

HIGH TIDE



AUG 2026



ST PAUL'S & FLEET

Worship • Parish life • Contact

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

ST PAUL'S

9.45am Morning Prayer
10.30am High Mass
5.00pm Evensong & Benediction
(4.00pm in winter time)

FLEET

9.00am Low Mass with hymns
2nd Sunday of the month

Daily services and special services are listed
on our website or please get in touch.

All are very welcome.



CLERGY

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PASTORAL CARE

If you are ill, housebound,
in hospital, or would like
Holy Communion, Confession,
or Anointing, please contact
the Vicar. We are always
happy to visit.

A priest is available for
Confession or spiritual
direction after each service
or by appointment.



CHURCHWARDENS

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE

- Service times
- Photos
- News & events



stpaulsweymouth.org



PARISH OFFICE & HALL

With enquiries about the parish
or hiring the hall, please contact us.



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*Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of the Parish Magazine. The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 30th August**. Please send all articles, information, and news you wish to be published by Sunday 16th August.*

Front cover: 'Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary', created with ChatGPT in imitation of eighteenth-century Roman Missal lithographs.



Deary Beloved, time is a curious thing. We measure it almost without thinking. There is the obvious way: the clock on the wall, the calendar on the kitchen door, birthdays, anniversaries and the changing of the seasons. We also measure time in less obvious ways. We speak of careers progressing, children growing up, houses being renovated, retirement approaching, holidays coming round again, or those great turning points that quietly divide life into a “before” and an “after”. For example, including the Newsletters published during COVID, this is the 99th parish magazine I am publishing here at St Paul’s...

None of this is wrong. It is simply part of being human. The problem comes when this becomes the only way we experience time. We can become so absorbed in one kind of time that we completely overlook another.

The ancient Greeks expressed this rather beautifully. They distinguished between Chronos and Kairos. Chronos is the steady passing of measurable time: minutes, days and years. It is from Chronos that we derive words such as “chronology”. In later Greek mythology Chronos became the Titan who famously devoured his own children. A disturbing but efficient image used by the Greeks to say what we all know: time eventually consumes everything and everyone.

St Paul borrowed the concept from the Greeks and uses Kairos repeatedly in his letters. Kairos is not another way of measuring time; it is God’s time: the moment filled with His presence.

It seems that the Church of England is often tempted to live more by Chronos than by Kairos. Church numbers, projects, initiatives, statistics and outcomes. Even financial support is now linked to measurable achievements. Reach the targets, complete the projects,

demonstrate the growth, and funding follows. There may be understandable reasons for this, but it also reveals how easily we can begin to think that God's Kingdom advances according to the same logic as a business plan.

The same temptation exists in every parish. We can become convinced that our health depends upon how busy we are, how many events appear in the diary, or how much we can point to at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. But we have another example to follow...

On 6 August we remember when Jesus led Peter, James and John up the mountain. Nothing was "achieved" in the usual sense. No strategy was discussed, nor plans were drawn up. They simply remained with Him until, for a few glorious moments, time itself seemed to disappear in the light of His presence. Realising this new way of being, Peter cried out: "Lord, it is good for us to be here!"

August, of course, also gives us Our Lady when we are invited to celebrate her Assumption. Mary's whole life teaches what Kairos looks like. She did many things, of course, though very few of those have been recorded—but first she listened, waited, pondered and remained faithfully present before God.

Perhaps that is the invitation for all of us this month. By all means let us continue to work hard for our parish. But let us work even harder at becoming people of prayer. Daily Mass whenever we can, times of reverent silence before and after our services, the Holy Rosary, Morning and Evening Prayer printed in this magazine, our First Friday Eucharistic devotions—we must see these not as interruptions to our hard work but rather as the very heart and foundation of being Christians, both individually and as a community.

Otherwise, we may find ourselves forever chasing Chronos, only to discover that, like the old Greek myth, it eventually consumes everything, including us. God's Kairos, on the other hand, consumes nothing. Instead, it transforms everything.

Assuring you of my prayers, I am,
ever yours in Christ,

Fr. Gregory



Induction of Fr David Swyer

Gill Cox writes:



On Monday 13th July Tony and I were present at St Martin's in Salisbury on a very warm evening for the induction of Fr David Swyer as interim priest-in-charge at St Martin's, Salisbury and St Peter's, Devizes. Unfortunately, Fr Gregory was ill and unable to be there so we unwittingly became the only people representing St Paul's, a fellow Oswestry parish.

Fr Swyer was officially inducted by the Rt Rev Dr John Inge, Assistant Bishop for the Diocese. He was formerly Bishop of Worcester, but Bishop Paul, Bishop of Oswestry, preached and presided at Mass. It was a lovely service, followed by a buffet in the parish centre.

For those who are new to St Paul's and may not know the history of the relationship between the two parishes - twenty years ago, there were four Forward in Faith parishes in the diocese of Salisbury, all under the episcopal ministry of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. St Paul's, St Martin's Salisbury, St Peter's Devizes and St Swithin's Bridport.

For several years, until the pandemic, a few people from each parish used to meet for a lunch twice a year. This gave us an opportunity to forge closer links between the parishes and for members to share their joys, worries and concerns.

Unfortunately, St Swithin's, being absorbed into the large benefice of Bridport, not only lost their own parish priest but also lost their Forward in Faith resolutions and thus the ministry of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet although they do retain their Anglo-Catholic tradition.

The Parish of St Peter's, Devizes has for a few years been without their own priest, relying on retired clergy, but still remaining under the Bishop of Ebbsfleet, and now, of course, the Bishop of Oswestry.

St Martin's went through a long interregnum after the Ordinariate was established when they lost their priest and some of their congregation, until the appointment of Fr David Fisher. He retired last year and now both parishes are to be looked after by one priest, thus strengthening their ties.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to be part of their celebration.

25 surprising or funny facts

Jeanne James writes:

1. The inventor of the frisbee was later turned into a frisbee—his ashes were made into commemorative discs for his family.
2. The word “Christian” appears only three times in the Bible.
3. Cows have best friends and become stressed when separated from them.
4. A group of flamingos is called a “flamboyance.”
5. Sloths can hold their breath longer than dolphins by slowing their heart rate.
6. Penguins sometimes propose by giving a smooth pebble to a potential mate.
7. A shrimp's heart is in its head.
8. Some turtles can breathe through their bottoms during hibernation.
9. The shortest war in history lasted just 38 minutes between the United Kingdom and Zanzibar in 1896.
10. Sea otters hold hands while sleeping so they don't drift apart.

11. Pigeons can recognise themselves in mirrors, a skill shared with only a few animal species.
12. The dot over the letters “i” and “j” is called a tittle.
13. The world’s oldest known “your mum” or “yo mama” joke is nearly 3,500 years old.
14. Goats have rectangular pupils, giving them an amazingly wide field of vision.
15. Crows can remember human faces and even tell other crows about people they dislike.
16. The first oranges weren’t orange—they were green.
17. There’s a species of jellyfish that can, in theory, avoid dying of old age by reverting to an earlier life stage.
18. An eagle can see a rabbit from over a mile away, while many of us can’t find our glasses when they’re on our heads.
19. The word “queue” is just the letter “Q” followed by four silent letters waiting their turn.
20. The fingerprints of a koala are so similar to humans’ that they can sometimes confuse investigators.
21. A bolt of lightning contains enough energy to toast around 100,000 slices of bread.
22. There are more possible ways to shuffle a deck of 52 cards than there are atoms estimated to exist on Earth.
23. The largest living organism on Earth is a giant fungus in Oregon, covering more than 3 square miles (8 square kilometres).
24. Your stomach gets a new lining every few days to stop it digesting itself.
25. The tradition of church weather vanes often features a rooster, recalling Peter’s denial of Jesus before the rooster crowed.

Not just any Afternoon Tea but a Sue Biles Afternoon Tea!

Angela Matthews writes:

At the Silent Auction a few weeks back, Sharon Waight had the highest bid for an Afternoon Tea for up to 6 people, supplied, made, and served by Sue Biles. Sharon hosted the Afternoon Tea in her garden on what turned out to be a perfect sunny afternoon. We were treated to a wonderful spread of various sandwiches, scones with jam and clotted cream, cherry cake, lemon drizzle cakes, and coffee and walnut sponge, accompanied by a glass or two of Prosecco and washed down with plenty of tea and coffee. We enjoyed good conversation which included the great debate about whether you put cream or jam first on your scone! Let's just say neither the Devon way nor the Cornwall way came on top! Apparently, in Dorset we don't have a preference.

It was a lovely afternoon enjoyed by all. A thank-you to Sharon for being a great hostess and to Sue for making us a fabulous Afternoon Tea. *(Please see photos on pages 10-11.)*

Trip in a vintage car

Beth Bentley writes:

On June 7th after a buffet lunch we had the result of a silent auction and I was very lucky in winning the car trip in a vintage car belonging to Michael Spearing.

On Sunday July 12th following Low Mass at Fleet and a tea break at Michael and Anthea's home, Michael announced that my vintage car awaited me. We drove to West Bay which was crowded, but the sea view was peaceful. Michael suggested that we drove back to Abbotsbury and stopped for an ice cream in a quiet and peaceful spot with hens roaming free and several little huts selling toys and second-hand china, cigarette cards and much more.

I would like to thank Michael and Anthea for making my trip so enjoyable and for their hospitality. *(Please see photos on pages 10-11.)*





Jewish Feast Days and Christians

Irene Leader writes:

The occult uses religious language and imagery but without God. This, of course, is deception and good examples are false teachers, fortune tellers (Acts 8:9-11). Indeed, the Scripture confirms: ‘What pagans sacrifice, they offer to demons, not God’ (cf. 1 Cor 10:14-22).

On the other hand, this must not frighten us. In the above quoted verses St Paul was addressing people who were afraid of eating meat sacrificed to idols. (That meat was often sold for cheaper at markets and was thus often the only affordable option for poor people.) St Paul says they are weak in faith: they have more faith in the devil, so to say, than in God. If we are deeply rooted in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, evil things cannot touch us (cf. Rom 14).

But! Do I *really* believe that God raised Jesus from the dead? It is only through believing in this with our whole heart that the “Righteousness of God”, that is justification through faith, can be ours. If we do not believe that Jesus was raised up in righteousness, then how could we ever believe that we too, in him, are made clean, baptised into his mystical Body, and live in his righteousness, sealed with the Holy Spirit. With that Holy Spirit who is the pledge of eternal life and of every gift in God’s kingdom (cf. Rom 10:9-10; Eph 1:13-14; 2 Cor 1:22).

What do I do to stay engaged with the Lord Jesus Christ? How can I be assured that the Spirit of Promise is my confident assurance? How can I resist the temptation to think that all this isn't real?

The fundamental question is: do I believe in Jesus? Am I in him and he in me? Jesus fought and won all battles in his death, burial, and resurrection. Being in him, and he being in me means that even if I have to fight these battles, my victory is assured through and in his victory.

It is at this point that I want to refer back to my previous articles about the Feasts of the Unleavened Bread and of the First Fruits. Our faith cannot be authentic if it only exists “on paper”, in words or

in thoughts. We must put our faith into practice, experiencing and living it, so they can have an effect in our life. For the Old Testament Israel, this happened through these Feast Days.

When the Israelites brought their prescribed sacrifices to the Tent (or later to the Temple), they had to recite some appointed verses from the Bible in front of the priest. Those verses articulated and explained what and why they were doing. It was a short catechism and creed. There was no space for individualism: “I believe this but I don’t believe that...” They had to use the words God revealed to them and only then would the priest accept their offering. It is easy to see how this practice was pointing towards the future: the Church and the importance of her teaching and worship in forming and informing our faith. Worship is collective and we all recite the same creeds and prayers because it is not about “my faith” but about me making the faith of the Church mine. A subtle but essential difference.

Without the Feast Days of the Unleavened Bread, Passover, First Fruits, or any other Jewish festival that was a constant reminder of God’s mighty and saving acts for his people, would Israel have remembered and truly believed? The answer is no.

Christ and his death and resurrection replaced all Jewish festivals and sacrifices not by abolishing them but by fulfilling them. This is why they remain important and meaningful for Israel until she herself comes to faith in Christ Jesus.

Although we, Christians, no longer need to observe these feasts today, they are still (imperfect) signs of who God is, how deeply He loves us, and what He has done for us. They also help connect the Old Testament with the New. As St Augustine puts it: “the New Testament is hidden in the Old, the Old is fully revealed in the New.”

These feast days, and the faithfulness of Israel in keeping them still after thousands of years, call Christians to re-evaluate our connection to our own Feast Days: are Sundays, feast days, solemnities still important for us, both at the parish and on a personal level? Not only as part of a “lovely, nostalgic tradition” (this is what we used to do when I was a child...) but as realities that express, form and strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ.



UK to introduce social media ban for under-16s — The Government has confirmed plans to introduce restrictions preventing children under 16 from accessing major social media platforms from early 2027. Ministers argue that the measure is necessary to address rising concerns over mental health, addiction, harmful content, online exploitation, and the effect of social media upon childhood development. Christian commentators have broadly welcomed the recognition that technology should serve human flourishing rather than dominate it.

Pope Leo calls for peace after Israel–Iran conflict — Following the recent escalation between Israel and Iran, Pope Leo XIV repeatedly appealed for an immediate ceasefire and renewed diplomatic efforts throughout the Middle East. He warned that modern warfare increasingly places ordinary civilians at greatest risk and urged political leaders to reject revenge in favour of justice and peace. Echoing the Church’s long tradition of just-war teaching, the Pope reminded Christians that peace requires both truth and the protection of innocent life, while encouraging continued prayer for all suffering throughout the region.

Christian persecution reaches highest recorded level — New international reports indicate that approximately 388 million Christians worldwide now experience high levels of persecution or discrimination because of their faith—the highest figure ever recorded. Countries including Nigeria, Syria, India, Nicaragua, Iran, and North Korea remain among the most dangerous places for Christians. Church leaders continue to urge governments not to overlook religious freedom when responding to humanitarian crises, reminding Christians in peaceful countries to remember persecuted believers in prayer and practical support.

Pope's July prayer intention: — Pope Leo XIV has dedicated July's worldwide prayer intention to “respect for human life”. He invites Catholics to recognise every human person—from conception to natural death—as a unique gift of God. The intention comes amid continuing international debates about abortion, assisted suicide, war, and care for the elderly. The Pope encourages Christians not merely to defend life in principle but to accompany the vulnerable with practical charity and compassion.

Pope likely to visit Great Britain — Archbishop Miguel Maury, the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain, has indicated that a papal visit by Pope Leo XIV is now considered “likely”. Although no dates have yet been announced, such a visit would be the first by the new Pope and would undoubtedly attract great interest across all Christian denominations in Britain.

Asia becoming increasingly important for the Church — Writing to the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences meeting in Indonesia, Pope Leo XIV encouraged Christians across Asia to become “builders of communion”. He particularly highlighted migrants, the poor, and those suffering from conflict as central to the Church's mission. The letter reflects the growing importance of Asian Christianity, where communities continue to expand despite often existing as small minorities within non-Christian societies.

Iraqi Christians encouraged to remain witnesses of hope — Addressing thousands of young Iraqi Christians, Pope Leo XIV encouraged them to become “light and hope” in a country still marked by years of conflict and instability. Rather than leaving the region, the Pope urged young believers to remain faithful witnesses of Christ wherever possible, reminding them that the future of Christianity in the Middle East depends greatly upon courageous young families and vibrant local communities.

Eucharistic Revival in the United States continues — Four years after the launch of the National Eucharistic Revival in the United States, Bishop Thomas Paprocki has urged Catholics to unite devotion to Christ's Real Presence with lives of holiness. He stressed that Eucharistic faith is not merely about belief but also about worthy reception of Holy Communion, repentance, and daily conversion.

The movement continues encouraging deeper Eucharistic devotion across American dioceses.

The Feast of Assumption of Our Lady at St Paul's: bring-and-share parish lunch and GSS meeting — On Saturday 15th August our parish will host again what has become an annual tradition: the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary Joint Chapter Day. Altar servers from churches that share our liturgical and doctrinal tradition will join us for worship, prayer, and fellowship. The day is also one of great solemnity: we remember the day on which Our Lady, at the end of her earthly life, was taken up to heaven in body and soul. Solemn High Mass will be celebrated in the morning, followed by a bring-and-share lunch. More details to follow soon. Please save the date in your diary!

Mission Day at St Paul's — the PCC has now agreed on the date for our next Mission Day: Saturday 26th September. Various stalls will be set up in the church to give a “taste” of our parish life: outreach, worship, prayer groups, hall, S.P.O.T., history, etc. We will need many volunteers on the day to invite people in from the streets, to welcome them, etc. Last year the day was seemingly unsuccessful... and yet shortly after the good Lord rewarded our efforts and courage with various new people joining us. The week of our Mission Day will also see the traditional Ember Days—days of prayer and fasting—on Wednesday 23rd, Friday 25th, Saturday 26th. The whole parish will be called to prayer and fasting on those days for the success of the Mission Day and for the growth and future of the parish.

“Church planting” — the recent Diocesan Clergy Day saw a very charismatic-style act of worship which was not appreciated by all. Just outside of the meeting room, while guitars were played and arms waved in the air, Fr Gregory met other diocesan clergy who were also hoping for a different style of worship. One thing led to another, and the Vicar of the Bride Valley and Chesil Benefice invited Fr Gregory and St Paul's Rosary Group to help him establish a Rosary Group in their own benefice. Fr Gregory hopes many from St Paul's will join him and see this as a wonderful opportunity to witness our Anglo-Catholic faith and spread devotion to our Blessed Lady.

Calendar, service times,
and prayer intentions

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for August 2026

SAT	1 st	St Peter's Chains	9.30am, 10am
SUN	2 nd	9 TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	3 rd	<i>Feria</i> (<i>Monthly Requiem</i>)	9am
TUE	4 th	St Dominic	9am
WED	5 th	Our Lady of the Snows	10am
THU	6 th	Transfiguration	6pm
FRI	7 th	St Cajetan	12pm
SAT	8 th	St John Mary Vianney	9.30am, 10am
SUN	9 th	10 TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	10 th	St Lawrence Deacon, Martyr	9am
TUE	11 th	<i>Sts Tiburtius & Susanna Virgin, Martyrs</i>	9am
WED	12 th	St Claire of Assisi, Virgin	10am
THU	13 th	<i>Sts Hippolytus & Cassian, Martyrs</i>	6pm
FRI	14 th	Vigil	12pm
SAT	15 th	ASSUMPTION OF THE B.V. M.	9.30am, 10am
SUN	16 th	11 TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	17 th	St Hyacinth	9am
TUE	18 th	<i>St Agapitus, Martyr</i>	9am
WED	19 th	St John Eudes	10am
THU	20 th	St Bernard Abbot, Doctor	6pm
FRI	21 st	St Jane Frances, Widow	*
SAT	22 nd	The Immaculate Heart of Mary	
SUN	23 rd	12 TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	24 th	St Bartholomew, Apostle	
TUE	25 th	St Louis King	
WED	26 th	<i>St Zephyrinus Pope, Martyr</i>	
THU	27 th	St Joseph Calasanctius	
FRI	28 th	St Augustine Bishop, Doctor	
SAT	29 th	Beheading of St John the Baptist	
SUN	30 th	13 TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	10.30am
MON	31 st	St Aidan Bishop	

** From 21 August please see the weekly sheet or the parish website for service times.*

Daily intentions & anniversaries of death

- 1st Shrine of Walsingham - *Handel Kardas, Dennis Farmer*
- 2nd Our Parishes - *Marlene Clothier*
- 3rd Departed - *Claire Humphries, Sylvia Mackintosh, Terry McCarthy pr.*
- 4th Preachers - *Phyllis Richardson*
- 5th S.P.O.T. & all our volunteers
- 6th Priests & vocations
- 7th Dying - *Charles Bristow*
- 8th Rosary Group - *Pennie Fowler, Neville Wathen*
- 9th Our Parishes
- 10th Our Benefactors, living and departed - *Christine Tolman*
- 11th Our PCCs - *Betty Scriven*
- 12th Deprived & homeless
- 13th Persecuted
- 14th Families - *Mike Anderson, Winifred Quehen, Michael Kemp pr.*
- 15th Our servers *14th: Mervyn Bown, George Ayling*
- 16th Our Parishes - *Daisy Tabone*
- 17th Peace among the nations
- 18th Missions - *Marrion Hain*
- 19th Those who doubt God's love - *Marge Medway, Kathleen Lucking*
- 20th Care homes & hospitals - *Paul Gibbons, Leonard Norris*
- 21st Widows - *Dorothy Scriven, Jessie Buckingham, Renee Skilleter*
- 22nd Conversion of our hearts - *Frederick Bishop, Agnes Searle*
- 23rd Our Parishes - *John Lucking*
- 24th Our choir and organists - *Roy Tarrier, Kathy Bray*
- 25th Our Diocese - *May Riggs*
- 26th Emergency services
- 27th Children & young people
- 28th Sick
- 29th Prisoners - *Andy Van Dorsten*
- 30th Our Parishes - *Iris Croxford, John White*
- 31st All afflicted by wildfires, floods, drought, famine, heatwaves

If there are names missing, or you want to add names, please talk to the Vicar.

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless thy holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding and kindle my affections; that I may worthily, attentively, and devoutly recite this Morning Prayer, and so be meet to be heard before the presence of thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.
R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. O Lord, open my lips. **R.** And my mouth shall proclaim your praise. **V.** O God, make speed to save me. **R.** O Lord, make haste to help me. **V.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. **R.** As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

V. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him!

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

V. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his.

R. O come, let us worship him.

V. The sea is his, for who but he made it; and his hands fashioned the dry land. O come, let us worship and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us! For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

V. Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, on the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, and put me to the test, and they saw my works.

R. O come, let us worship him.

V. For forty years I loathed that generation, and I said: They always err in heart, they have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath: they shall not enter my rest.

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

R. The Most High King of glory, even Christ: Him let us worship.

HYMN

Light of the anxious heart,
Jesu, thou dost appear,
To bid the gloom of guilt depart,
And shed thy sweetness here.

Joyous is he, with whom,
God's Word, thou dost abide;
Sweet light of our eternal home,
To fleshly sense denied.

Brightness of God above!
Unfathomable grace!
thy presence be a fount of love
Within thy chosen place.

To thee, whom children see,
The Father ever blest,
The Holy Spirit, One and Three,
Be endless praise address. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	96	1 Samuel 18:1-16 Luke 24:36-end	17	113	2 Samuel 3:12-end Acts 6
2	85	1 Maccabees 3:1-12 2 Peter 1:1-15	18	115	2 Samuel 5:1-12 Acts 7:1-16
3	97	1 Samuel 19:1-18 Acts 1:1-14	19	120	2 Samuel 6:1-19 Acts 7:17-43
4	99	1 Samuel 20:1-17 Acts 1:15-end	20	121	2 Samuel 7:1-17 Acts 7:44-53
5	100	1 Samuel 20:18-end Acts 2:1-21	21	122	2 Samuel 7:18-end Acts 7:54-end
6	27, 150	Ecclesiasticus 48:1-10 1 John 3:1-3	22	123	2 Samuel 9 Acts 8:1-25
7	101	1 Samuel 22:6-end Acts 2:37-end	23	104 v. 1-25	Jonah 2 Revelation 1
8	103	1 Samuel 23 Acts 3:1-10	24	86, 117	Genesis 28:10-17 John 1:43-end
9	88	1 Maccabees 14:4-15 2 Peter 3:8-13	25	125	2 Samuel 12:1-25 Acts 9:1-19
10	106	1 Samuel 24 Acts 3:11-end	26	126	2 Samuel 15:1-12 Acts 9:19-31
11	108	1 Samuel 26 Acts 4:1-12	27	132	2 Samuel 15:13-end Acts 9:32-end
12	110	1 Samuel 28 Acts 4:13-end	28	133	2 Samuel 16:1-14 Acts 10:1-16
13	111	1 Samuel 31 Acts 5:1-11	29	139	2 Samuel 17:1-23 Acts 10:17-33
14	112	2 Samuel 1 Acts 5:12-26	30	107 v. 1-32	Jonah 3:1-9 Revelation 3:14-end
15	98, 138	Isaiah 7:10-15 Luke 11:27-28	31	141	2 Samuel 18:1-18 Acts 10:34-end
16	92	Jonah 1 2 Peter 3:14-end			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS

Ant: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, alleluia.

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, *
 who has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
 born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets God promised of old *
 to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,
To show mercy to our ancestors, *
 and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: *
 to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
 holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
 for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
 by the forgiveness of all their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
 the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
 and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
 and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *
 world without end. Amen.

Ant: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, alleluia.

V. Let us pray. – ***Intercessions*** are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (the world), for those in need, and for the dead. Then follows the Collect:

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant unto us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may obtain

your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

V. The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life. **R.** Amen. **V.** Let us bless the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R.** Amen.

Morning Prayer ends with the final Antiphon of Our Lady:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, who by the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become a worthy dwelling for Thy Son; grant that we who rejoice in her commemoration may, by her gracious intercession, be delivered from present evils and from everlasting death. Through the same Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen

EVENING PRAYER

The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.
R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. O God, make speed to save me. **R.** O Lord, make haste to help me. **V.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

HYMN

All ye who would the Christ descry,
Lift up your eyes to him on high:
There mortal gaze hath strength to see
The token of his majesty.

A wondrous sign we there behold,
That knows not death nor groweth old,
Sublime, most high, that cannot fade,
That was ere earth & heaven were made.

Here is the King the gentiles fear;
The Jews' most mighty King is here
Promised to Abraham of yore,
And to his seed forevermore.

'Tis he the prophets' words foretold,
And by their signs shown forth of old;
The Father's witness hath ordained
That we should hear with faith unfeigned.

Jesu, to thee our praise we pay,
To little ones revealed today,
With Father and blest Spirit One
Until the ages' course is done. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	114	Jeremiah 36:1-18 James 5:7-end	17	119 v. 113-128	Micah 1 Mark 5:1-20
2	80	1 Kings 10:1-13 Acts 13:1-13	18	119 v. 128-144	Micah 2 Mark 5:21-34
3	118	Jeremiah 36:19-end Mark 1:1-13	19	119 v. 145-160	Micah 3 Mark 5:35-end
4	119 v. 1-16	Jeremiah 37 Mark 1:14-20	20	119 v. 161-176	Micah 4 Mark 6:1-13
5	99, 110	Exodus 24:12-end John 12:27-36	21	124	Micah 5 Mark 6:14-29
6	72	Exodus 34:29-end 2 Corinthians 3	22	127	Micah 6 Mark 6:30-44
7	119 v. 17-32	Jeremiah 39 Mark 2:1-12	23	97	2 Kings 6:8-23 Acts 17:15-end
8	119 v. 33-48	Jeremiah 40 Mark 2:13-22	24	91, 116	Ecclesiasticus 39:1-10 Matthew 10:1-22
9	86	1 Kings 12:1-20 Acts 14:8-20	25	128	Micah 7 Mark 7:1-13
10	119 v. 49-64	Jeremiah 41 Mark 2:23-end	26	129	Habakkuk 1:1-11 Mark 7:14-23
11	119 v. 65-80	Jeremiah 42 Mark 3:1-19	27	130	Habakkuk 1:12-end Mark 7:24-30
12	119 v. 81-96	Jeremiah 43 Mark 3:20-end	28	131	Habakkuk 2 Mark 7:31-end
13	119 v. 97-112	Jeremiah 44:1-14 Mark 4:1-20	29	134	Habakkuk 3 Mark 8:1-10
14	72	Proverbs 8:22-31 John 19:23-27	30	105 v. 1-15	2 Kings 7:3-end Acts 18:1-16
15	132	Song of Solomon 2:1-7 Acts 1:6-14	31	135	Haggai 1:1-11 Mark 8:11-21
16	90	2 Kings 4:1-37 Acts 16:1-15			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Ant. Jesus said to his disciples: Arise, and be not afraid, alleluia.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, +

my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;*

he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed; +

the Almighty has done great things for me*

and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him, *

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm*

and has scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones*

and lifting up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things*

and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, *

to remember his promise of mercy,

The promise made to our ancestors, *

to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *

and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *

world without end. Amen.

Ant. Jesus said to his disciples: Arise, and be not afraid, alleluia.

V. Let us pray. – ***Intercessions** are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (world), for those in need, our Benefactors, and for the dead. Then the Collect is said:*

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant unto us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may obtain

your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen. **V.** Let us bless the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God. **V.** And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R.** Amen.

Evening Prayer ends with the following prayer: To the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, to our Lord Jesus Christ Crucified, to the fruitful Virginity of the most blessed and most glorious Mary, always a Virgin, and to the holiness of all the Saints be ascribed everlasting praise, honour, and glory, by all creatures, and to us be granted the forgiveness of all our sins, world without end. Amen.



ASSUMPTA EST MARIA IN COELUM : GAUDENT ANGELI, LAUDANTES BENEDICUNT DOMINUM.

Novena Prayer to Our Blessed Lady, assumed into heaven, for our parish

As we celebrate the Assumption of Mary, Jesus' Mother and most faithful Disciple, let us be united in prayer for our parish. You are invited to say this prayer daily in August or at least during the Novena: 7-15 August.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, You have destroyed the power of death and given the hope of eternal life in body and soul. You granted your Mother a special place in your glory, and did not allow decay to touch her body.

As we rejoice in the Assumption of Mary, give to us a renewed confidence in the victory of life over death. You who live and reign with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

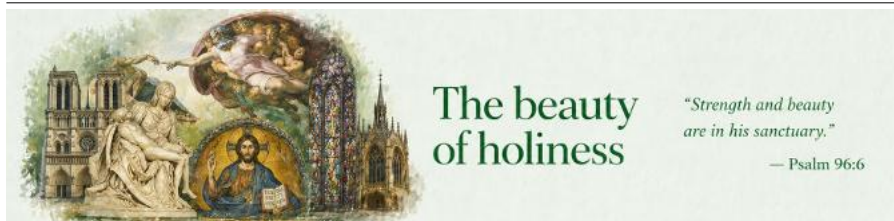
Immaculate Virgin, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, Mary, Queen Assumed into Heaven: I rejoice that after years of heroic martyrdom on earth, you have at last been taken to the throne prepared for you in heaven by the Holy Trinity.

Lift my heart with you in the glory of your Assumption above the dreadful touch of sin. Teach me how small earth becomes when viewed from heaven. Make me realise that death is the triumphant gate through which I shall pass to your Son, and that someday my body shall rejoin my soul in the unending bliss of heaven.

From this earth, over which I tread as a pilgrim, I look to you for help. I ask you to pray for and with our parish for an increase in our charity, faith, unity, numbers, and all necessary virtues. We are confident that you watch over our daily lives and we ask that you intercede for us now.

When my hour of death has come, lead me safely to the presence of Jesus to enjoy the vision of my God for all eternity together with you.

Mary, Queen Assumed into Heaven, pray for us.



Lift up your eyes: the great East window (3)

In this (for now) final article about the East window at St Paul's we are going to have a look at the last, 5th panel. However, before doing so, let us return very briefly to last month's article.

Unfortunately there were no proposed solutions to the "gentleman" dressed in a biblical outfit but David Bruce-Payne sent in a few interesting words about the misspelled St Cecilia's musical instrument. David writes:

In High Tide (July) on page 31 St Cecilia, the Patron Saint of Musicians, is pictured holding a Portative Organ with both hands. Her left hand is not only supporting the weight of the instrument, but it is also activating a set of Bellows under it in order to provide wind for the pipes above. The right hand is playing the actual notes. Incidentally, her name, when sung in vocal compositions, is generally pronounced 'Chechilia'.

Let us have a second look at St Cecilia in the light of David's words, and let me encourage some research again into our biblical saint (Zachary?).



On the last panel we have the usual angels (three of them) at the top. Then six Saints follow, with seven heads... Two of these Saints are unidentified because, as on the previous panels, the metal bars of the window cover their names.

On the top, just below the angels we have St Anne, Mary's mother and Jesus' grandmother. A bishop follows with blocked-out name though the bottom parts of the letters can be seen (6-7 letters?).

St Methodius is represented as a soldier because he served as a Byzantine military commander and imperial administrator before he left secular life to become a monk. Together with his brother, St Cyril, he went to Moravia to preach the Gospel. They both perfected a Slavonic alphabet which is now known as the Cyrillic alphabet, and

translated the liturgy into this language.

The next bishop's name is hidden again. The top part of some of the letters can be seen. It is a short name; his hand forms the symbol of the Holy Trinity (=Eastern bishop, teaching & blessing gesture). Could he be St Methodius's brother...?

Finally, we have St Paul (kneeling at the very bottom and holding the instrument of his martyrdom: a sword) and St Denis with two heads: one on his neck where heads normally belong, and one (the same head!) in his hand, on a plate, as a reference to his legend.



Symbols of Early Christian Art: the church

Based on Prof. László Vanyó's book:

When we step into a church, we often admire its beauty, architecture or atmosphere. Yet every traditional church is much more than an attractive building. Its shape, decoration and arrangement developed over centuries to express the Christian faith in visible form. A church was designed not simply to shelter worshippers, but to teach, remind and proclaim.

The first Christians did not build churches. They met in private houses and adapted ordinary rooms for worship. Pagan temples were unsuitable because they were intended as the dwelling places of the gods, not as gathering places for people. Christianity, by contrast, understood the Church first of all as the community of believers. As St Paul writes, Christians themselves are the living temple of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Only after Christianity gained legal recognition in the fourth century did church building begin on a large scale. The model chosen was not the pagan temple but the Roman basilica – a spacious public hall where people gathered. This perfectly reflected the Christian understanding of worship as the assembly of God's people.

Very soon, however, Christians began to see deeper meanings in church architecture. A church became an image of the heavenly Jerusalem described in the Book of Revelation. Entering the building symbolised entering God's Kingdom. At the same time, it reminded worshippers that they themselves were "living stones", forming the spiritual temple of Christ.

Early churches were usually simple. Their importance lay less in elaborate decoration than in the community gathered within them. As Christianity spread and resources increased, churches became larger and more richly adorned. Even so, the symbolism always remained more important than mere display.

Many features acquired theological significance. The eastern end of the church, where the altar stood, represented the rising sun and the hope of Christ's Resurrection. The nave, where the congregation

assembled, symbolised the pilgrim Church journeying through history. The sanctuary pointed towards heaven, while the altar stood at the very heart of the building as the place of Christ's sacrifice



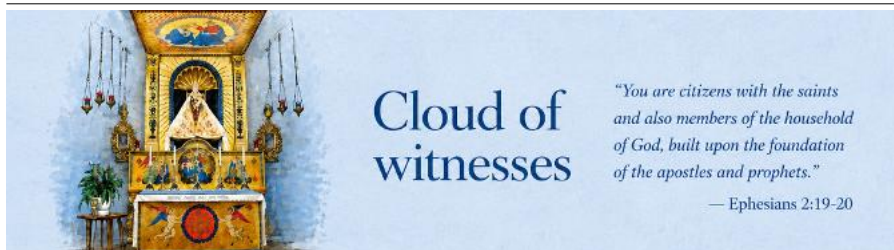
and the Eucharistic banquet.

The church building itself also came to represent Christ. Just as Christ unites heaven and earth, so the church joins the visible and invisible worlds. Medieval writers even compared different parts of the building to the human body, reminding believers that Christ is the Head of his Body, the Church.

Numbers also carried symbolic meaning. An octagonal baptistery often represented the “eighth day” – the new creation brought about through Christ’s Resurrection. Cross-shaped ground plans reminded worshippers that the whole Christian life is rooted in the mystery of the Cross.

Decoration served a purpose beyond beauty. Mosaics, frescoes, stained glass and sculpture were not simply ornaments but a visual form of teaching. At a time when many people could not read, the walls of a church proclaimed the stories of Scripture, the lives of the saints and the great truths of the faith.

Seen in this light, a traditional church is almost a theological book built in stone. Every doorway, window, column and arch can carry meaning. Understanding this rich symbolism allows us to appreciate our churches not only as historic buildings or works of art, but as carefully designed expressions of the Christian vision of the world, where architecture itself becomes a silent proclamation of the Gospel.



St Lawrence Deacon, Martyr - 10 August

Every year on 10 August, Christians throughout the world celebrate St Lawrence, one of the Church's best-loved martyrs. A deacon of the Church in Rome during the persecution under Emperor Valerian in AD 258, Lawrence was entrusted with a task that reveals much about the early Church: caring for the poor and safeguarding the Church's charitable resources.

When Pope Sixtus II was arrested and led away to execution, Lawrence is said to have cried, "*Father, where are you going without your deacon?*" The Pope replied that Lawrence would follow him in just a few days—and so he did.

Before Lawrence's arrest, the Roman prefect demanded that he surrender the Church's treasures. Lawrence asked for three days. During that time he distributed the Church's wealth to the poor, the widows, and the sick. Then he gathered these very people before the prefect and declared: "*These are the treasures of the Church.*" The emperor expected gold and silver; Lawrence pointed instead to those in whom Christ himself is present. It was an unforgettable sermon without a pulpit.

Tradition tells us that Lawrence was condemned to die on a great iron gridiron over burning coals. Whether every detail of the story is historically certain, Christians have treasured it for centuries because it expresses the saint's extraordinary courage. Even in the midst of terrible suffering, Lawrence is said to have astonished his executioners by remarking with gentle humour: "*Turn me over; this side is done.*" That famous sentence has made him the patron saint not only of deacons, but also of cooks, chefs and even comedians, reminding us that Christian joy can survive where fear would expect only despair.

There is another delightful tradition connected with his feast. Around 10 August, the annual Perseid meteor shower reaches its peak. Long before astronomers understood its true nature, people looked up into the summer sky and called the shooting stars “*the Tears of St Lawrence*.” In Italy especially, many still gather on warm August evenings to watch the heavens, seeing in the falling stars a beautiful reminder of the martyr whose witness continues to shine across the centuries. The meteors are, of course, a natural phenomenon, but the old tradition gives them a deeper spiritual poetry: the heavens themselves seem to remember a faithful servant of Christ.

St Lawrence reminds us that the Church’s true wealth has never been found in buildings, money or possessions, but in lives transformed by the love of Christ. That remains as true today as it was in Rome nearly eighteen centuries ago.



Your martyr Lawrence, O Lord our God, in his struggle received an incorruptible crown from You. With Your strength he brought down the tyrants and broke the cowardly valour of demons. Through his prayers, O Christ our God, save our souls.

Victorious martyr of Christ our God, by the sign of the Cross you gave sight to the blind; you distributed the riches of the Church to the poor; you were tried by fire and no evil was found in you. As you endured the burning, may your prayers extinguish the flames of our many sins, blessed Archdeacon Laurence!

Your heart burned with divine fire as the flames of the passions died within you. God-bearing martyr Lawrence, the pillar of those who struggle, you cried out in the midst of your contest: “Nothing can separate me from the love of Christ.”

— Troparion & Kontakion from various Eastern Orthodox liturgies

Loaves and fishes

*"You bring forth wine to gladden
the human heart,
oil to make the face shine,
and bread to strengthen
the human heart."*

(Psalm 104:14-15)



Eating out in 70s' Britain (2)

The ***Lion's Corner Houses*** were magnificent temples to dining that dominated London's West End from the 1920s to the 1970s. These vast multi-story establishments could seat up to 2,000 people at a time and employed hundreds of the famous Nippies, waitresses in distinctive black and white uniforms who were known for their efficient service.



In the 1970s, a visit to a Lion's Corner House was still a grand experience. The interiors were opulent with marble floors, grand staircases, and ornate ceilings. Live orchestras played as you dined,

adding to the sense of occasion. The food was traditional British fair. Roast meats, fish dishes, and elaborate desserts served from trolley wheeled to your table.

What made the Corner House special was their democratic nature. Unlike many fine dining establishments, they welcomed everyone. Shoppers could pop in for tea and cake. Businessmen could have lunch meetings. and families could enjoy a special dinner out.

But by the 1970s, the Corner Houses were struggling. Changing tastes, rising costs, and the growth of fast food meant these grand dining palaces were becoming outdated.

The last Lion's Corner House closed in 1977, marking the end of an era in British dining.



If Little Chef had a cheeky younger brother, it was **Happy Eater**. Established in 1973, Happy Eater was a roadside restaurant chain that competed directly with Little Chef, offering a similar concept, but with a more family focused approach. The Happy Eater experience was defined by its child-friendly atmosphere.

The restaurants featured distinctive yellow and red signage with a logo of a smiling face licking its lips, a design that perfectly captured the chain's playful approach to dining. Inside, the restaurants were bright and cheerful with colourful furniture and play areas that kept

children entertained while parents enjoyed a moment of peace.

The menu was classic British roadside fair. All day breakfasts, burgers, sandwiches, and traditional main meals like fish and chips or chicken in a basket.

But what really set Happy Eater apart were the desserts. The funny face ice cream, a scoop of vanilla with sweets and sauce arranged to create a face, was a particular favourite among children.

Happy Eater reached its peak with around 90 restaurants across the UK. However, in 1996, the chain was acquired by Granada, who also owned Little Chef, and by 1998, the Happy Eater brand had disappeared from Britain's roadsides.



Marrow

This is a Hungarian recipe and first of all we must talk about marrow... This traditional Hungarian dish is made with “cooking marrow”, a pale green cooking squash that is difficult to find in the UK. The closest substitute is a medium-sized vegetable marrow, especially a pale or striped one. The word *marrow* can be confusing: some people simply mean an overgrown courgette, while others mean varieties bred specifically for cooking when mature. Both belong to the same species, but for this recipe a proper vegetable marrow gives a much more authentic result than ordinary courgettes.

This quick and simple recipe turns this otherwise tasteless vegetable into a delicious dish.

Ingredients: some vegetable oil; 2 small onions, finely chopped; 1.5 kg marrow, peeled, deseeded and coarsely grated; 1 large (or rather huge!) bunch fresh dill, finely chopped; salt and freshly ground black pepper; 400 ml milk; 250 g sour cream (or single, or double cream, or creme fresh, or soy cream... whatever you prefer); 2 tsp sweet paprika (optional, it's more there for the colour); 3 tbsp plain flour; 2 tbsp white vinegar (about 10% acidity)

Method: Heat the oil in a large saucepan and gently fry the chopped onion for a few minutes until softened. Add the grated marrow together with the chopped dill—don't be shy with the dill, it is one of the defining flavours of the dish. Cover and cook gently for about 6 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper, pour in the milk and bring to the boil. Simmer for about 4 minutes.

Ladle a little of the hot cooking liquid into a bowl and whisk it with the cream of your choice, paprika and flour until smooth. Gradually stir this mixture back into the saucepan, stirring continuously to prevent lumps. Once off the hob and slightly cooled, stir in the vinegar. (The vinegar is optional but very Hungarian.)

Serve with one of the following: meatballs, grilled sausage, fried eggs, soft boiled eggs, or poached eggs, together with a slice of crusty sourdough bread.

Ice cream (gelato)

At a recent dinner party I decided to try something I had never made before: homemade vanilla ice cream without an ice cream machine. I must admit I was a little sceptical at first—surely it couldn't compete with proper ice cream? I was delighted to be proved wrong. My gracious guests even asked for the recipe. So here it is!

The beauty of this recipe is its simplicity. There is no custard to make, no complicated techniques, and no specialist equipment. The result is wonderfully smooth, creamy and full of real vanilla flavour.

Ingredients:

- 1 × 397 g tin sweetened condensed milk
- 500 ml extra thick double cream
- 100 g full-fat crème fraîche
- seeds of 1 vanilla pod
- 1 teaspoon good-quality vanilla bean paste
- 20 g milk powder
- a small pinch of fine sea salt.

Method:

Mix together the condensed milk, crème fraîche, vanilla pod seeds, vanilla bean paste and the pinch of salt until completely smooth. The extra-thick double cream does not need whipping. Simply whisk it gently for a few seconds until smooth and easy to fold, then carefully combine it with the vanilla mixture, taking care not to overmix.

Transfer the mixture to a freezer-safe container, cover, and freeze for at least eight hours, or preferably overnight. About 10–15 minutes before serving, remove the ice cream from the freezer to soften slightly. This makes it much easier to scoop and allows the full vanilla flavour to develop. That's it—as simple as it sounds but truly delicious!

(Milk powder is optional but it increases the milk solids without adding extra water, resulting in a smoother and silkier ice cream, richer dairy flavour, but with no ice crystals.)



Know the Bible! - The Book of Psalms

(© bibleproject)

The book of Psalms is a collection of 150 ancient Hebrew poems, songs, and prayers that come from all different periods in Israel's history. Many of these poems are connected with King David (73 actually) who was known as a poet and a harp player. But there are many different authors behind these poems. Even Solomon and Moses have their own poems, and nearly one third of these are anonymous.

Now, many of these poems came to be used by the choirs that sang in Israel's Temple, but the book of Psalms is actually not a hymn book. To see how the book of Psalms is designed, it's actually most helpful to start at the end. The book concludes with five poems (***Psalms 146-150***) of praise to the God of Israel, and each one begins and ends with the word “hallelujah,” which is Hebrew for a command to tell a group of people to praise “Yah,” which is short for the Divine Name.

The whole book has an internal organisation into five main parts.

Psalms 1-2 — Psalm 1 celebrates how blessed the person is who meditates on the Torah and obeys it. The word torah simply means “teaching” but it came to refer to the five books of Moses.

Psalm 2 is a poetic reflection on God's promise to King David from 2 Samuel 7, that one day a messianic king would come and establish God's Kingdom over the world and defeat evil and rebellion among the nations.

Together then, these two poems tell us that the book of Psalms is designed to be the prayer book of God's people as they strive to be

faithful to the commands of the Torah as they hope and wait for the future messianic kingdom.

Psalms 3-41 — Right at the centre we have a collection of Psalms that call to covenant faithfulness and David is depicted as a model of this faithfulness but only as the image of the Messianic King of the future. This Messiah, just as David did, will also call out to God who will deliver him and give him a kingdom over the nations.

Psalms 42-72 — The first two psalms in this group are poems that are united in their hope for a future return to the temple in Zion, and this is the image closely associated with the hope of the messianic kingdom. This group of psalms then closes with a poem that depicts the future reign of the messianic king over all of the nations, echoing passages from the prophets. It concludes by saying that this Messianic King's reign will bring about the fulfilment of God's ancient promise to Abraham to bring God's blessing to all of the nations.

Psalms 73-89 — The main topic is God's promise to David in light of Israel's exile. God promised he would never abandon the line of David, but now he's looking at Israel's rebellion and its destruction and exile, and the downfall of the line of David.

Psalms 90-106 — These Psalms are designed to respond to this crisis of exile, so the opening poem shows us Moses who calls upon God to show mercy. Other Psalms announce that the Lord, the God of Israel, reigns as the true King of the world and that all creation is summoned to celebrate that future day when God will bring his justice and Kingdom over all the world.

Psalms 107-145 — These are a series of Psalms that affirm that God hears the cries of his people and will one day send the future King to defeat evil and bring God's Kingdom. Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm and is an alphabet poem. Each line begins with a new letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and it explores the wonder and the gift of the Torah as God's Word to his people.

The Psalms teach us not to ignore the pain of our lives, but at the same time, biblical faith is forward-looking, looking to the promise of God's future messianic kingdom.

The Psalms

Psalm 63: Longing for the living God

Psalm 63 is one of the most moving expressions of longing for God in the whole Psalter. Traditionally associated with David “*when he was in the wilderness of Judah*,” it reflects a time of danger, uncertainty, and physical hardship. Yet the psalm is striking because it is not primarily about escape from suffering. Rather, it reveals that even in the midst of trial the deepest desire of the faithful heart is not simply safety, but communion with the living God. The wilderness becomes a symbol of every period in life when we feel empty, vulnerable, or alone.

The psalm begins with the powerful image of thirst. Every reader understands the desperation of thirst, especially in a desert. The psalmist uses this experience to describe the longing of the soul. Just as the body cannot survive without water, so the human person cannot truly flourish apart from God. No amount of wealth, success, pleasure, or human affection can satisfy the deepest hunger for which we were created.

Yet this longing is filled with hope because it is rooted in memory. The psalmist recalls standing in the sanctuary, where he had beheld God’s “*power and glory*.” That encounter with God in worship becomes a source of strength long after he has left the Temple behind. The sanctuary may be distant, but the God who revealed himself there is not.

The heart of the psalm is the astonishing declaration: “Thy grace is better than life.” Life itself is among God’s greatest gifts, yet God’s steadfast love is greater still. Everything else is temporary, but his faithful love endures forever. Because of this, praise becomes the natural response. The psalmist lifts up his hands in prayer, blesses God throughout his life, and finds his soul satisfied “as with marrow and fat”—the richest food imaginable. The joy that comes from God’s presence is deeper and more lasting than any earthly pleasure.

This communion with God is not confined to moments of public worship. Even in the silence of the night, the psalmist continues to

meditate on God. He rests securely under the shadow of God's wings, a beautiful image of protection, tenderness, and refuge. God's presence accompanies him beyond the sanctuary into every circumstance of daily life. The experience of worship reshapes the whole of life, so that praise, remembrance, and trust become a continual way of living.

The psalm does not pretend that evil has disappeared. Enemies still threaten, and injustice remains a reality. Yet these dark notes no longer dominate the song. The psalmist entrusts judgement to God, confident that those who oppose his purposes will not ultimately prevail. The final word belongs not to fear but to rejoicing. Those who remain faithful to God may live in quiet confidence, upheld by his strong hand and sustained by his unfailing love.

For Christians today, Psalm 63 reminds us that the deepest desire of every human heart is not merely for comfort, security, or success, but for God himself. Whether we find ourselves in seasons of joy or in the wilderness of disappointment, illness, grief, or uncertainty, we are invited to seek his presence above all else. In him alone the restless heart finds its true home, discovering that his steadfast love is indeed better than life.

Reflective questions

1. What do I most deeply long for in my life?
2. In spiritual dryness, where do I turn for satisfaction?
3. How can I make prayer and praise part of my daily routine, even in ordinary moments?
4. Do I truly believe that God's steadfast love is "better than life"?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, you alone can satisfy the deepest longing of our hearts. When we feel weary, anxious, or spiritually dry, draw us ever closer to yourself. Help us to seek your presence above all earthly things, to praise you in times of joy and in times of trial, and to find our true satisfaction in your steadfast love. Uphold us with your mighty hand, that we may rejoice in you always, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

‘The Lord
is in his holy temple;
let all the earth
adore him.’

HABAKKUK 2:20
& PSALM 66:4

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