis Law Courts. When into his 80's Walter still helped the homeless on Christmas Day by going to the local centre and washing up after lunch, so that others could go home to their families, A quiet devout man, Walter would attend meetings, even though he didn't drive. In the photo from left to right are Colin, Walter and Roger enjoying a glass of bucks fizz. Last year David Burchell and Bemie Widdowson received their certificates for 50 years' Guild membership and both are still active members of this Chapter.



S. Joseph of Arimathaea, Portsmouth. In July we had a very successful joint meeting with the Chichester and Bognor Chapter at S. Mary's Barnham. We did not meet in August but had a very successful meeting in September At the Church of the Ascension in Portsmouth. Fr. Robinson began the service by singing the Angelus, this was followed by an Admission then the Guild Office. Fr Robinson preached and hosted us for refreshments afterwards. It was good to see so many members at a Chapter meeting.

The Midlands Area Festival • S. Mary De Castro. A most joyful and uplifting day. There were 150 at the Mass and also in the afternoon. The Principal Celebrant and preacher at the Mass of the Holy Cross at noon was the Bishop of Richborough joined by 11 con-celebrants. The choir from S. Aidan's added to the worship. The Office was sung in the afternoon led by Fr. Brain, the address and Benediction was given by Fr. Moore.



St Andrew, Romford Pg13/8 We have kept up our programme of monthly meetings and encouragingly attendances have improved. In May we were at S. Augustine, Rush Green, where the planned Guild Office had to be changed to a Mass. The Parish Priest, Father Howse, celebrated and preached on the need for both servers and clergy to be flexible. June was our "annual outing" to London for a Mass at S. Katherine Cree, where we were joined by the Chapter of St Hugh of Lincoln. During our July meeting at S. Barnabas, Woodford Green, Thomas Greenwood and Amanda Wren, were admitted as full members. In August we visited S. Mary Magdalene, Harlow, where we sang the Guild Office led by, Father Hingley, followed by Benediction given by the Warden. Our September meeting was for Mass at St.Thomas of Canterbury, Brentwood, and in October we visited St Mary the Virgin, Ilford, to sing the Guild Office.

Our Lady of Walsingham and S. Alban LG2/148 celebrated their 80th



Anniversary in June at S. Anselm's Church Hatch End. The Bishop of Fulham) a former priest associate of the Chapter and the Chapter's Patron came to be the Presidential Celebrant and Preacher. Bishop John welcomed us to one of his own parishes in the

gathering rites and in the sermon the Bishop spoke of the previous secretaries ,the formation of the Chapter and its founding parishes of . At the end of Mass the. Bishop was thanked and presented with a 12 year old malt whisky. Then came some photographs followed by a Pontifical Blessing. We then adjourned to the side of the Church for superb refreshments.

October Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Egmanton. The Chief Concelebrant and Preacher at the mass was the Bishop of Fulham. The mass began at Noon with Bp. John singing the Angelus. The serving team consisted entirely of members of GSS from various chapters. At the end of Mass the Bishop laid hands on our chairman John Barnett who is recovering from the amputation of a leg. After a splendid lunch the pilgrims assembled for a Solemn Magnificat, Procession round the village and back into church for Benediction

S Chad, Coventry. We visited S. Catherine's, Burbage in July for Guild Office, Address, Procession and Benediction. Fr. Norman Stevens sang the Office and Fr. Bob Stephen gave the Address and Benediction. This was a well attended S. John the Divine, Leicester. The Assumption of Our Lady was marked by a meeting with servers and friends from our own Chapter and from the Chapter of

Sung Mass at S. Oswald's, Tile Hill. The parish priest, Fr. Regan was the Celebrant, Fr. Stevens gave the Address. A good number of our servers attended the Midlands Area Festival at S. Mary de Castro, Leicester in September. We were please to have the area festival brought back to the Coventry/Leicester area. We thanked our councillor, Terry Doughty for organising this festival and for bringing it back to our area once again.

PG11 Group Festival. For the past three years PG11 (West of England) Group Festival has been combined with the Bristol Catholic Societies Assumptiontide Festival. The latter Festival has been in existence since the early 1970s; it was transferred from a village north of Bristol to Bristol Cathedral in 2000. At this years Festival Bishop Edwin Barnes presided at the Solemn Concelebrated Mass in the Cathedral supported by twelve concelebrants. The Mass was preceded by the Angelus and a Procession of Our Lady, when the statue of Our Lady of Glastonbury was carried to a place of honour at the nave Altar. Bishop Edwin preached a thought-provoking sermon and there were over 150 communicants. The servers were drawn from the Cathedral and local parishes. After lunch we moved to the Lord Mayor's Chapel. A short period of silent Exposition was followed by Solemn Benediction which was given by Fr Eldridge, chaplain of the Holy and Indivisible Chapter, Cheltenham. The servers were from the area Chapters. Guild members from as far afield as the South Coast attended. We hope they will be with us next yearwhen Bishop David Thomas, formerly Provincial Assistant Bishop in the Church in Wales, will preside and preach.

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Letter to the Editor

An extract from a letter from John Crowther of Redcar the article on Sundials in The Server (Autumn 2009) states that 'tall, slender tapering, four sided obelisks served as the basis of Egyptian'. But these were symbols of the rays of the sun god reaching down to bless the land of Egypt. Egyptian sundials marked the day until noon and then they were turned to mark the afternoon hours. The shadow was cast by a 'T' shaped gnomon which was accurate enough for the sub-tropical land of Egypt. These were small, handy, portable time keepers. An accurate gnomon must be set at the latitude angle of the place where it is fixed so the longest side of the vertical gnomon of the vertical sundial of Darley Dale church, as in the photograph in the article, if continued through the wall is lined up with Polaris, the North Star

Cycle of Prayer

January 2010

- 1 The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus Peace on Earth
- 2 All Guild members and Priest Associates
- 3 * 2nd Sunday of Christmas Remembering all working away from home
- 4 The Warden Fr J David Moore
- 5 The Chaplain General Fr Michael Brain
- 6 Epiphany The Orthodox Church
- 7 The Secretary General GrandCouncillor Terry Doughty
- 8 The Treasurer General Grand Councillor Louis A Lewis
- 9 The Server Editor Writers and Distributors
- 10 * 1st of Epiphany The Baptism of Christ
- 11 Grand Honorary Ex Officio and Group Councillors
- 12 The General Council and all members
- 13 For all Bishops Priests Deacons and Lay Workers
- 14 Thanksgiving for members who have given over 50 years service
- 15 H M Forces and Lone Members
- 16 Candidates for Ordination
- 17 * 2nd of Epiphany For those alone
- 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 19 Diocese of London
- 20 London Group 1/2 (West) Cllr John Donovan
- 21 1/83 S Hugh of Lincoln
- 22 2/77 The Holy Rood
- 23 2/112 Our Lady of Willesden & S Mellitus NW6
- 24 * 3rd of Epiphany Christian Unity
- 25 Conversion of S Paul Are we converted?
- 26 Timothy and Titus Companions of Paul
- 27 2/148 Our Lady of Walsingham & S Alban Wembley
- 28 Thomas Aquinas Priest Philosopher Teacher of the Faith
- 29 London Group 4 City of London/Westminster parts of Essex
- 30 Charles King and Martyr 1649
- 31 * 4th of Epiphany For those who are alone

February 2010

- 1 4/98 King Charles the Martyr Walthamstow/Leyton
- 2 Candlemas Presentation of Christ in the Temple

- 3 London Group 5/6 South London & East Surrey Cllr Michael Rogerson
- 4 5/75 The Holy Redeemer S E London
- 5 5/85 The Incarnate Word S Alban & S Edward SW London E Surrey
- 6 H M The Queen Elizabeth and the Royal Family
- 7 * 2nd before Lent Sexagesima That we may see the sights of your glory
- 8 6/48 Epiphany Croydon Area
- 9 Diocese of Southwark
- 10 S Scholastica Sister of S Benedict For Our Brothers and Sisters
- 11 Diocese of Guildford
- 12 Provincial Group 1 West Kent Cllr Robert Nunn
- 13 1/14 S Augustine of Canterbury Sittingbourne Isle of Sheppey
- 14 * Next before Lent Quinquagesima Grant us the light of your glory
- 15 Thomas Bray Priest Founder of SPCK and SPG c1730
- 16 1/139 S Cyprian Rochester Chatham Stroud Gravesend
- 17 Ash Wednesday Repentance for our sins and faults
- 18 1/96 S Justus Orpington
- 19 1/74 S Stephen Tunbridge Wells Groombridge Pembury
- 20 Diocese of Rochester
- 21 * Lent 1 For the deliverance from temptation
- 22 Provincial Group 2 Kent Cllr Frederick Palmer
- 23 2/7 All Souls Whitstable Canterbury Herne Bay
- 24 2/116 S Michael the Archangel East Kent
- 25 2/121 S Mildred of Kent Margate
- 26 Diocese of Canterbury
- 27 Provincial Group 3 Sussex Cllr Roger Emery
- 28 * Lent 2 For faithfulness in the following where Christ has led

March 2010

- 1 S David The Church of Wales
- 2 Anglian Church Australia All the Servers and Supporters
- 3 3/76 The Holy Ressurrection Brighton
- 4 3/163 S Philip & S Richard Worthing
- 5 Diocese of Chichester
- 6 Diocese of Portsmouth
- 7 * Lent 3 For true wisdom to all in authority
- 8 Edward King Bishop of Lincoln 1910

- 9 3/183 S Wilfred Eastbourne
 10 Provincial Group 4 Hampshire/East Wiltshire/W Sussex Cllr Peter Keat
 11 4/92 S Joseph of Arimathaea Portsmouth
 12 4/94 S Joseph the Foster Father Isle of Wight
 13 4/144 Our Lady & S Richard Bognor Area
 14 * **Lent 4 Mothering Sunday Our Own Mothers**
 15 Diocese of Winchester
 16 4/175 S Swithun Winchester
 17 S Patrick Apostle to the Irish c460
 18 Provincial Group 5 Devonshire
 19 S Joseph of Nazareth Our Fathers
 20 S Cuthbert For Missionaries
 21 * **Lent 5 Passion Sunday Help us to share in His Passion**
 22 5/24 S Brannock Ilfracombe Barnstable
 23 5/73 The Holy Trinity Teighmouth Newton Abbot
 24 5/88 S John the Baptist Torbay Dartmouth Exeter E Devon
 25 Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary Pray for us O Holy
 Mother of God
 26 5/136 Our Lady & S George Plymouth
 27 Diocese of Exeter
 28 * **Lent 5 Palm Sunday Hosanna in the Highest**
 29 Monday of Holy Week May we be regular in worship
 30 Tuesday in Holy Week May we be regular in devotion
 31 Wednesday in Holy Week May we enjoy the benefits of confession

Corrections, omissions and suggestions to:

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The Guild Diary

Saturday 9th January 2010 Epiphany Festival - Holy Trinity Hoxton

12 Noon - Solemn Concelebrated Mass
 Preacher Fr. Daniel Humphreys, Vicar of S. Matthews, Willesden.
 3.45pm - Solemn Guild Office, Procession to the Crib and Benediction



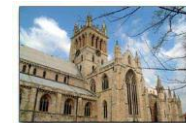
Saturday 10th April 2010. Guild Easter Festival and Annual General Meeting. S. Alban's, Holborn.

Noon: Concelebrated Mass
3.00pm Guild AGM
3.30pm Guild Office, Procession and Benediction



Saturday 19th June 2010. Northern Area Festival Selby Abbey

12.00: Solemn Mass
15.00: Guild Office



Saturday 21st August 2010 Bristol Area Assumptiontide Festival

12.00 Solemn Concelebrated Mass Bristol Cathedral
Preacher The Rt Revd David Thomas
15.30 Exposition and Benediction in the Lord Mayor's Chapel
15.31 Details Cllr Chris Verity 01275 462927



Saturday September 2010 Annual Festival and 82nd AGM of the Scottish Guild of Servers. S. Andrews Banff

1.00pm Mass
2.45 AGM
3.45 pm Guild Office



Autumn Festival to be arranged in the North West Area

Anslem of Canterbury, monk, Archbishop and theologian



Anselm is probably the most important Christian theologian in the West between Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. His two great accomplishments are his *Proslogium* (in which he undertakes to show that Reason requires that men should believe in God), and his *Cur Deus Homo?* (in which he undertakes to show that Divine Love responding to human rebelliousness requires that God should become a man). Anselm was born in the province of Piedmont in 1033 of a Catholic family. He was raised and instructed in the faith by his mother at the age of 15 he was filled with the desire to enter the monastery but barred due to the wishes of his father. Anselm followed up on his desire to enter the monastery 12 years later after a period of religious indifference and years of worldly living. He joined the monastery at Bec in Normandy and within three years was elected Abbot. During his life in the world Anselm gained a reputation as an original and independent thinker and was admired for his teaching skill and gentleness. Under the guidance of Anselm the monastery began a school that soon became a theological and philosophical center of learning. At the request of his community Anselm began publishing his theological works. These soon spread around Europe and many of them are still available today. In the year of 1093 Anselm, against his will, was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. His appointment was challenged at first by King William Rufus but eventually he relented and allowed Anselm to take up the position. Anselm worked to reform the clergy and monastic communities but met with much difficulty from the king. He realized that argument with the king was unavoidable so he voluntarily exiled himself from England until the death of the King. In 1100 the king died and Anselm was asked to return to England where he soon got into a bitter disagreement with Henry I, the new king, and was exiled for three years to Rome. He returned for the remaining years of his life and was successful in enacting many reforms. One being was a resolution prohibiting the sale of humans. S. Anselm died in 1109 and his writings are still used for theological and philosophical learning today.

A Prayer of Anselm: My God, I pray that I may so know you and love you that I may rejoice in you. And if I may not do so fully in this life let me go steadily on to the day when I come to that fullness. Let me receive that which you promised through your truth, that my joy may be full.

A Song of Anselm: Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you: You are gentle with us as a mother with her children; Often you weep over our sins and our pride: tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgment. You comfort us in

sorrow and bind up our wounds: in sickness you nurse us, and with pure milk you feed us. Jesus, by your dying we are born to new life: by your anguish and labour we come forth in joy. Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness: through your gentleness we find comfort in fear. Your warmth gives life to the dead: your touch makes sinners righteous. Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us: in your love and tenderness remake us. In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness: for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.

A Prayer: Almighty God, who didst raise up thy servant Anselm to teach The Church of his day to understand its faith in thine eternal Being, perfect justice, and saving mercy: Provide thy Church in every age with devout and learned scholars and teachers, that we may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Christmas and the New Year



The ‘X’ Word. Xmas is such an ugly word. What does the X stand for anyway? Xploitation—perhaps. Xcess—possibly. Xtremely long, drawn out Xpensive commercial season—you’ve got it!

Christmas, on the other hand, is all about Jesus Christ. God’s sublime and selfless gift of himself to humanity. A perfect life laid down in sacrificial love so that we might have peace with God—you can have it!

This year don’t let Xmas rob you of Christmas!

New Year Traditions Around The World

Swaziland New Year. In Swaziland the harvest festival called Newala occurs at the end of the year. It is a celebration of kingship as tradition says that the King, the Ngwenyama or “Lion”, has mystical powers that are believed to embody the Swaziland prosperity and fertility and it is said that he must have many wives and father many children. The ceremony consists of many events that last for up to a month, these include the gathering of foam from the tops of waves.

Maharashtra New Year. Here the New Year is celebrated on the first day of the new moon and may fall in the period of mid-March to mid-April. The

New Year is known as *Gudhi Padwa*, meaning flag hoisting first day. On this day people fly saffron coloured flags from their houses. All families hold their own religious ceremony on New Year's morning, at which the first page of the Almanac is read out. This contains the horoscope for the coming year. Offerings are made to the deities of garlands of flowers and vermilion. People may also visit their local temple. They have a special meal on New Year's Day and an important item on the menu is a bitter-sweet chutney.

Vietnamese New Year. The more popular name for this is Tef, and the formal name is *Nguyen-dan*. It is an important festival because it provides one of the few breaks in the agricultural year as it falls between the harvesting of the crops and the sowing of the new crops. The Vietnamese prepare in advance for the New Year by cleaning their houses, polishing their copper and silverware and paying *off* all their debts. On the first day of the New Year they visit their closest friends, teachers and their parents. The second day they visit their in-laws and other friends who are not as close. Third day they visit the family of their teacher and distant relatives. On the fourth day the spirits return to heaven and business returns to normal. They also visit their local temple and they bring back flowers or greenery as a gift from the celestial spirits. This gift will be kept in the house all year.

Russian New Year. Here Santa is replaced with Grandfather Frost, he looks like Santa but arrives on New Year's Eve with his bag of toys. He wears blue instead of red. Father Frost can punish any evildoer by freezing them. Often children dance around the tree, tell rhymes to Father Frost then receive their presents. The most formal New Year's celebration is a party at the Kremlin; as many as 50,000 attendance tickets are sold in the weeks before the event. The main Russian meal on New Year's Eve is primarily meat and potato.

From: A Collection of Christmas

oOo
An Advent Payer

Let us pray for shepherds: all who carry out their work in cold and sleet:

Those burdened down with serving in our shops,
Those cold and soaked who guard our city. All who in country field of city street or factory tend the everlasting fire of sacrifice that me may be housed and fed. As you appeared to the shepherds who were amazed, speak to all who shepherd flocks of any sort that their work is holy. Let us pray for wise men and women: all who in their science and studies seek a star that will lead to harmony: All who in their planning take long journeys of adventure that others need not take them

but may find rest; All who have grown tired of being merely clever and now seek a simple solution in the paths of love. As you did appear to the wise men from the East speak to all of today's wise men that they may place their talents and their gifts at your disposal.

Let us pray for the devout: all who find time to think of eternal things lest temporal things become chaos; all who linger in the house of God, knowing that God hears and will answer, All who pray for the sick as well as for those tending to them. We bless you. We praise you for all who have made true Christmas real to us in the words they have spoken in our youth and the things they have done for us in our life's pilgrimage. May we be warm, where there is bitterness be strong where there is doubt be patient where there is opposition So shall this Christmastide will bring folk nearer to that family that is in you; And to that expectancy without which we cannot see the Lord. Amen

oOo

A German legend for Christmas Eve

A long time ago, on the night before Christmas, a child was wandering alone through the streets of the city. There were many people on the street, fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, uncles and aunts, even grey-haired grandparents, all of whom were hurrying home with bundles of presents. Carriages rolled by, wagons rattled past, even old carts were pressed into service, all things seemed in a hurry and glad with expectation of the coming Christmas morning. From some of the windows lights were already beginning to stream but the child seemed to have no home and wandered about from street to street. No one took any notice of him except the frost, which bit his bare toes and made the ends of his fingers tingle. The north wind blew against him and pierced his ragged clothes causing him to shiver with cold. He walked past happy homes looking with longing eyes through the windows upon the happy children, most of who were helping to trim the Christmas trees. Surely," said the child, "where there is so much gladness and happiness, some of it may be for me." So with timid steps he approached a large house. Through the windows, he could see a Christmas tree already lit with presents hung on it. Its boughs were trimmed with gold and silver ornaments. Slowly he climbed up the steps and gently rapped on the door. A manservant opened it. He had a kindly face, although his voice was deep and



gruff. He looked at the child then shook his head and said, "Get off the steps. There is no room here for such as you." He looked sorry possibly remembering his own little ones at home. Through the door a light shone, and the warm air, filled with fragrance of the Christmas pine, rushed to greet them. As the child turned into the cold and darkness, he wondered if the children in the house would love to have another companion to join in their Christmas. But the children did not even know that he had knocked.

It grew colder and darker as the child went sadly forward, saying to himself, "Is there no one who will share Christmas with me?" Farther down the street the homes were not so large. There seemed to be children inside nearly every house. They were dancing around Christmas trees in almost every window. In one window there was a lamb made of cotton wool, around its neck was a red ribbon. The little stranger stopped and looked earnestly at the beautiful things inside, but most of all he was drawn toward the lamb. Creeping to the window he tapped on it. A girl came to the window and looked out into the dark street where the snow had now begun to fall. She saw the child but she frowned and said, "Go away. We are too busy to take care of you" Back into the dark, cold streets he turned again. Again and again the child rapped at door or window-pane. At each place he was refused admission. One mother feared he might have some disease; another father said he had only enough for his own children and none to spare. Still another told him to go home where he belonged, and not to trouble other folks. The hours passed and the wind grew colder. On and on he wandered until there was scarcely any one left upon the street and the few who remained did not seem to see the child, when ahead of him there appeared a bright, single ray of light. It shone through the darkness into the child's eyes. He looked up smilingly and said, "I will go where the small light beckons and perhaps they will share their Christmas with me." Hurrying past all the other houses, he reached the end of the street and went to the window from which the light was streaming. It was a poor house, but the child did not care. The light seemed to call him. The light came from a tallow candle that had been placed in an old cup with a broken handle, in the window, as a token of Christmas Eve. There were no curtains at the small, window and as he looked in he saw on a wooden table a branch of a Christmas tree. The room was plainly furnished but clean. Near the fireplace sat a mother with a 2 year-old on her knee and an older child beside her. The children were looking at their mother and listening to a story. A few coals were burning in the fireplace, and all seemed light and warm. The little wanderer crept closer and tapped very gently



on the door. The mother stopped talking, the children looked up. "What was that, mother?" asked the little girl. "I think it was some one tapping on the door," replied the mother. "Run quickly dear, for it is a bitter cold night to keep any one waiting in this storm." "Mother, I think it was the bough of the tree tapping against the window-pane," said the girl. "Do please go on with our story." Again the little wanderer tapped upon the door. "My child," exclaimed the mother, rising, "that certainly was a rap on the door. Run quickly and open it. No one must be left out in the cold on Christmas Eve." The child ran to the door and threw it open. The mother saw the ragged stranger standing outside in the cold with bare head and bare feet. She held out both hands and drew him into the warm, bright room. "You poor, dear child," she said, and putting her arms around him, she drew him close. "He is very cold, my children," she exclaimed. "We must warm him." "And," added the little girl, "we must love him and give him some of our Christmas, too." "Yes," said the mother, "but first let us warm him" The mother sat down by the fire with the child on her lap, and her own little ones warmed his half-frozen hands in theirs. The mother smoothed his tangled curls, and, bending low over his head, kissed him. She gathered the three little ones in her arms for a moment the room was very still. Later the little girl said to her mother, "May we not light the Christmas tree, and let him see how beautiful it looks?" "Yes," said the mother. With that she seated the child on a stool beside the fire, and went to fetch the few simple ornaments that from year to year she had saved for her children's Christmas tree. They were soon so busy that they did not notice the room had filled with a strange and brilliant light. They turned and looked at the spot where the little wanderer sat. His ragged clothes had changed to garments white and beautiful; his tangled curls seemed like a halo of golden light about his head; but most glorious of all was his face, which shone with a light so dazzling that they could scarcely look upon it. In silent wonder they gazed at the child. Their room seemed to grow larger and larger, until it was as wide as the whole world, the roof of their low house seemed to expand and rise, until it reached to the sky. With a sweet smile the wonderful child looked upon them for a moment, and then slowly rose and floated through the air, above the treetops, beyond the church spire, higher than the clouds, until he appeared to them to be a shining star in the sky. At last he disappeared from sight. The astonished children turned in hushed awe to their mother, and said in a whisper, "Oh, mother, was it was the Christ-Child?" And the mother answered "Yes." And it is said that each Christmas Eve the little Christ-Child wanders through some town or village, and those who receive him and take him into their homes and hearts have given to them this marvellous vision that is denied to others.

Saint Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

There is little to be found about the foster-father of Jesus in the Gospels indeed, why should there be? The four Gospels are primarily concerned with Person of Jesus and His message. We learn that Joseph was of the house of David, he was a carpenter and was a 'just man'. His distress at finding Mary, his betrothed, with child was dispelled by an angelic vision and he took Mary as his wife. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph was warned by an angel to take Jesus and Mary to Egypt in order to escape Herod. This would be about 18 months after the birth of Jesus. When the Magi, came to Bethlehem they went into the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Note that Matthew, the writer of these words uses the words 'house' and 'child', not 'baby' and 'stable' showing that this visit had not occurred at the Nativity. The New Testament Gospels do not relate when Joseph died, but clearly it was before the crucifixion. More information about Saint Joseph can be found in "The Suppressed Gospels" also known as "The Apocryphal Gospels". In the Book of James, or Protoevangelium, which Origen (186-254) mentions, it states that the 'brethren of the Lord' were sons of Joseph by a former wife. The use of this book by Origen shows that the Book of James was known from the second century at least. Wand (The History of the Early Church) holds that Origen was the first of the Fathers to insist upon a good text as the foundation of all work on the scriptures', and so would not have used this Book if he had doubts about it.

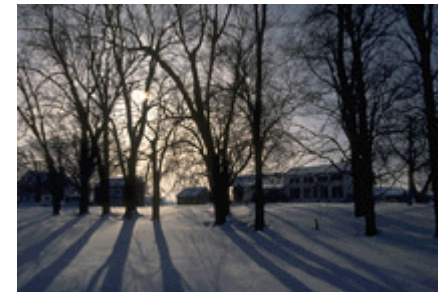


In the Seventh Chapter of this Book we learn how the High Priest, Zacharias, was bidden by an angel to 'call together all the widowers of the people, and let every one of them bring his rod, and he to whom the Lord shall shew a sign, shall be the husband of Mary'. Joseph's rod was chosen, and although he protested that he was an old man, with children, was persuaded, by Zacharias to take Mary into his house. Joseph said to Mary, "Behold I have taken thee from the temple of the Lord and now I will leave thee in my house; I must go to mind my trade of building. The Lord be with thee." The Book of James, this Protoevangelium, gives many details, which would not be known outside the family. It tells that Joseph took his sons with him and Mary to Bethlehem, and when Birth of Jesus drew near, these sons guarded Mary in the stable while Joseph sought 'a midwife of the Hebrews.' Another book, 'The History of Joseph the Carpenter', written about the fourth century, but quoting many earlier books of the second and third centuries, gives the names of the Josephs' children by his first wife. There were four sons, Judas, Josetos (Justus) James, Simon and two daughters, Lysia (Asia), and Lydia. James was the youngest child, and it

and it relates that Mary brought up James and was called 'Mary of James'. This book states that Joseph was 40 years old when he married Mary. When Joseph died is unknown, and the suggestion that he lived until he was over a hundred is fanciful. In examining the life of Joseph in the Apocrypha, a lot of the questions raised in the New Testament Gospels are answered. Because these Apocryphal Gospels and Epistles are not in the New Testament they should not be ignored, but read with cautiously, always comparing them to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

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It Came upon the Midnight Clear



Taken from: *The Christmas Caroler's Book*, 1935

The Revd. Dr. Morrison, editor of the "*Christian Register*", received the poem '*It Came upon a Midnight Clear*' by the Revd. Edmund Hamilton Sears in December, 1849 and was so delighted with it that he read it on several Christmas programs. He published it in the "*Christian Register*" in December of the following year and then set about finding a musical setting for it. He adapted an old hymn-tune, which is still occasionally used today. Dr. Edmund Sears was a Unitarian minister and poet who spent his entire life in Massachusetts where he served in several pastorates, he published several books and poems of a religious nature; but he is especially remembered for '*It Came upon the Midnight Clear*'. Richard Storrs Willis, a musician and composer, from Boston composed the carol-tune, which has carried the song to its present international popularity. On reading Sear's poem, Willis was inspired to write the score that is now so familiar to us all. His melody is called simply '*Carol*'. *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* is widely used in England and has become a firm favourite in America..

The Church is full of Hypocrites

That is something that is quite often said by people outside the Church, often as a reason for not joining themselves. At one level this accusation is justified. The word hypocrite, from the Greek literally means someone who pretends to admire their principles, beliefs or feelings but behaves otherwise.

Few of us would honestly protest that it did not apply to us in some measure. As Christians we aspire to be followers of the example of Jesus. Jesus calls us to avoid Sin and live a certain kind of lifestyle. S. Paul explains it like this:- *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness and orgies and the like. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control (Galatians 5:19-23).*

Well not many of us fall foul of witchcraft, but we might find it tricky to deny our guilt as to other parts of this list, or to claim that we are always loving, patient and self-controlled! No we must admit we are a sinful people, whilst claiming to be the followers of Christ.

But in reality that is the point. We Christians may aspire to be Christ-like but at the same time we do, most of the time anyway, accept that we fall short. In that sense then we are not really hypocrites. We do not pretend to be sinless, quite the contrary, our liturgy accepts that as a fact of life the church has recognised the rite of confession and absolution. Look it up in the Book of Common Prayer page 317.

In addition to this almost all our services begin with a rite of penitence. Certainly every Eucharist does. We meet together in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We then call to mind and confess our sins. Now this is not primarily designed to make us feel guilty, or even to give ourselves a wash so that we will not be struck down when we approach the altar! It is a recognition that we all fall short of what God calls us to be,. But and it's a big but, nevertheless God calls us to himself. The Roman Confession at Mass makes it clearer than our own.

I confess to Almighty God,
And to you my brothers and sisters,
That I have sinned through my own fault,

In my thoughts and in my words,
In what I have done and what I have failed to do,
And I ask Blessed Mary, ever Virgin
And all the angels and saints
And you my brothers and sisters
To pray for me to the Lord our God. Amen.

In this rite we confess to one another and to God. We acknowledge that we are 'in this together' and that we need one another's support and prayers.

In the Roman rite at Mass there is no pronounced Absolution. The priest is in the same boat as everyone else. At the end the priest says, 'May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.'

So, we may be hypocrites, but at least we come to God and to one another with an acknowledgement of our sinfulness. At mass you sit beside a self-confessed sinner and so does the person who sits beside you.

As a member of our congregation I look around at a church full of sinners, and you look back one. As Christians each of us are called upon to acknowledge our sinfulness – and to take the consequences of our wrong-doings and to make amends. In this we are one.

Also, as one, we reply upon God, that despite our tendency to sinfulness, he welcomes us and leads us forward into a right relationship with him and with one another. As the priest says, 'May God bring us to eternal life'. We cannot do this all at once, nor can we do it alone. It is a process and in this process we have to swallow our pride and allow ourselves to be drawn and cleansed by God's love and power.

That is not hypocrisy – it's just being honest.

Bro. Darren Goodwin

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December 28th. The Feast of The Holy Innocents.

This feast, once called 'Childermass' in England, commemorates the boys of Bethlehem aged 2 or under who were murdered by King Herod the Great, according to Matthew chapter 2, in a futile attempt to ensure that he was rid

of the Christ-child. Herod was very unpopular with his people because of his connections with the Romans and his religious indifference. Hence he was insecure and fearful of any threat to his throne. He was a master politician and a tyrant capable of extreme brutality. He killed his wife, his brother and his sister's two husbands, to name only a few. Matthew 2:1-18 tells that Herod was "greatly troubled" when astrologers from the east came asking the whereabouts of "the newborn king of the Jews," whose star they had seen. They were told that the Jewish Scriptures named Bethlehem as the place where the Messiah would be born. Herod cunningly told them to report back to him so that he could also "do him homage." They found Jesus, offered him their gifts and, warned by an angel, avoided Herod on their way home. Jesus escaped to Egypt. Herod became furious and "ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under." Commentators tend to doubt that such an event ever took place, or at least reduce the size of the slaughter to 'manageable' proportions: between six and twenty-five. At the very least, the Innocents symbolise those who are ready to die for Christ at any age. In earlier ages of high infant mortality, the Church used this feast to console parents whose children had died very young.

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The Two Rs'

The Two Rs' - railway enthusiasm and religious belief, do the two go together? They appear to looking at the number of steam orientated vicars there are and have been over the years. For some folk, railway enthusiasm is akin to a religion.

A number of parallels can be drawn: the major stations are cathedrals, the more common ones are churches and some are closed down. Locomotives are often worshipped like a god. After a Deltic diesel locomotive arrived at King's Cross from Edinburgh for the last time in British Rail service, one of the passengers came down the platform (aisle) and knelt down, as if in prayer, at the side of the locomotive. Not one of the 600 or so passengers or the thousands who had filled the station for this event thought that there was anything unusual about it. To the contrary his passion was admired. For many the timetable is the Bible, Bradshaw the timetable, which existed until the 1960s is the Authorised version, the British Rail and latterly the National Rail Timetable are the Common Worship versions. There are, of course, alternative prayer books published by Thomas Cook. Incense is steam and the liturgical chanting takes the form of the station announcer "The train now standing

The railway station can be thought of in many ways, one of which is that they are reflections of the Society in which we live. The Victorians, the significant builders of the railways modelled their stations on cathedrals, for instance the Great Hall at the Old Euston has a ceiling based on S. Peter's in Rome. Today, new or rebuilt stations are modeled on Shopping centres and office blocks. Even in the 1920s Sir Edward Elgar described the newly built stations as having 'no soul, no romance, no imagination'. As we might ask why do people believe in God and what do they believe, we can also ask why are people so fascinated by railways.

Why is it that members of a congregation, not previously known for irrational behaviour, have been seen at the lineside, standing in the light of a watery moon to witness the passage of a famous steam locomotive? They were enthralled by the sight of the footplate crew (the ministers) silhouetted against the night sky by the glow of the fire. Interestingly one of the few people to have addressed the question of 'fascination' was Canon Roger Lloyd who wrote a book 'Fascination of Railways', to this he says, "The curious but intense pleasure that is given to many people by the watching and the study of railway trains, their engines and the detail of their organisation is both an art and a mystery. It is an art because the pleasure to be had is exactly proportionate to the informed enthusiasm one puts into it. The pleasure of railway watching cannot be explained, but it can perhaps be communicated, and it can be shared." Some parallels here with religious beliefs! It is perhaps worthy of note that there are parallels in church attendance and the number of people 'trainspotting'; both have declined in the last 50 years. Trainspotting is now the subject of media derision and, although not *so* strongly tarnished, church going is also viewed as a minority activity. (Even though more people go to church on Sunday than go to football on Saturday). Mention of Sunday brings up 'Sunday Services'. On the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830 no train left either terminus between 10 am and 4 pm on Sundays, in order to facilitate religious observance. This was adopted by a number of other companies and became known as the 'Church Interval'. Today, the absence of trains on a Sunday is due to 'engineering work" Running of excursion trains on a Sunday, of course, led to much debate. Whereas some stations are regarded as cathedrals, some stations have been used as churches, on the remote Settle & Carlisle Railway Ribbleshead and Garsdale stations were used for Sunday services.

What about the people? A good proportion of the Chief Mechanical

Engineers of the Great Northern and London and North Eastern Railways were the sons of clergy. Sir Nigel Gresley, the designer of 'Mallard' and "Flying Scotsman" was the son of the Rector of Netherseale, no less than four generations of Gresley Rectors. Amongst the railway enthusiast fraternity there have been a significant number of clergy. Archbishop Temple is said to have memorised the railway timetable of the day. Canon Reginald Fellows researched the history of Bradshaw (the railway timetable), Canon Victor Whitechurch was the creator of the railway detective Thorpe Hazell and the Revd. Wilbert Awdry the author of Thomas the Tank Engine books, not forgetting the Revd. Teddy Boston who had a railway running in the vicarage garden and graveyard at Cadeby.

None was better known than Eric Treacy, the "railway bishop", Vicar of Edge Hill, Rector of Keighley and finally Bishop of Wakefield. He once preached, using the tender of Stephenson's *Locomotion* as a pulpit. He was a noted railway photographer, one of the best of his day and died on Appleby Station whilst



photographing the last steam locomotive built for British Railways, *Evening Star*. There is a memorial stone at the station, dedicated there at a special service conducted by another enthusiast, the Bishop of Birmingham. It is said that during the less interesting parts of General Synod he would nip out to the other London cathedrals to photograph the trains! *Bishop Treacy left in working dress and right in enthusiasts clothing whilst looking out from the footplate of The Flying Scotsman*'.

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A Prayer

Many of you will probably know the first part of this prayer attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr and quoted by Harold Wilson, but do you know all of it?

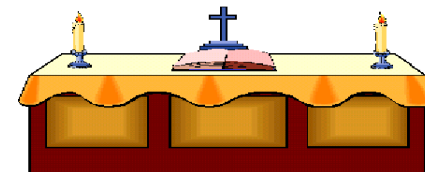
God grant me the grace to accept with serenity the things I cannot change; Courage to change the things I can And wisdom to know the difference, Living one day at a time, Enjoying one moment at a time; Accepting hardship as the pathway to peace, taking, as you did, this sinful world as it is, Not as I would have it; Trusting that you will make all things right, If I surrender to your will; That I may be reasonably happy in this life, And supremely happy with you forever in the next.

And finally:-

The Parish Priest was giving a series of children's sermons on the symbols of the church. On week he was speaking about vestments and asked, "Why do you think I wear this collar?" To which came the response, "Because it kills fleas and ticks for up to 5 months."

Young Curate Bill was giving a sermon to the children. "Now kids," he says, "What's green, lives in the pond, sits on a lily pad, and hops?" The children looked at each other with vacant eyes. "Surely, someone has an idea?" Finally, little Susie stood up and said, "Well, it sounds like a frog, but it must be Jesus!"

The old priest had spent 40 years in the same church and was highly respected in the community. The end of his life was drawing near and as he lay on his death bed he ask for the local banker and lawyer to come and spend his last hours with him. Both were impressed that they were asked and discussed what great pearl of wisdom the old man wished to share with them. As they enter his room he motioned for one to sit on his left and one on his right. As they sat down a great peace came upon the man of God, 30 minutes passed and not a word was spoken. Finally the banker leaned forward and ask, " we were wondering what pearl of wisdom you may want to share with us since you called us here." The old parson looked at him and replied, "as you know Jesus has been my example all my life, and since he died between two thieves I decided that's the way I wanted to go also".



The Guild Collect

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, to us Thy servants, the spirit of holy fear: that we, following the example of Thy holy child Samuel, may faithfully minister before Thee in Thy Sanctuary; through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen

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