

HIGH TIDE



SEP 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.



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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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07356 256800

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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 27th September**. Please send all articles, information, and news you wish to be published by Sunday 20th September.*

Front cover: *Pietà* by Perugino (ca. 1493); oil on wood (detail)
The Uffizi, Florence (Italy)



Dear Beloved, this last Thursday, as you do, I was sitting in the house where Leonardo da Vinci was born. Kris and I watched a film about his life, projected onto the very walls that saw this genius grow up. Alongside some stunning images of his art and inventions, there were also readings from his works. In a letter written towards the end of his life, he wrote that knowledge was the best thing for man, as it is the only thing that time not only does not diminish, but actually increases.

Now, to some extent, he was right. Most things are taken away from us. The same Leonardo, indeed, wrote: “*O Time, consumer of things [...] you destroy all things.*” I am not sure, however, that knowledge always endures either. In some fortunate minds it often increases, yes, but in most of us, I believe, it can easily diminish or at least change.

Perhaps it was because of his difficult personal life—he was born an illegitimate child, he was separated from his mother early, his half-brothers excluded him from any inheritance, and he couldn’t return to his beloved Tuscany (Vinci and Florence) at the end of his life—that he was trying so desperately to find anchors or touchstones. As mentioned above, he thought he had found one in knowledge. I think there he was wrong, and I will tell you why.

When academics, researchers and art historians compared his works with one another, something clearly stood out: a face. More exactly, a feminine face.

Leonardo repeatedly drew and painted a remarkably similar kind of woman: the inclined head, heavy or lowered eyelids, a very gentle expression and that slight, inward-looking smile. It appears in the *Mona Lisa*, but, more importantly, it appears in his Madonnas and particularly strongly in Saint Anne. The surviving study for the *Head of Saint Anne* is especially striking because the face is more immediate

and human than the somewhat idealised face in the finished painting. Many say it is the face of Caterina, Leonardo's mother...

So, you see, Leonardo was wrong, even if he was reluctant to admit it to himself. It was not knowledge but the love a mother bears for her child that was his real anchor. Love he never received enough of, and yet he knew—at least his artwork did!—that he could always go back to it, even in his most troubled, most difficult times.

There is no doubt that Leonardo was one of the greatest, most talented minds in human history. Kris and I were amazed by all the models created and exhibited in the museum, based on his drawings and descriptions: tanks, amphibious boats, flying devices... (*We were also annoyed that we couldn't touch any of them. Italian museum guide ladies can be truly frightening... Mamma mia...*) And this genius, throughout his life, always returned, in the end, to love.

But, to some extent, I am wrong, too. Or at least, I would be if I identified our firmest anchor with human love. Because human love, wonderful and necessary as it is, remains fragile. Those whom we love grow old; they change; they disappoint us; and eventually death separates us, at least for a time. Even the tender face of a mother, preserved for a lifetime in the memory of a child, can fade.

The Gospel, however, points us beyond this. “*God is love*,” St John tells us—not simply that God loves, but that Love itself has its source and perfection in him. And that Love took flesh in Jesus Christ, entering our changing and uncertain world so that nothing—not suffering, failure, separation, not even death—could finally take it from us. Our Patron Saint, St Paul, puts it magnificently: “*nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

Leonardo was searching for the one treasure that time could not consume. Knowledge was not quite it. Perhaps the answer was closer to him than he realised. The only anchor which cannot fail, the only treasure which time cannot diminish and death cannot destroy, is Love. And Love is God. Even if we never become geniuses, if we only learn this one thing, all will be fine. Our lives will be fine. And so will we be.

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

Fr. Gregory



Welcome to eating out in and around Weymouth

“Felipe Felop” writes:

Hello everyone, my name is Felipe Felop, and I would like to share with you some of my thoughts about eating locally. Mrs Felop and I eat out a lot and have our own ideas of what we like, and sometimes what isn't so good. To start off, today I have picked a couple of spots which may be a little unusual.

Down at the Weymouth Rugby Club ground, at the back of Lidl, is an unusual eating spot, called The Caddy Shack. It's perfect for a bit of lunch out in the open while this lovely weather keeps going. There is quite a varied menu, for example breakfasts, jacket potatoes, burgers (my favourite), salads and lots more, all prepared on demand and very reasonably priced. They do soft drinks and an assortment of nice coffees. They have a small sign which tells you that “You can pay by card but we do prefer cash”. I have no problem with that!



If it's raining, don't bother but even if the weather is cold, it's still a good place to call in, and parking is no problem. Really good value for money and a fun, unusual place, with lovely service from very friendly people. So just follow the signs to Weymouth Rugby Club and you can't miss it.

Now, Mrs F and I do like a curry. We are fortunate that there are several very good curry restaurants in Weymouth, but let me tell you a little story about my favourite one, CHILLI'S, near to the railway station. Recently we went to an



“event” at CHILLI'S, an Elvis Night. The evening comprised a choice of several dishes including starters, a selection of main courses, choice of a vegetable and naan bread or rice, plus a dessert. I had three small starter portions, chicken Madras, Bombay aloo, naan bread and a small but very nice dessert. Plus of course Elvis.

Elvis was due on at 7.30, so we were requested to be there at least an hour earlier in order to get the food served beforehand. All dishes were pre-ordered from a really comprehensive menu, which cost £35 per head for the evening, obviously drinks were extra. Let me mention the food first of all. I believe CHILLI'S is the best of our very good Indian restaurants. Eight of us all agreed the food was absolutely lovely and excellent value for the £35.

At 7.30 an Asian Elvis literally shot out of a cupboard and burst into song. To be fair, he wasn't the best Elvis you will ever see but he gave it his all for an hour, then had a 20-minute break, and did another hour or so. He did a wide range of Elvis favourites, although the most popular number of the evening was Sweet Caroline! Not sure Elvis was alive when Neil Diamond wrote that song. Elvis then announced that he would be coming back to CHILLI'S every three months, and his next visit will be in September. It really was a fun night with excellent food and Elvis for good measure.

CHILLI'S is owned and run by the husband-and-wife team, Rocky and Panna. Rocky (that's his nickname, his real name is Harok) is the chef and Panna oversees the restaurant. Their reputation is excellent. If you fancy CHILLI'S, tel: 01305 766601, or 07585 977704. Have a good month and see you next time with more reviews!

(Name and contact details supplied. 🍌)

Did you know...?

Jeanne James writes:

1. The Captain and the First Officer of most airlines eat different food to avoid an unfortunate situation of both getting food poisoning while flying.
2. One man's blood saved more than two million babies' lives. An Australian donated blood every week for 60 years.
3. The Democratic Republic of the Congo considers marriage such a serious business, neither the bride nor the groom can smile or laugh during the ceremony, reception, and even in wedding photos. If they do, it shows they're not serious about their commitment.
4. A village in India named Piplantri plants 111 trees every time a girl is born. In Indian culture the number 111 is said to bring success.
5. Quokkas (small, rounded animals who live in Western Australia) are known as 'the happiest animal in the world'. Not only do they appear to have a permanent smile on their faces, but they're also incredibly friendly and will hop right up to you. In some cases, they've even posed for a selfie!
6. Samsung performs a range of tests on smartphones and one of them includes having a bum-shaped robot (wearing jeans!) sit on smartphones to see whether they can survive the pressure.
7. A group of butterflies is called a kaleidoscope.
8. According to astronomers, the giant dust cloud at the centre of the Milky Way would taste like raspberries due to the presence of ethyl formate (the chemical which gives raspberries their flavour). This chemical also has another fascinating characteristic – it smells like rum.
9. There's a village in the Netherlands (Hogeweyk in Weesp) that is home to residents who all have dementia. This village is unlike any other, as it's actually a nursing home that's designed to look like a village.
10. There's a fruit that tastes like chocolate pudding. Black sapote is a tropical fruit found in Central America and the Caribbean. When it's ready to eat, the inside will appear velvety and look quite similar to

chocolate pudding – but what’s so special about this little fruit is that it tastes like it too!

11. Octopuses make ‘gardens’ at the bottom of the ocean. Octopuses like to hide in holes or crevices where they feel safe and, for added protection, they’ll collect useful items to add to their den. For example, they might scatter shells around the outside of their den to conceal it, collect and arrange shiny objects to make a decorative ‘garden’, and some octopuses even create a door to their den using a rock.

12. Queen Elizabeth II was a trained mechanic. In 1944, at age 18, Princess Elizabeth joined the army in London, where she trained as a mechanic and military truck driver. She was promoted to Junior Commander (the equivalent of Captain) five months later.

13. The voices of Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse got married in real life. Their names were Wayne Allwine and Russi Taylor. They tied the knot in 1991 and remained together until Wayne passed away in 2009.

14. An astronaut wrote his daughter’s initials on the moon. The astronaut’s name is Eugene Cernan, and he probably won space-dad of the year.

15. There’s a basketball court on top of the U.S. Supreme Court building. It’s even punnily called “*The Highest Court in all the Land*”.

16. In Switzerland, it’s illegal to own only one guinea pig. Guinea pigs are social animals, so if you want to own one in Switzerland you need to also get a mate for it.

17. Babies sleep 5,400 hours in the first year of their life.

18. One strand of spaghetti is called a “spaghettio”.

19. Just like your fingers, your tongue has a completely unique print that no one else has.

20. A horse normally has more than one horsepower. A study in 1993 showed that the maximum power a horse can produce is 18,000 W, around 24 horsepower.



Reconciliation

Irene Leader writes:

Meaning: Something done by the one who offers it; to exchange, to bring into a changed relationship.

We needed to be reconciled to God because our relationship with Him was broken through disobedience (the Fall of Man), but there is nothing we can do by ourselves to restore this relationship, so God did it for us and reconciled us to Himself by sending His Son Jesus. Jesus achieved this reconciliation with God by dying for us and offering Himself in our place. It is something we could never achieve for ourselves – it is already done for us.

However, I only benefit from this if I receive what God has done for me in faith, take it into my life and live it; it does not happen through knowledge alone. If I live it, I am drawn more deeply into Christ and into His death and resurrection. Nothing can separate me from His love. If I choose not to accept what God offers me, then I remain in my sins.

I am of immeasurable value to the Father and bring joy to Him. He loves me so much that He was willing to give His Son for me; not to make me a slave, but to show me His love. Jesus is equally of immeasurable value to the Father, but the Father handed Him over for us, and Jesus freely gave Himself for us: that was the price of our redemption. That's amazing, and that's the exchange – Jesus giving Himself for me.

‘God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God’ (2 Cor 5:21). ‘For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God’ (Heb 12:2b). All have sinned and ‘fall short of the glory of God’ (Rom 3:23).

Look up “glory” and we find the greatness, beauty, holiness, power, righteousness, presence, brightness and majesty of God. However, this does not help me understand God. Our view, opinion and understanding of reality are rarely in complete harmony with His.

Therefore, to *'fall short of the glory of God'* is not simply God telling us how bad we are for not living up to His expectations. It describes the reality of our fallen condition: through sin we have fallen short of the life and glory for which God created us. Our own perspectives, shaped by our opinions of ourselves and of God, can also prevent us from seeing ourselves as God sees us and from living according to His will.

We talk about God, say the right words and quote the right Scriptures; however, being in the Kingdom of God is more than knowing that you are saved and are going to heaven. It is about acknowledging Jesus as Lord of your life (Lordship).

Lordship is surrendering to God through Jesus. I give up those views and opinions which are contrary to God and exchange them for His truth. Jesus, in His life, teaching, ministry, death, burial and resurrection, showed us God's "view and opinion"—He showed us the Father and revealed His will for us.

If I do not bring myself under the Lordship of Jesus, then every failure I have can affect my confidence, and I start to build a track record which becomes more real to me than God's "view and opinion", that is His grace and calling.

Every time I've compromised the Word of God, I bring myself into self-condemnation. Expectations of failure, feelings of unworthiness, believing that I can't do something, or focusing on what I lack can all build this track record.

God's view is that we should be in Christ and, united with Him, share in Jesus' victory over sin, death and the devil. Ultimately, we have nothing to fear, because nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. You are always above and never below, always the head and never the tail. Even in suffering and apparent defeat, Christ remains victorious, and those who belong to Him share in His victory.

If we see ourselves only through our failures, this limits us because we fail to recognise the identity we have in Christ. I need to die to those views and opinions of mine which keep me from seeing myself and others in the light of God's truth.

Think on these. Part two next month.

Assumption at St Paul's

Sharon Waight writes:

On Saturday 15th August 2026 we gathered to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; this is an important feast day and solemnity for St Paul's. This special day honours the belief that, at the end of her earthly life, Mary was taken up body and soul into heaven by her Son. Evidence shows that Mary's Assumption was already well established in the 5th century and must have been celebrated much earlier than that. The feast itself originated in the East as the *Dormition* (Falling Asleep) of Mary and it spread to the West by the 6th and 7th centuries. Pope Pius XII defined it as an infallible official doctrine (dogma) on 1st November 1950.

In recognition of the antiquity and importance of this feast, our parish community celebrated it with deep devotion and reverence. We prayed the Holy Rosary, offered High Mass, shared parish lunch, and sang the Guild Office, the evening prayer of the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary (GSS).

As usual, we warmly welcomed visitors, including friends and servers from GSS Chapters from across Dorset, Salisbury, Somerset, London and Wales, to a day of prayer and celebration. We received feedback from some of our visitors that I will share below and link their narratives with the core moral and spiritual values that the Assumption of Mary teaches us.

One visitor wrote: *'What a wonderful, spiritually uplifting day it was today. All at St Paul's excelled themselves in producing a service I feel Our Lord would have approved. It was a privilege to be able to be with you all today and to be part in upholding the traditions of our faith'.*

They described their experience of celebrating the Assumption with us as a profound source of joy, comfort and inner peace. They felt truly honoured to share in and be part of this special occasion.

Mary was not taken away to be distant but to be fully present to humanity without the limitations of time and space, anchoring the heart in a larger, beautiful divine plan where love and joy ultimately

win. The value of harmony is expressed in a sense of balance and unity, together with joy, hope and optimism. As such, Mary, our motherly advocate, offers unfailing comfort and constantly walks beside us throughout our lives. What joyful, gracious and uplifting words, giving us a real sense of gratitude for all the hard work and effort of so many on Assumption Day.

In the following feedback, values of gratitude and feelings of connection and belonging are evident: *‘We look forward to when we are able to meet again and our prayers and best wishes go to all at St Paul’s. Lunch was lovely and I am very grateful indeed; God, good people, good food, sunny Weymouth – what more does life need’.*

These words are a real expression of appreciation for our Mass, our shared humanity and the generosity of spirit at St Paul’s: Fr Gregory, the servers, our choir, all who welcomed and settled our visitors, brought and prepared food, served lunch and cleared away afterwards. The values of humility, kindness and generosity demonstrated by everyone are summed up in these kind words.

The Assumption is God’s wonderful gift to Mary and, through her, to us: a sign of hope, encouraging us to treasure those special moments that fill our hearts with joy and to notice the beauty of the ‘small’ things – things which, often behind the scenes, involve significant yet unseen effort by people. This hidden yet joyful effort, made for the good of others, could well be part of Mary’s message to us on this day. It is reflected, I believe, in another visitor’s feedback: *‘The church is clean, very organised, books laminated neatly, etc.’*

In Christian tradition, the Assumption of Mary celebrates the end of her earthly life and her entry into heaven—the ultimate destination of holiness and eternal peace. This sacred transition reminds us how ordinary ground can be transformed into a landmark of deep spiritual, cultural, and emotional significance. A place becomes special when it connects deeply with human identity, memory, and sacred values. This truth is alive in this inspiring feedback: *‘Thank you for everything on Saturday [Assumption and Guild Office], we always enjoy being at St Paul’s, you all make it such a special place. It means so much to us to keep such an important connection, thank you’.*



All the above inspirational feedback beautifully captures just how special our church, St Paul's, is and, on this occasion, what coming to Assumption means to many.

It is deeply moving to have received this gracious feedback and an honour to align such feedback with the important meaning and values of Assumption. Many have shared what our church and the

Assumption mean to them. I hope next time more of our own people will support their own parish by taking part in feast days and celebrations such as the Assumption of Our Lady. We really hope to host a Guild Office again soon. The Feast of the Assumption, of course, is meaningful to all Christians but can I say that this year, here at St Paul's, it was made even more special by the prayers, presence, participation and effort of many.

Thank you everyone at St Paul's and to all our visiting GSS members for making the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary such a special and joyful day. The welcome and respect shown on this day made it a rewarding success. I would also like to acknowledge and thank those who sent the kind words of appreciation which I have shared in this article. As we carry forward the joy and hope we find in Mary, we look forward to our next important Feast Day, Dedication Sunday, 11th October 2026. The month will see a bring-and-share lunch for our parish community. Look out for more details that will be coming soon and make a note in your diaries. Thank you.







Drought and wildfires grip Britain following exceptional heat and the driest July in 190 years. Water restrictions, wildfires and serious difficulties for farmers remind Christians of our responsibility for creation and our duty to support farmers in these trying times.

Pope: Sunday Mass cannot be replaced by watching online

— Pope Leo XIV has reminded Catholics that virtual participation cannot replace being physically present at Mass. He stressed that Christianity is lived in real participation in Christ and His Church.

Pope appeals again for peace in the Holy Land — Following continuing violence against Palestinian civilians in the West Bank, Pope Leo has called for attacks to cease and renewed his support for dialogue, international law and a just peace.

Christians continue to suffer in Nigeria — Renewed attacks upon predominantly Christian communities have again drawn international attention to Nigeria, where killings, displacement and kidnappings continue. Christians are asked to remember the persecuted Church in prayer.

AI must serve the common good — As AI develops rapidly, the Bishop of Oxford has warned that governments must retain the power to regulate technology rather than surrendering important decisions to powerful companies. Christians can welcome technology which genuinely serves humanity while insisting that human dignity, responsibility and the common good must remain paramount.

Attacks on hospitals reach alarming levels — More than 900 attacks on healthcare have been recorded in conflict zones worldwide during 2026. Hospitals, patients and medical staff are protected under international law; for Christians, their protection also reflects the fundamental dignity of every human life and the particular duty to care for the sick and suffering.

Calendar, service times,
and prayer intentions

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for September 2026

TUE	1 st	<i>St Giles Abbot; The Holy Twelve Brothers, Martyrs</i>
WED	2 nd	St Stephen, Apostolic King of Hungary
THU	3 rd	St Pius X Pope
FRI	4 th	<i>Feria</i>
SAT	5 th	St Lawrence Justinian, Bishop
SUN	6 th	14TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
MON	7 th	<i>Feria</i>
TUE	8 th	Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
WED	9 th	<i>St Gorgonius, Martyr</i>
THU	10 th	St Nicholas of Tolentino
FRI	11 th	<i>Sts Protus & Hyacinth, Martyrs</i>
SAT	12 th	The Most Holy Name of Mary
SUN	13 th	15TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
MON	14 th	Exaltation of the Holy Cross
TUE	15 th	Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary
WED	16 th	Sts Cornelius Pope & Cyprian Bishop, Martyrs
THU	17 th	<i>The Impression of the Stigmata of St Francis of Assisi</i>
FRI	18 th	St Joseph of Cupertino
SAT	19 th	St Januarius Bishop & Companions, Martyrs
SUN	20 th	16TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
MON	21 st	St Matthew Apostle & Evangelist
TUE	22 nd	St Thomas of Villanova, Bishop
WED	23 rd	Ember Day; Padre Pio; <i>St Linus Pope, Martyr</i>
THU	24 th	<i>Our Lady of Ransom</i>
FRI	25 th	Ember Day
SAT	26 th	Ember Day; <i>St Cyprian & Justina, Martyrs</i>
SUN	27 th	17TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
MON	28 th	St Wenceslaus, Duke, Martyr
TUE	29 th	ST MICHAEL, THE ARCHANGEL
WED	30 th	St Jerome, Priest, Doctor of the Church

Daily intentions & anniversaries of death

- 1st People with disabilities - *Maud & Millie Palmer, May Clothier*
- 2nd Beechcroft & Conifers
- 3rd Priests & vocations
- 4th Dying - *Dorothy Butler*
- 5th Walsingham - *Tom Buchanan, Mary Salisbury, Leslie Thomas*
- 6th Our Parishes - *Peter Mullis*
- 7th Peace - *Mary Vincent, Leslie Ball, David Foote, Peter Dawson, John Wray*
- 8th Mothers, expectant mothers and newborn children
- 9th All emergency responders
- 10th Who have lost hope or attempted suicide - *Margaret Ward*
- 11th People with chronic illnesses - *Bessie Scriven, Tommy McCarthy,*
—11th: *Andy Hutching, Margaret Boxwell, Liz Taylor*
- 12th Our Choir & Servers - *Joan Nickinson, Eileen Parsonage, Jean Wray*
- 13th Our Parishes
- 14th All who suffer - *Austin Woolrych, Jack Hardy, Holly Harding, Joyce Kemp*
- 15th Parents who grieve for their children
- 16th The Armed Forces (Battle of Britain)
- 17th Doctors, nurses & all healthcare workers; their patients
- 18th Students with learning difficulties or anxiety - *Kathleen Gunn*
- 19th Our PCCs
- 20th Our Parishes - *Betty Vincent, Marjorie Green*
- 21st The end of wars and of violence - *Ann Wray*
- 22nd Those who depend upon the generosity of others
- 23rd Westham - *Sydney Lambert pr., Elizabeth Keat*
- 24th Victims of addictions, modern slavery, human trafficking
- 25th The sick
- 26th The sanctification of clergy - *Francis Johnstone, Madaleine Hicks*
- 27th Our Parishes
- 28th Heads of state and governments - *David Davies pr.*
- 29th Protection of the Church, our homes & families - *Mary Kemp*
- 30th A greater love for God's word - *Michael Kerrigan, David Sertin*

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. Come and adore Christ the King, exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King, exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King, exalted to the Cross for us!

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. Come and adore Christ the King, exalted to the Cross for us!

HYMN

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle
Sing the last, the dread affray;
O'er the cross, the victor's trophy,
Sound the high triumphal lay:
Tell how Christ, the world's Redeemer,
As a victim won the day.

God, his Maker, sorely grieving
That the first-made Adam fell,
When he ate the fruit of sorrow,
Whose reward was death and hell,
Noted then this wood, the ruin
Of the ancient wood to quell.

Wherefore, when the sacred fullness
Of the appointed time was come,
This world's Maker left his Father,
Sent the heav'nly mansion from,
And proceeded, God Incarnate,
Of the Virgin's holy womb.

To the Trinity be glory
Everlasting, as is meet;
Equal to the Father, equal
To the Son, and Paraclete:
Trinal Unity, whose praises
All created things repeat. Amen.

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

1	142	2 Samuel 18:19-end Acts 11:1-18	16	16	1 Kings 10:1-25 Acts 17:1-15
2	143	2 Samuel 19:1-23 Acts 11:19-end	17	17	1 Kings 11:1-13 Acts 17:16-end
3	144	2 Samuel 19:24-end Acts 12:1-17	18	19	1 Kings 11:26-end Acts 18:1-21
4	146	2 Samuel 23:1-7 Acts 12:18-end	19	20	1 Kings 12:1-24 Acts 18:22-end
5	149	2 Samuel 24 Acts 13:1-12	20	119 v. 153-end	Isaiah 45:9-22 Revelation 14:1-5
6	119 v. 17-32	Jonah 4:1-11 Revelation 8:1-5	21	49, 117	1 Kings 19:15-end 2 Timothy 3:14-end
7	1	1 Kings 1:1-31 Acts 13:13-43	22	21	1 Kings 13:11-end Acts 19:21-end
8	98, 138	Isaiah 7:10-15 Luke 11:27-28	23	23	1 Kings 17 Acts 20:1-16
9	3	1 Kings 3 Acts 14:8-end	24	27	1 Kings 18:1-20 Acts 20:17-end
10	5	1 Kings 5:1-12 Acts 15:1-21	25	28	1 Kings 18:21-end Acts 21:1-16
11	6	1 Kings 6:11-28 Acts 15:22-35	26	30	1 Kings 19 Acts 21:17-end
12	14	1 Kings 8:1-30 Acts 15:36-end	27	125, 126, 127	Isaiah 48:12-21 Luke 11:37-54
13	119 v. 65-88	Isaiah 44:24 - 45:8 Revelation 12:1-12	28	31	1 Kings 21 Acts 22:1-21
14	2, 8, 146	Genesis 3:1-15 John 12:27-36a	29	34, 150	Tobit 12:6-end Acts 12:1-11
15	15	1 Kings 9:1-9 Acts 16:25-end	30	32	1 Kings 22:29-45 Acts 23:12-end

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS

Ant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because through your Cross you have redeemed the world.

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: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because through your Cross you have redeemed the world.

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 Lord, we pray that your grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; 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

Thirty years among us dwelling,
His appointed time fulfilled,
Born for this, he meets his passion,
For that this he freely willed:
On the cross the Lamb is lifted,
Where his life-blood shall be spilled.

He endured the nails, the spitting,
Vinegar, and spear, and reed;
From that holy body broken
Blood and water forth proceed:
Earth, & stars, & sky, & ocean,
By that flood from stain are free.

Faithful cross! above all other,
 One and only noble tree!
 None in foliage, none in blossom,
 None in fruit thy peers may be;
 Sweetest wood and sweetest iron!
 Sweetest weight is hung on thee.

Bend thy boughs, O tree of glory!
 Thy relaxing sinews bend;
 For awhile the ancient rigour,
 That thy birth bestowed, suspend;
 And the King of heavenly beauty
 On thy bosom gently tend!

Thou alone wast counted worthy
 This world's ransom to uphold;
 For a shipwrecked race preparing
 Harbour, like the ark of old;
 With the sacred blood anointed
 From the smitten Lamb that rolled.

To the Trinity be glory
 Everlasting, as is meet;
 Equal to the Father, equal
 To the Son, and Paraclete:
 Trinal Unity, whose praises
 All created things repeat. Amen.

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

1	136	Haggai 1 Mark 8:22-26	11	7	Zechariah 8:9-end Mark 10:35-45
2	137	Haggai 2 Mark 8:27-end	12	9	Zechariah 9:1-12 Mark 10:46-end
3	138	Zechariah 1 Mark 9:1-13	13	66	Isaiah 53 Ephesians 2:11-end
4	140	Zechariah 2 Mark 9:14-29	14	110	Isaiah 63:1-16 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
5	145	Zechariah 3 Mark 9:30-37	15	10	Zechariah 11:4-end Mark 11:12-26
6	108, 115	Ezekiel 12:21 - 13:16 Acts 19:1-20	16	11	Zechariah 12:1-10 Mark 11:27-end
7	72	Proverbs 8:22-31 John 19:23-27	17	12	Zechariah 13 Mark 12:1-12
8	132	Song of Solomon 2:1-7 Acts 1:6-14	18	13	Zechariah 14:1-11 Mark 12:13-17
9	147	Zechariah 7 Mark 10:17-31	19	22	Zechariah 14:12-end Mark 12:18-27
10	4	Zechariah 8:1-8 Mark 10:32-34	20	119 v. 113-116	Ezekiel 33:30 - 34:10 Acts 26:9-25

21	119 v. 33-40	Ecclesiastes 5:4-12 Matthew 19:16-end	26	33	Ecclesiasticus 5 Mark 13:32-end
22	24	Ecclesiasticus 1 Mark 12:35-end	27	124	Ezekiel 37:15-end 1 John 2:22-end
23	25	Ecclesiasticus 2 Mark 13:1-13	28	91	2 Kings 6:8-17 Matthew 18:1-10
24	26	Ecclesiasticus 3:17-29 Mark 13:14-23	29	148	Daniel 10:4-end Revelation 5
25	29	Ecclesiasticus 4:11-end Mark 12:24-31	30	35	Ecclesiasticus 10:6-24 Mark 14:26-42

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Ant: O Holy Cross, upon you the Life of the world hung, upon you Christ openly triumphed, and his death trampled down death for ever.

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: O Holy Cross, upon you the Life of the world hung, upon you Christ openly triumphed, and his death trampled down death for ever.

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

O Lord, we pray that your grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; 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.



Orthodox prayers in front of the Holy Cross

From the Aposticha of the Exaltation of the Cross

Rejoice, O Life-bearing Cross,
 the invincible trophy of godliness,
 the door of Paradise, the foundation of the faithful,
 the protection guarding the Church,
 by which corruption is utterly destroyed
 and the power of death is swallowed up
 and we are exalted to heaven from earth.
 The invincible weapon, the adversary of demons,
 the glory of the martyrs, the true beauty of the saints,
 the haven of salvation which gives great mercy to the world.

From the Praises of the Exaltation

O all-glorious wonder! The Cross which bore the Most High like
 a cluster of grapes full of life is seen today lifted up from the
 earth. Thereby have we all been drawn to God, and death hath been
 utterly slain. O the all-precious Tree whereby we have received the
 food of immortality in Eden, glorifying Christ!

At the Veneration of the Cross

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy
 holy Resurrection, we glorify.

From the service of the Exaltation

Today the Cross of the Lord cometh forth; and the faithful
 receive it with desire, and they derive healings of soul and body,
 and every pang. Let us venerate it with joy and fear: with fear, for we
 are unworthy because of our sins; and with joy, because of the
 salvation which is granted to the world by Christ God, Who hath
 great mercy, and Who was nailed to it.



At the monks' table (1)

In a Benedictine monastery even eating belongs to the life of prayer. This perhaps explains one of the most remarkable painted rooms in twentieth-century Christian art: the monks' refectory at Saint Joseph Abbey in Louisiana.



Its creator was Dom Gregory de Wit (1892–1978), a Dutch Benedictine monk and artist from Mont-César Abbey in Belgium. He came to Saint Joseph Abbey in the 1940s, and in 1946 Abbot Columban Thuis gave him a commission. The monks' dining room needed a painting, and the obvious subject for a Christian refectory was the Last Supper.

De Wit was initially given only the west wall. He worked for nine months, and on Christmas Eve 1946 the enormous painting was blessed. It covers some 732 square feet and is believed to be among the largest representations of the Last Supper ever painted. The monks were sufficiently impressed to allow de Wit to continue. Over approximately four years he transformed the entire refectory.

De Wit employed a principle sometimes called *inclusio*: one image explains another; scenes are framed by other scenes; things apparently separated in time belong to a single story. The whole

room therefore becomes one composition. A monk cannot look at the Last Supper without the Old Testament; he cannot look at food without creation; he cannot look at creation without Christ.

This was particularly appropriate to Benedictine life. The

Rule of St Benedict requires reading during meals: while the body receives its food, the mind and soul are nourished by the Word of God. The refectory is not a restaurant attached to a monastery. The common meal itself forms part of a disciplined Christian life of receiving, thanksgiving and communion. De Wit made the walls perform something of the same function as the reader's voice.

Above and around the monks are prophets, apostles and biblical scenes. Overhead are animals, birds, fishes, plants, stars and the elements of creation. At one end is the Last Supper; at the other, Christ the Good Shepherd. Thus an ordinary action—sitting down and eating—is placed within the whole history of salvation.

Perhaps that is de Wit's first lesson. Our Christian faith does not divide life neatly into "religious" and "ordinary". Bread, wine, hunger, work, companionship and creation itself can all speak of God. And so, three times a day, the monks eat inside a painted sermon.

(This is the first in a series of four articles on Dom Gregory de Wit's remarkable painted refectory at Saint Joseph Abbey, Louisiana.)



Symbols of Early Christian Art: the “Orant”

Based on Prof. László Vanyó's book:



The orant – a standing figure with arms raised in prayer – is one of the most characteristic images of early Christian art. The gesture itself was not invented by Christians: it belonged to the ancient world and was

already familiar in both pagan and Jewish contexts.

In Roman catacomb painting, orants appear in many different settings. They may be men or women, sometimes shown alone and sometimes placed within larger biblical scenes. Their raised hands immediately suggest prayer, and early Christian writers confirm that Christians prayed in this manner.

The gesture had important biblical associations, too. Moses prayed with his hands raised during Israel's battle with Amalek, and early Christians interpreted his outstretched arms as prefiguring the Cross. The praying Christian could therefore imitate a gesture which recalled both Moses and Christ. Tertullian explained that Christians not only raised their hands but extended them in remembrance of the Lord's Passion. Prayer itself thus became bodily connected with the mystery of salvation.

The orant could also express the soul's hope after death. In funerary art the figure often appears in a peaceful, frontal pose, detached from ordinary activity. This has led to interpretations of the orant as the soul of the deceased already enjoying blessedness. The image could therefore combine prayer, confidence and the expectation of eternal life rather than simply recording what the person looked like while praying.

At the same time, its meaning should not be reduced to one fixed explanation. The same gesture appears within biblical narratives. Noah, for example, can be represented as an orant in the ark; Daniel appears praying



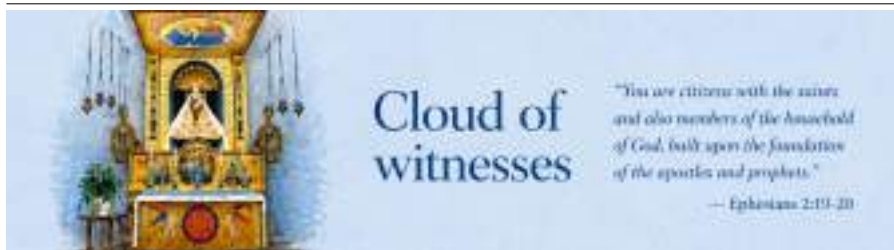
between the lions; and other figures rescued by God are shown in the same attitude. Here the raised hands express trust in God at the very moment when human help is impossible. The gesture becomes a visual shorthand for prayer answered by divine deliverance.

The catacombs repeatedly place this attitude beside scenes whose message is rescue from mortal danger. The emphasis is therefore not upon anxiety or dramatic movement, but upon the certainty of the God who hears prayer and has already shown his power to save.

This helps explain why such scenes were particularly suitable for tombs. Christians remembered the great acts by which God had saved his servants and prayed with confidence that he would likewise deliver the departed from death. The orant belonged naturally among images of Noah, Daniel and other biblical examples of salvation.

There is another important dimension. The praying figure could stand not only for an individual but for the Christian community itself. In this sense the orant expresses the Church at prayer: the people of God turning towards their Lord, interceding and awaiting fulfilment of his promises.

The apparent simplicity of the orant is therefore deceptive. A pair of raised hands could evoke ancient prayer, Scripture, the Cross, deliverance, the soul's hope and the worship of the whole Church. For the early Christian viewer, this quiet human figure was a compact proclamation of trust: the believer stands before God with empty hands, confident that salvation comes from him. (*Images: Catacomb of Priscilla, Rome, 3rd c.*)



Padre Pio - 23 September

When we think of saints, we often imagine figures from a distant world, known to us through old paintings and stories handed down over centuries. Padre Pio is rather different. We have photographs of him, recordings of his voice and moving film of him celebrating Mass. There are people still living whose parents or grandparents actually met him. Most remarkably, film survives of his final Mass, celebrated on 22 September 1968, the day before he died.

Born Francesco Forgione in Pietrelcina, southern Italy, in 1887, he entered the Capuchin Franciscans at fifteen, taking the religious name Pio. Ordained priest in 1910, he arrived at the friary of San Giovanni Rotondo in 1916 and remained there for more than fifty years.

It was there that something extraordinary happened. On 20 September 1918, while praying, Padre Pio received the stigmata: wounds in his hands, feet and side corresponding to the wounds of the crucified Christ. They remained for fifty years. His hands were normally covered, and the wounds were repeatedly investigated during his lifetime. Remarkably, as he approached death in 1968 the wounds disappeared, leaving no scars.

Yet perhaps his most



remarkable ministry took place not before crowds but inside the confessional. At times Padre Pio heard confessions for twelve to fifteen hours a day, and penitents might wait days—or even weeks—to reach him. Numerous people testified that he possessed an extraordinary ability to know the state of a person's soul, sometimes reminding penitents of sins they had forgotten or deliberately concealed. For Padre Pio this was never entertainment or clairvoyance: everything was directed towards repentance, absolution and reconciliation with God. "*Confession is the soul's bath,*" he famously taught.



Other extraordinary phenomena were reported throughout his life: healings, visions, a mysterious fragrance associated with his presence and even bilocation—being witnessed in a place while physically known to be somewhere else. Yet Padre Pio himself consistently directed attention away from such wonders and towards prayer. He had an intense devotion to Our Lady and especially to the Rosary, which he called his "*weapon*". His practical spiritual advice was wonderfully simple: "*Pray, hope and don't worry.*" This came from someone who was blessed with heavenly visions, but who also experienced spiritual warfare, including spiritual and physical attacks by the devil from a young age.

His concern was not only for souls. Having himself suffered much ill-health, he founded the "Home for the Relief of Suffering", a hospital inaugurated in 1956 which continues its medical work today.

Padre Pio died on 23 September 1968, aged 81, repeating the names "*Jesus, Mary*" shortly before losing consciousness. He was canonised by Pope St John Paul II in 2002, before a crowd of more than half a million people.

And the most extraordinary thing is that his holiness was rooted in the ordinary: he was a simple priest who spent his life celebrating Mass, hearing sins, praying the Rosary, caring for the sick and calling people back to Christ.



Eating out in '70s Britain (3)

Before Pizza Hut and Domino's dominated the British pizza scene, there was **PizzaLand**. Launched in the early 1970s, PizzaLand was one of the first chain restaurants to introduce many Britons to the concept of pizza, a food that was still considered exotic by many at the time.

PizzaLand restaurants were instantly recognisable with their red and green colour scheme and casual, family-friendly atmosphere. The interiors were designed to evoke an Italian trattoria, albeit a very British interpretation of one, with checkered tablecloths, Chianti bottles as candle holders, and walls decorated with stereotypical Italian scenes.



The menu was centred on pizza, of course, with toppings that would make an Italian chef weep. The Hawaiian with ham and pineapple was particularly popular, as was the Four Seasons, which divided the pizza into quarters with different toppings on each. But PizzaLand also offered pasta dishes, garlic bread, and its famous Ice Cream Factory desserts, where children could create their own sundaes.

By the 1990s, however, competition in the pizza market was fierce. In 1996, PizzaLand was acquired by Pizza Hut, and the brand gradually disappeared as restaurants were either converted or closed.

The **Golden Egg** was a chain of cafeterias that became a familiar sight on British high streets throughout the 1960s and 1970s. With their distinctive yellow and white colour scheme and egg-shaped signage, they were hard to miss. And for many Britons, they were a regular part of shopping trips and days out.



Tea was served in thick white cups. And there was always a selection of cakes and puddings for those with a sweet tooth.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, changing tastes and increased competition led to the decline of Golden Egg. The chain was eventually absorbed by other companies, and the distinctive yellow and white cafeterias disappeared from British high streets.

The cafeterias operated on a self-service basis, with customers queuing up with trays to select their food from a counter before finding a seat. The menu was classic British café fare: eggs, of course, cooked in various ways, bacon, sausages, beans, chips, sandwiches, and simple main meals like fish and chips or pie and mash.

Croccantella di zucchini e cipolla rossa



Croccantella is one of those wonderfully simple Italian dishes whose name tells us what to expect: *croccante* means crisp or crunchy. Rather than a conventional pie or focaccia, vegetables are suspended in a thin flour-and-water batter which becomes golden and crisp in the oven. Numerous versions are

found in modern Italian home cooking, using courgettes, onions, potatoes and other vegetables. The secret is to spread the mixture very thinly: a good croccantella should be crisp at the edges and delicately soft within, never thick or bread-like.

Ingredients: 230 g courgette + 70 g red onion (or make your own mix of courgette, onion, and thinly sliced potato in any proportion, to a total weight of roughly 300 g); 180 g plain flour; 300 ml cold water; 35 g Parmesan, grated; 30 g breadcrumbs; 25 g extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing; $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt; black pepper; dried marjoram or oregano.

Method: Heat a fan oven to 200°C. Thinly slice the courgette and red onion, ideally about 1–2 mm thick.

Whisk the flour and cold water until smooth. Stir in the salt, pepper, Parmesan, marjoram/oregano and about 15 g of the olive oil. Add the vegetables and mix until thoroughly coated.

Generously oil a roughly 30 × 40 cm metal baking tray and scatter half the breadcrumbs over the base. Pour in the mixture and spread it into a very thin, even layer. Sprinkle with the remaining breadcrumbs and drizzle over the remaining oil.

Bake on the lower-middle shelf for 30–35 minutes, until deeply golden and crisp around the edges. If necessary, raise the temperature to 210°C for the final 3–5 minutes. Leave to rest for 5–10 minutes, then cut and serve warm or at room temperature.

Frittata di spaghetti ripiena

The *frittata di spaghetti* is a classic of Campanian *cucina povera*: an ingenious way of turning leftover pasta into another meal. Golden outside and tender within, it is good hot or cold and traditionally excellent picnic food. This version hides ham and melting cheese between the pasta layers...and why wouldn't it?! 🍷

Ingredients: 300 g spaghetti; 5 eggs; 50 g Parmesan, grated; 100 g cooked ham; 100 g sliced melting cheese (provolone, scamorza, mozzarella or ordinary cheese slices); salt and black pepper; 2 tbsp olive oil.

Method: Cook the spaghetti in salted water until al dente, drain and cool slightly; alternatively, use leftover spaghetti. Beat the eggs with the Parmesan, salt and pepper, then mix thoroughly with the spaghetti.

Heat half the oil in a 24 cm non-stick frying pan. Spread half the spaghetti mixture over the base and press down gently. Cover with ham and cheese, keeping the filling away from the edge, then add the remaining spaghetti and level the surface.

Cook over medium-low heat, covered (!), for about 10 minutes, until firm and golden underneath. Slide onto a large plate, invert the pan over it and carefully turn. If necessary, add the remaining oil and cook the other side for 7–10 minutes (again, covered), until golden. Rest briefly, cut into wedges and serve—I serve it with crisp gherkins.





Know the Bible! - The Book of Proverbs (1)

(© bibleproject)

The word “proverb” typically refers to a short, clever saying that offers wisdom in some way. While this book does contain many hundreds of proverbs, most of them are found in the centre section of the book (chs. 10-29). In the outer frames of the book are more elaborate poems all about wisdom. There is more to this book than you might think. The central idea of the book is that wisdom depends on trusting God and leads to life, but folly starts with distrusting God and leads to death.

The book of Proverbs has been designed with a short introduction in 1:1-9 that starts by linking the book to King Solomon, son of David. Solomon had asked God for wisdom to lead Israel well and God honoured his request. Solomon became known as the wisest man and teacher in the ancient world.

The introduction goes on to say that by reading this book, you will gain wisdom. For most of us, this word simply means “knowledge,” but the Hebrew word *chokhmah* means more than just mental activity. It refers primarily to practical knowledge, and it would be better translated with the words “skill” or “applied knowledge.” This is why artists and craftsmen in Israel were said to have *chokhmah*, that is, skill (Exod 31:3). The purpose of this book is to help you develop a set of practical skills for living well in God’s good world.

The introduction also links with another foundational idea in this book: “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*” (1:7; 9:10). The word fear is not about terror. Rather, it refers to a sense of reverence and awe before God, which makes clear our small place in the universe. It’s a moral mindset that recognises that we are not God

and don't get to make up what's right and wrong for ourselves. The fear of the Lord is a posture of humility before God, embracing his definition of good and evil even when it's difficult or inconvenient.



Proverbs 1-9: The first main section of the book doesn't contain any proverbs at all. Instead, we find 10 speeches from a father to a son. The father tells the son that he should listen to wisdom and cultivate the fear of the Lord. This will require a life of virtue, integrity, and generosity, all of which will lead to success and peace. The father warns the son about folly and evil, about shortsighted, selfish decisions and pride. All of these will lead to ruin and shame.

In the Bible, wisdom is the accumulated insight of God's people through the generations. It is all about how to live in a way that honours God and others. Through the book of Proverbs, these human words about wisdom have become God's word and wisdom to his people.

This connects to another key theme in chapters 1-9, the words of *Lady Wisdom*. There are four poems where wisdom is personified as a woman, calling out to humanity to pay attention to her and to seek her out. These poems are a creative, poetic way of exploring the idea that we live in a moral universe and that goodness and justice are objective realities that we ignore at our own peril.

Together, these twin sets of speeches from the father and Lady Wisdom make a powerful claim about the book of Proverbs. This book doesn't simply offer good advice. It is an invitation from God to learn human and divine wisdom from previous generations of God's people.

The Psalms

Psalm 64: God's recompense

Psalm 64 is a prayer for protection against enemies, but the danger it describes is largely hidden. Traditionally associated with David, the psalm presents wicked men who conspire in secret, using lies, slander, and carefully planned schemes against the innocent. The psalmist therefore turns to God: “*Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.*” His first concern is significant. He asks not simply to be delivered from his enemies, but from the *fear* they create.

The psalm uses vivid imagery to describe the power of malicious speech. The enemies “*whet their tongue like a sword*” and shoot “*their arrows, even bitter words.*” Words cannot physically cut the body, yet they can wound deeply: through gossip, false accusation, ridicule, or deliberate damage to another person’s reputation. Like archers hiding in ambush, these enemies attack suddenly and secretly, believing themselves secure. “*Who shall see them?*” they ask. The psalm describes their plots as prepared: they encourage one another in evil, hide their snares, and imagine their schemes are beyond discovery.

Yet this confidence rests upon a fundamental mistake. Other human beings may not see what they are doing, but God does. The conspirators search deeply for ways of accomplishing evil, and the psalm observes how profound the inward heart of man can be. Motives and intentions may remain hidden from everyone else, but nothing is concealed from God. The Judge before whom the psalmist brings his complaint knows not merely outward actions but the secret purposes from which they spring. However carefully evil is concealed, God cannot be deceived.

Then comes the dramatic reversal: “*But God shall shoot at them with an arrow.*” The very image used for the enemies is now turned against them. They had secretly shot their arrows at the innocent; now God intervenes in judgement, and their wounds come suddenly. Even their own tongues contribute to their downfall. The psalmist does not devise his own revenge or attempt to defeat conspiracy with

conspiracy. He places the matter in God's hands, trusting that justice belongs to him.

God's judgement also has a wider purpose. Those who witness it recognise his hand: "*This hath God done.*" They are brought to fear God and to consider wisely what he has accomplished. What was hidden becomes known, and what seemed merely a struggle between human beings becomes a revelation of divine justice. The psalm thus moves from fear and secrecy to acknowledgement and confidence. Evil may operate in darkness for a time, but it does not escape God's knowledge or his righteous judgement.

The final verse gives the proper response: "*The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, and put his trust in him.*" The psalm ends not with satisfaction in another person's destruction, but with renewed confidence in God. For Christians, Psalm 64 is therefore both comfort and warning. When we suffer from lies, hostility, or injustice, we need not answer evil with evil; we can entrust ourselves to God. But the God who sees the secret intentions of our enemies also sees ours. The psalm calls us not only to trust his justice, but to examine our own words and hearts before him, confident that those who take refuge in him are secure.

Reflective questions

1. When others hurt me, do I entrust the matter to God or allow fear and resentment to govern me?
2. Have I ever wounded another person through gossip, criticism, or careless words?
3. Do I remember that my hidden thoughts and motives are known to God?
4. Can I trust God's justice when wrongdoing seems to go unanswered?

Prayer — *Almighty God, you search every heart and nothing is hidden from your sight. Preserve us from fear when we suffer injustice, and keep us from answering evil with evil. Guard our tongues from words that wound, purify our thoughts and intentions, and teach us to trust your righteous judgement. May we always take refuge in you and rejoice in your unfailing goodness; 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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