# HIGH TIDE



NOV 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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vicar@stpaulsweymouth.org
07796 963703

**Fr Tony Ball** *Assistant Priest*
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**Fr James Baker** *Assistant Priest*
james.baker15971@gmail.com
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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

**ST PAUL'S**
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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.

07356 256800

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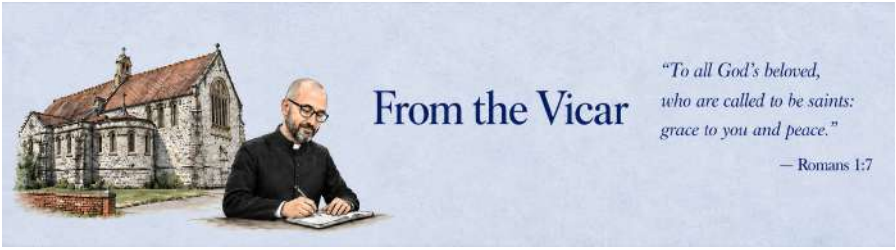
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*Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of the Parish Magazine. The next Magazine will be published on* ***Sunday 29th November.*** *Please send all articles, information, and news you wish to be published by Sunday 22nd November.*

Front cover: *The Mass of St Gregory for the Souls in Purgatory*
AI generated




Dearly Beloved, you will all agree with me when I say how blessed we are to live in such a beautiful part of the world. What for many is a desired holiday destination, for us is home: the beautiful sea, sandy beaches, green hills and lovely Georgian seafront… Part of this beauty, I believe, is the relative remoteness of Weymouth—we are not easy to reach. Endless train changes, no motorways or important roads, and not many people are hardcore enough to face the queues and closures on Ridgeway more than once in their lifetime.

The downside of this isolation is, of course, that we can easily become a bit provincial. When I arrived in 2019, for most children at Beechcroft I must have been the most exotic person they had ever met… We look around in our little town, still mostly white and British (20 percentage points more than England overall, the 2021 Census tells me), and forget the many connections we actually do have to the rest of the world. But let's start at the beginning.

In 1823 at Bolton-le-Moors, Lancashire, a healthy baby boy was born into a family with commercial and industrial background. His name was Robert Whitehead and later he trained with a Manchester engineering firm. His work took him to Trieste (Italy), and then to Fiume—today Rijeka, Croatia. There he developed marine engines and the practical self-propelled underwater torpedo in 1866. Three decades later, in 1891, he opened his torpedo factory at Wyke Regis… By then he was married to Frances Maria Johnson and had five children, one of them called Alice (1851-1936).

Now let's go to Spain, more precisely to Burgos in Castile to witness the rise of a noble family. However, we can only stay there briefly as in the early sixteenth century the family moved to Austria in Habsburg service. The one member we are most interested in is

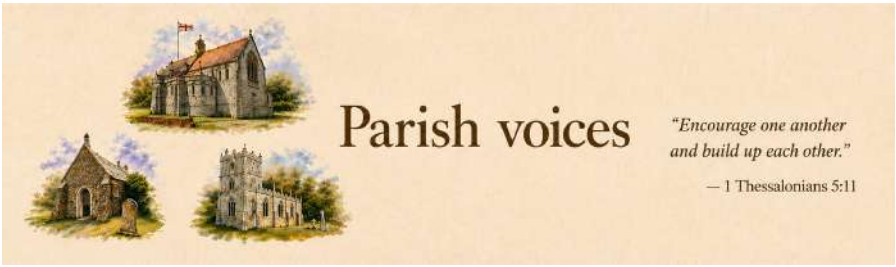
Georg Anton Maria, born in 1842. He was an Austro-Hungarian naval officer and industrialist, born at Zombor, then in the Kingdom of Hungary, now Sombor in Serbia. His father was part of the noble family we followed from Spain to Austria and his mother, Countess Camilla Erdődy de Monyorókerék et Monoszló, from a distinguished Hungarian-Croatian noble family. Georg trained at the naval academy in Fiume (Rijeka) where Robert Whitehead and his family were living. And that's how, that's where two faraway stories and families became intertwined when Georg married Alice, bestowing on her his own hereditary title. Indeed on marrying Georg, Alice Whitehead became Countess Hoyos.

If you go to the Eastern external wall of St Paul's, you will notice an often overlooked, fading foundation stone. It was laid in 1894 by Alice, Countess Hoyos…

The family connections are fascinating too. Georg and Alice's niece, Agathe, married Georg von Trapp and became the mother of their seven children—the children whose story was later adapted for the musical and film, "*The Sound of Music*". Another nephew, Sir Edgar Whitehead, became Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia. George and Alice's daughter, Marguerite, married into the Bismarck family, becoming the daughter-in-law of the famous German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck. Their son, Alexander, became an Austro-Hungarian diplomat and acquired the impressive Schwertberg Castle in Austria in 1911 where his descendants continue to live to this day.

All these places, names, cultures and languages lie behind the simple words on the foundation stone of our church in sleepy Weymouth. And this is not even what I wanted to write about. I wanted to write about an even more exciting, even richer, even more complicated "family history", the Feast of All Saints, where so many, very different cultures, languages, places and stories are merged into one amazing family portrait of God's household. And there is still room in that portrait for our faces and our stories with an open invitation… but since I have reached the end of these two pages, more of this in my Sunday sermon! See you there!

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




## Welcome to eating out in and around Weymouth

*"Felipe Felop" writes:*

I would like this month to mention one of my very favourite eating places, Hall's Kitchen, at the harbour end of St Mary's Street.

Set up a few years ago by Jason Hall, who incidentally went on to work on the first series of *The Celebrity Traitors*, where he and his daughter produced all of the wonderful food which acted as the great backdrop for all of the dining room action in the show.

Now two young chefs, Jack and Adam, who were approved by Jason, have taken over the restaurant, to produce what is the probably the best fine food in Weymouth.

If anything, they have raised the bar higher than the very high level previously set by Jason. The standard menu is sufficiently varied to cater for all tastes but, additionally they routinely change the offerings on a Specials Board, to give diners a very wide selection.

Hall's Kitchen's descriptions of menu items are quite straightforward. They don't do complicated write ups which most of us don't actually understand.

Rather than go into individual dishes, can I suggest that you have a look at their menu, and make up your own mind.

A night out at Hall's is not cheap, probably cost you well in excess of £50 per person including drinks. However, as with all good restaurants, if you just take the house wines, you will not be disappointed.

Hall's is an experience worthy of regular if not frequent visits. You can contact them on 01305 839839 or 07523 684049. If you leave a

message and number, they will call you back if it's out of normal working hours.

Ten years ago, 16-year-old Jack was working in his dad's previous restaurant as a waiter. At that time, Mrs F was very poorly in hospital and I sat in their restaurant feeling pretty low and very concerned. That sixteen year old waiter sat with me and chatted, which exactly what I needed at the time. It's lovely now to see that as a 26-year-old chef, Jack is successful and is a well settled married man with a family.

I can only believe that God looked down on him and has rewarded him because in my eyes he is a very good person. See you all next month.

## Some facts about our beautiful church

*Jeanne James writes:*

St Paul's Church in Westham, Weymouth is a late-19th-century parish church known for its distinct design and local history.

- **Architectural Designer:** It was designed by the prominent late-Victorian architect George Fellowes Prynne.
- **Design Description:** Building conservation and architectural historians describe its style as "unique but impressive" and an "idiosyncratic but convincing design" with Decorated and Perpendicular Gothic revival elements mixed with subtle Art Nouveau overtones.
- **Construction Period:** The main body of the church was built between 1894 and 1896.
- **Original Cost:** The initial construction contract and building costs totalled £5,267.
- **Foundation Stone:** The foundation stone was officially laid on May 9 1894, by the Countess of Hoyos.
- **Delayed Consecration:** Although construction began in 1894, contractor delays pushed back completion, leading to its consecration later in 1900.

- **Builder and Clerk:** Mr. W. H. Gooding of Exeter served as the primary builder, and Mr. R. Ramm acted as clerk of the works.
- **Site Purchase Price:** The building plot located on Abbotsbury Road was bought for a sum of £655.
- **Grade II Listing:** The building has been recognised as a Grade II-listed building since 14 June 1974.
- **War Memorial Listing:** The external World War I memorial associated with the church is also separately listed as Grade II.
- **Parent Parish Origin:** It originally started as part of the parish of All Saints Wyke Regis.
- **The Chapel of Ease:** Before the current church was built, a local chapel of ease was erected across the road in 1880 to serve the growing Westham population.
- **Population Boom Trigger:** It was commissioned because Westham's population surpassed 2,000 residents by 1892, rendering the original chapel too small.
- **Separate Parish Status:** Westham officially became its own independent parish in 1902, two years after the new church was consecrated.
- **The Old Parish Hall:** The 1880 chapel of ease subsequently served as the parish hall until it was demolished in the early 1970s.
- **South Chapel Addition:** An apsidal south chapel (the Lady Chapel) was added to the complex later in 1903.
- **West Baptistery Addition:** The west baptistery was added to the structure a decade later in 1913.
- **Exterior Materials:** The building is faced with squared, rock-faced local limestone combined with Bath stone dressings and surrounds.
- **Roof Design:** The roof pitches are covered in bright red plain clay tiles, with the main nave roof sweeping down low over the aisles.
- The interior walls are finished with painted Bath stone ashlar.

- **Window Glazing:** Leaded glass panels throughout the interior are reinforced by heavy ferrous saddle bars (fitted in both square and round sections).
- **High Church Tradition:** Historically, and continuing today, the church is known for its traditional Anglo-Catholic and High Church style of worship.
- **Benefice Partner:** It forms part of the joint benefice known as Weymouth St Paul with Fleet.
- **Regular Devotions:** The church hosts regular community and devotional gatherings, including monthly Eucharistic Adoration sessions ("An evening with Jesus").
- **Independent Parish Council:** Although closely linked with Fleet in a shared benefice, St. Paul's maintains its own legally and financially independent Parochial Church Council (PCC).

## Harvest Service – Beechcroft St Paul's

*Sharon Waight writes:*

On Monday 12th October pupils from all years at Beechcroft St Paul's attended church to celebrate Harvest Festival. Church was prepared with Harvest Gifts, donated by school staff and pupils, and arranged on display on the dais.

Pupils walked to church accompanied by school staff. As pupils entered the church, they offered warm, polite and respectful greetings to us, adding how pleased and excited they were to be taking part in the school's Harvest Service.

The Harvest Service was open to parents and carers and the public to attend who then followed the pupils into the church. Our church was nearly full, extra seating had been arranged, and it was certainly needed.

Once pupils had taken up their seating positions around the dais, the headteacher, Caroline Hawker, welcomed everyone to the service and thanked all who had donated the harvest gifts. Caroline explained the gifts would be donated to the Nest and would be taken



there by the Student Council – pupil representatives. Caroline then explained that the Harvest Service would be led and delivered by the pupils, from across all years. Thanking them as they had all worked hard on their respective parts, singing, reading and speaking and put in a lot of effort into this harvest service.

The whole school then stood and sang the 'Harvest Song' joyfully and enthusiastically. Becky Greet, RE teacher, read from John 6:1-14, the feeding of the five thousand. The reading was followed by several pupils demonstrating very good acting, reading and speaking skills. This was followed by groups of pupils from across the years in school, who spoke and read various themes relating to harvest. All pupils joined in and sang the song 'Shine' with enthusiasm and joy. During the change of groups, a reflective song 'We bring Gifts to Your Altar' was played.

Becky read the following concluding prayer: *Thank you for the wonderful world you have given us. Thank you for the food we enjoy and for all the people who help grow, prepare and share it. Thank you for our families, our friends and our community. Help us to notice when others need care and to remember that everyone matters. Guide us as we grow, so that we can use our gifts to make the world a kinder and brighter place. Amen*

Following the prayer, all pupils recited the school's prayer, joyfully and confidently. Pupils left quietly and respectfully accompanied by their parent or carer or walked back to school with their year teacher.

Beechcroft St Paul's School Harvest Service certainly demonstrated the school's vision: *Soaring with Compassion.* All pupils clearly demonstrated the school's values, being respectful, joyful, polite, and generous in sharing harvest gifts.

# Parish Safeguarding Officer Recognition Service

*Sharon Waight writes:*

On Saturday 19th September 2026, I was invited to attend the Parish Safeguarding Officer Recognition Service held at St Paul's Cathedral. The service, first of its kind, was organised by the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team to recognise and celebrate the commitment, care and dedication of Parish Safeguarding Officers across the Church of England. The service included Choral Evensong, sung by the Choir of St Paul's Cathedral, prayers and sermon by The Rt Revd Robert Springett, Bishop of Tewkesbury, Lead Safeguarding Bishop in the Church of England.

The work of Parish Safeguarding Officers is often unseen; it is found in the conversations that build understanding of what safeguarding means and careful attention to good practice in the Church. It relies (as with many roles and duties held by people in church life), upon Parish Safeguarding Officers' willingness to give time, share experience and respond to the needs of others. This recognition service provided an opportunity to acknowledge the significance of the work of Parish Safeguarding Officers and say thank you. I felt very humbled and pleased to have been invited to attend and represent Parish Safeguarding Officers in our Diocese.

Safeguarding is, at its heart, about people. It is about creating church communities where every person is treated with dignity and respect, where concerns are listened to and taken seriously, and where trust can flourish. It is about ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected, supported and able to participant safely in the life of the Church. Above all, it is about fostering environments where those who have experienced harm are met with compassion and where everyone can belong safely.

Much of our safeguarding practice in the Church is built upon how we relate to each other, expressing and demonstrating the love of God in every aspect of our relationships and valuing the image of God in each person. In this regard, safeguarding is a core Christian activity: relationships in church should be characterised by generosity,

care and kindness. Particular care should be taken when that relationship involves a level of responsibility for or authority over others. That responsibility and authority must be exercised in a trustworthy way, acknowledging the power and influence that can be exerted, perhaps even inadvertently, over others.

The core of safeguarding relies on an understanding of the dynamics of power and vulnerability in relationships. This is not specialist activity that is only undertaken by those with qualifications in the safeguarding field. To practise it safely, all of us engaged in church life, need to reflect on these issues and their boundaries in our relationships. This is the 'heart' of safeguarding.

Sunday 15th November 2026 will be the Church of England's National Safeguarding Sunday. All are invited to pray, to carefully and mindfully reflect upon Safeguarding which is, at its heart, about people and relationships; protecting and preventing harm, keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe.

## Repentance

*Irene Leader writes:*

Remorse is sorrow for what we have done, failed to do, or for the consequences of our choices. Repentance is deeper: grief over wrongdoing, especially when we recognise the hurt caused to others and our offence before God.

A message to the Ephesian church says, '*You have forsaken your first love*' (Rev 2:4), and Jesus warns of impending judgement if they do not repent. God says that they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts. God has been trying to warn them but eventually has to give them over to their closed minds and hardened hearts because they do not want Him.

The kingdom of heaven is God's rule and presence breaking into the world through Jesus and it requires immediate response. The core message after His Baptism was to '*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*' (Mt 4:17). Repentance leads to forgiveness, it involves the recognition of the fact that I am not in alignment with God and I

need to change my inner self. It also includes regret and remorse for the past, and the sincere intention to align my life with God's purpose.

Repentance is more than saying we are sorry. It is often depicted as turning around and walking the other way. It does encompass both those things. Yet true repentance goes beyond words or outward change alone. It is getting our thoughts in alignment with the Word of God, intentionally engaging with that Word to get it in our heart so that it will bear fruit.

The contrast can be seen in Judas. Jesus says, '*Woe to the man who betrays Me*' (Lk 22:22b). Judas committed suicide (Mt 27:3-5). Jesus knew his remorse would not lead to repentance. Judas felt sorrow for what he had done, but his grief did not lead him back to God. Instead, he was overwhelmed by the consequences of his actions. What he experienced was remorse, not the full reality of repentance.

In a change of direction, we have the regrets, remorse, and we say sorry, and then we change aspects of our lives. A good example is a typical New Year resolution.

However, even with regret, remorse and outward effort, something is missing. The all-to-common experience, often through failure in our promises and resolutions, that we cannot do anything if we only rely on our own strength.

There is another aspect to all this to be aware of: self-condemnation. There is nothing more destructive than that. It keeps us as a failure because we are constantly meditating on what we have done. This leads to guilt and shame, while, at the same time, we forget about grace, forgiveness, hope, and the real possibility of a new start given to us by God. When living in self-condemnation, in theory, we still might know that we are forgiven but it is not influencing our life.

As well as having regrets, feeling remorse and changing direction, we need God's grace in our lives by the empowering of the Holy Spirit within us. That way we do not try to do it in our own strength. Once we align our life with Jesus with the help of is grace, the easier repentance becomes by the same grace. Jesus said to tie ourselves to Him for His yoke is easy and His burden is light (cf. Mt 11:28-30).

Turn every thought to Jesus because you love Him (2 Cor 10:5) and turn away from thoughts not rooted in the Gospel. We have other things to repent of, not just the sins we have committed. Errors in judgment, missed opportunities, clinging to the past. Your current outlook on life depends on your mindset: 'As a man thinks in his heart, so is he' (Prov 23:7). You have a self-portrait in your heart, and this is what you display and what you measure everything by. You will never live beyond the boundaries of your heart.

This is why we need to repent: so that the boundaries of the heart can be changed. Repentance means aligning again with God in the way we think. It is not simply telling God how sorry we are and then expecting forgiveness.

Put on the mindset of who you are in Christ: the Word is in you and in your mouth, and that Word is living and active, shaping the way we think, speak, and live (Heb 4:12). Look at the end from the beginning, then choose a path; if I keep going this way, what is the effect on my relationship with God?

To be a repentant person you must be teachable, adaptable, flexible – this shows the state of your heart. You are always improving, expanding, changing your mind, and repenting. Begin by seeking God. That seeking often starts when you recognise that things are not working and that something in your life needs to change.

Repentance, while having outward signs, is an inward action; a decision of the will. It is also important to point out that while repentance often involves an emotional response too, repentance and emotions are two separate inner movements and can arise independently. Emotions fluctuate and while there is no doubt that emotions are a part of repentance, they not always necessarily lead to it. Certainly, we cannot stop at the emotional response on our way to repentance, so to say.

John preached a message of repentance '*Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*' (Mt 3:2). Those who heard this message were called to make a deliberate decision: to change their minds, turn to God for help, and be baptised as a sign of steadfast faith.

Another related theme is condemnation. Scripture says that there is no condemnation in Christ (Ro 8:1) in the sense that there is always

a way back. I am sure you can think of reasons why Judas' actions may have seemed right to him. We can do something wrong while having good intentions, or some kind of self-conviction. Peter is the contrary, the good example. When he realised what he had done, he too had an emotional response: he wept bitterly and violently, with poignant grief, in a traumatic and agonising way — not much unlike Judas, we must add that. Yet, the huge difference was that Peter was thinking chiefly about Jesus and not himself. This saved him from despair and transformed his emotional response into true, life-long repentance.

Peter remembered well the words of Jesus: 'I have prayed for you, and when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers' (Lk 22:32). He knew there was a way back! He knew he failed but that he also knew this failure did not define him. His initial emotional response was followed by an act of his will, under the influence of grace: e repented. He changed his mind, so to say, and turned back to Christ.

Repentance shows humility, not the selfish hurt pride of solely emotional remorse. We have to have an attitude of humility: practice it until we perfect it. To some degree it can be achieved through practice, as many natural virtues, but ultimately it is a gift of God, through grace, and we are called, still aided by grace, to accept and to use well this gift and the grace that comes with it.

How do we respond to something with humility? In other words, what are the 'tangible' fruits of humility? Reverence, thanksgiving, and sincere prayer that brings everything before God and asks for His grace. This blesses God (Ps 103:1-5).

When you put on the mindset of who you are in Jesus, the Word is in you, and in your mouth. The Word is alive and active in moving, living, breathing, instructing, shaping, changing, and sharp (like two-edged sword Heb 4:12). This highlights the gap between how we are called to live and how we often actually live.

When we accept Jesus's reign in our lives, our thinking will change too. Repentance is a way of life: we constantly invite Him to renew our minds. The fullness of his promises is only accessible through faith and trust in Him, waking with and abiding in Him.




*Pope recovering after cancer surgery* — Pope Leo XIV is recovering after surgery on 13 October to remove the lower lobe of his right lung. Doctors confirmed that the cancer was localised and that no further treatment is necessary. We remember him in our prayers as he gradually resumes his duties.

*A papal fellowship at Windsor* — With the King's approval, Pope Leo has accepted the honorary title of Papal Confrater of the College of St George, Windsor. The gesture reciprocates the fellowship conferred on King Charles at St Paul's Outside the Walls in Rome last year, expressing a shared commitment to Christian unity.

*Anglicans and Orthodox explore Christian discipleship* — Meeting in Alexandria, Anglican and Orthodox theologians continued their work on witnessing to Christ in today's world. Their discussions considered how prayer, sacramental life and spiritual formation equip Christians for daily living and service.

*Ethiopian Christians mourn deadly attacks* — The Ethiopian Orthodox Church reports that 60 Christians were killed in two attacks in Oromiya on 20 and 24 October. Homes were burned and others seriously injured. Responsibility remains disputed. We pray for the bereaved, the wounded, and all working for peace and protection for vulnerable communities.

*Care for creation on the international agenda* — An Anglican delegation led by Bishop Graham Usher is attending the UN biodiversity summit in Armenia. Its priorities include protecting oceans, supporting communities most affected by environmental destruction, and sustainable farming. Their message connects care for God's creation with our responsibility towards our neighbours, especially the poorest.

Calendar, service times,
and prayer intentions

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

## Calendar for November 2026

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SUN | 1st | **ALL SAINTS** |
| MON | 2nd | **ALL SOULS** |
| TUE | 3rd | *Feria* |
| WED | 4th | St Charles Borromeo, Bishop |
| THU | 5th | *Feria* |
| FRI | 6th | *Feria* |
| SAT | 7th | *Of the Blessed Virgin Mary* |
| SUN | 8th | **23RD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY** |
| MON | 9th | **Dedication of the Lateran** |
| TUE | 10th | St Andrew Avellino |
| WED | 11th | St Martin of Tours, Bishop |
| THU | 12th | St Martin I Pope, Martyr |
| FRI | 13th | St Didacus |
| SAT | 14th | St Josaphat, Bishop & Martyr |
| SUN | 15th | **24TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY** |
| MON | 16th | **St Edmund of Abingdon, Bishop** |
| TUE | 17th | St Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop & Doctor |
| WED | 18th | **Dedication of St Peter's & of St Paul's** |
| THU | 19th | St Elizabeth of Hungary, Widow |
| FRI | 20th | St Edmund King, Martyr |
| SAT | 21st | The Presentation of Our Lady in the Temple |
| SUN | 22nd | **25TH & LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY** |
| MON | 23rd | St Clement I Pope, Martyr |
| TUE | 24th | St John of the Cross, Doctor |
| WED | 25th | St Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin & Martyr |
| THU | 26th | St Sylvester, Abbot |
| FRI | 27th | *Feria* |
| SAT | 28th | *Of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (***monthly Requiem***) |
| SUN | 29th | **1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT** |
| MON | 30th | **St Andrew, Apostle** |

## Daily intentions & anniversaries of death

1st Our Parishes - *Charles Coleman*
2nd All the faithful departed - *Andrew Neal, Cynthia Ingham*
3rd Those who are lonely
4th Ordinands and theological colleges - *Norman Bridge, David Mutch*
5th Priests & priestly vocations
6th The dying
7th The Shrine of Walsingham - *William Walmsley*

8th Our Parishes - *Melvyn Humm*
9th The unity of the Church - *John Richards bp.*
10th Peace - *Owen Anderson*
11th All who suffer through war - *Albert Clark, Geoffrey Rose*
12th Persecuted Christians - *Elsie Smart, Pearl Melpass, Lyn Davidge*
13th Those who care for the sick - *Olive Clark*
14th Our Rosary Group

15th Our Parishes - *Frederick Sefton-Smith*
16th Mutual respect, end to prejudice - *Pat Stockting, William Kelly pr.*
17th The growth of our congregations
18th The Pope & all Christian leaders - *Alfred Scriven, Baby John Greet*
19th The poor & homeless - *Minnie White, Maxwell Biles*
20th His Majesty the King - *Gordon Groves, Christine Bagwell, Leonard Barlow, Ray Clothier, Mark Ison*
21st Children who are denied care & education - *Lilian Wilcox*

22nd Our Parishes - *Ron Jones, Timothy Lawford*
23rd Our PCCs & Churchwardens - *Gordon Coombs, Karen Collings*
24th Those passing through spiritual darkness
25th Victims of violence & abuse - *Ted Turner, Cecil Day*
26th A deeper prayer life - *Evelyn Groves, Eric Powell*
27th The sick - *Irene Wellman*
28th The departed - *Frederick Humm, Eric Kemp bp.*

29th Our Parishes
30th Scotland & the Eastern Churches - *Glenda Harris, Irene Roberts*

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. Unto the Eternal King all live. O come, let us worship Him.
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. Unto the Eternal King all live. O come, let us worship Him.
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. Unto the Eternal King all live. O come, let us worship Him.
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. Unto the Eternal King all live. O come, let us worship Him.

## HYMN

Day of wrath! O day of mourning!
See fulfilled the prophets' warning,
Heaven and earth in ashes burning

Oh, what fear man's bosom rendeth,
When from heaven the Judge descendeth,
On whose sentence all dependeth.

Wondrous sound the trumpet flingeth;
Through earth's sepulchres it ringeth;
All before the throne it bringeth.

Death is struck, and nature quaking,
All creation is awaking,
To its Judge an answer making.

Lo, the book, exactly worded,
Wherein all hath been recorded,
Thence shall judgement be awarded.

When the Judge his seat attaineth,
And each hidden deed arraigneth,
Nothing unavenged remaineth.

What shall I, frail man, be pleading?
Who for me be interceding,
When the just are mercy needing

King of Majesty tremendous,
Who dost free salvation send us,
Fount of pity, then befriend us!

Think, kind Jesu! – my salvation
Caused Thy wondrous Incarnation;
Leave me not to reprobation.

Lord, all-pitying, Jesus blest,
Grant them Thine eternal rest.
Amen.

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

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **15, 84, 149** | **Isaiah 35<br>Luke 9:18-27** | **15** | **98** | **Daniel 10:19-end<br>Revelation 4** |
| 2 | 23 | Wisdom 3:1-9<br>1 Peter 1:3-9 | 16 | 112 | Daniel 8:1-14<br>Revelation 10 |
| 3 | 88 | Daniel 1<br>Revelation 1 | 17 | 113 | Daniel 8:15-end<br>Revelation 11:1-14 |
| 4 | 92 | Daniel 2<br>Revelation 2 | 18 | 115 | Daniel 9:1-19<br>Revelation 11:15-end |
| 5 | 97 | Daniel 3:1-18<br>Revelation 3:1-13 | 19 | 117 | Daniel 9:20-end<br>Revelation 12 |
| 6 | 99 | Daniel 3:19-end<br>Revelation 3:14-end | 20 | 120 | Daniel 10<br>Revelation 13:1-10 |
| 7 | 100 | Daniel 4:1-18<br>Revelation 4 | 21 | 121 | Daniel 12<br>Revelation 13:11-end |
| **8** | **91** | **Deuteron. 17:14-end<br>1 Timothy 2:1-7** | **22** | **90 v. 1-6** | **1 Thessalonians 2:1-8<br>Matthew 22:34-end** |
| 9 | 101 | Daniel 4:19-end<br>Revelation 5 | 23 | 122 | Isaiah 40:1-11<br>Revelation 14 |
| 10 | 103 | Daniel 5:1-12<br>Revelation 6 | 24 | 123 | Isaiah 40:12-26<br>Revelation 15 |
| 11 | 106 | Daniel 5:13-end<br>Revelation 7 | 25 | 135 | Isaiah 40:27-end<br>Revelation 16:1-11 |
| 12 | 108 | Daniel 6<br>Revelation 8 | 26 | 126 | Isaiah 41:1-20<br>Revelation 16:12-end |
| 13 | 110 | Daniel 7:1-14<br>Revelation 9:1-12 | 27 | 132 | Isaiah 41:21-end<br>Revelation 17 |
| 14 | 111 | Daniel 7:15-end<br>Revelation 9:13-end | 28 | 133 | Isaiah 42:1-17<br>Revelation 18 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29 | 44 | **Isaiah 2:1-5**<br>**Luke 12:35-48** | 30 | 47, 147 | Ezekiel 47:1-12<br>John 12:20-32 |

*Each reading ends with these words:* V. This is the word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

## BENEDICTUS

*Ant:* I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

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:* I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

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, who are yourself at once the Maker and the Redeemer of all your faithful ones, grant unto the souls of your servants and handmaids remission of all their sins, so that they may have that forgiveness which they have ever hoped for. Who lives and reigns with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. 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 concludes 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

Faint and weary, Thou hast sought me,
On the Cross of suffering bought me.
Shall such grace be vainly brought me.

Righteous Judge, for sin's pollution
Grant Thy gift of absolution,
Ere the day of retribution.

Guilty, now I pour my moaning,
All my shame with anguish owning;
Spare, O God, Thy suppliant groaning!

Through the sinful woman shriven,
Through the dying thief forgiven,
Thou to me a hope hast given.

Worthless are my prayers and sighing,
Yet, good Lord, in grace complying,
Rescue me from fires undying.

With Thy sheep a place provide me,
From the goats afar divide me,
To Thy right hand do Thou guide me.

When the wicked are confounded,
Doomed to flames of woe unbounded,
Call me with Thy saints surrounded.

Low I kneel, with heart's submission,
See, like ashes, my contrition,
Help me in my last condition.

Ah! that day of tears and mourning,
From the dust of earth returning
Man for judgement must prepare him,
Spare, O God, in mercy spare him.

Lord, all-pitying, Jesus blest,
Grant them Thine eternal rest. Amen.

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

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **148, 150** | **Isaiah 65:17-end Hebrews 11:32-end** | 12 | 114 | Isaiah 7:1-17 Matthew 5:38-end |
| 2 | 27 v. 1-6 | Lamentations 3:17-26 John 5:19-25 | 13 | 116 | Isaiah 8:1-15 Matthew 6:1-18 |
| 3 | 86 | Isaiah 1 Matthew 1:18-end | 14 | 118 | Isaiah 8:16-end Matthew 6:19-end |
| 4 | 93 | Isaiah 2:1-11 Matthew 2 | 15 | **89 v. 19-37** | **1 Kings 1:15-40 Revelation 1:4-18** |
| 5 | 94 | Isaiah 2:12-end Matthew 3 | 16 | 124 | Isaiah 9 Matthew 7:1-12 |
| 6 | 102 | Isaiah 3:1-15 Matthew 4:1-11 | 17 | 127 | Isaiah 10:1-19 Matthew 7:13-end |
| 7 | 104 | Isaiah 4 Matthew 4:12-end | 18 | 128 | Isaiah 10:20-end Matthew 8:1-13 |
| 8 | **82** | **Judges 7:2-22 John 15:9-17** | 19 | 129 | Isaiah 11 Matthew 8:14-22 |
| 9 | 105 | Isaiah 5:1-24 Matthew 5:1-12 | 20 | 130 | Isaiah 12 Matthew 8:23-end |
| 10 | 107 | Isaiah 5:25-end Matthew 5:13-20 | 21 | 131 | Isaiah 13:1-13 Matthew 9:1-17 |
| 11 | 109 | Isaiah 6 Matthew 5:21-37 | 22 | **119 v. 137-152** | **Isaiah 59:9-20 Luke 14:1-14** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 | 134 | Isaiah 14:1-20<br>Matthew 9:18-end | 27 | 138 | Isaiah 22:1-14<br>Matthew 11:1-19 |
| 24 | 135 | Isaiah 17<br>Matthew 10:1-15 | 28 | 140 | Isaiah 24<br>Matthew 11:20-end |
| 25 | 136 | Isaiah 19<br>Matthew 10:16-33 | **29** | **25** | **Isaiah 1:1-20**<br>**Matthew 21:1-13** |
| 26 | 137 | Isaiah 21:1-12<br>Matthew 10:34-end | 30 | 87, 96 | Zechariah 8:20-end<br>John 1:35-42 |

*Each reading ends with these words:*

V. This is the word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

## MAGNIFICAT

*Ant:* All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

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:* All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

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 God, who are yourself at once the Maker and the Redeemer of all your faithful ones, grant unto the souls of your servants and handmaids remission of all their sins, so that they may have that forgiveness which they have ever hoped for. Who lives and reigns with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. 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 concludes 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.



## Prayers for the faithful departed

*Prayer for a departed loved one:* I commend you, my dear *[name],* to almighty God, and entrust you to your Creator. May you rest in the arms of the Lord who formed you from the dust of the earth. May holy Mary, the angels, and all the saints welcome you now that you have gone forth from this life. May Christ, who was crucified for you, bring you freedom and peace. May Christ, who died for you admit you into his garden of paradise. May Christ, the true Shepherd, embrace you as one of his flock. May he forgive all your sins and set you among those he has chosen. May you see your Redeemer face to face and enjoy the vision of God, forever. Amen.

*Prayer for the dead:* In your hands, O Lord, we humbly entrust our brethren. In this life you embraced them with your tender love; deliver them now from every evil and bid them eternal rest. Welcome them into paradise, where there will be no sorrow, no weeping or pain, but fullness of peace and joy where you live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

*Offering of the Mass:* Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in my own home - and amongst them for myself - and within my family. Amen.

*Orthodox Prayer:* O God of spirits and of all flesh, Who hast trampled down death and overthrown the Devil, and given life to Thy world, do Thou, the same Lord, give rest to the souls of Thy departed servants in a place of brightness and refreshment, a place of repose, where all sickness, sighing, and sorrow have fled away. Pardon every transgression which they have committed. For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind; because there is no man who lives yet does not sin, for Thou only art without sin. For Thou are the Resurrection, the Life, and the Repose of Thy servants who have fallen asleep, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen.




## At the monks' table (3) — Shepherd and flock

At the opposite end of the refectory from Dom Gregory de Wit's painting of the Last Supper is another great image of Christ: the Good Shepherd. At first, the connection between the two paintings may not be obvious. Why should a shepherd appear in a dining room? The answer lies in one of the best-loved psalms: Psalm 23.

"*The Lord is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing.*" The psalm begins with the image of sheep led to green pastures and refreshing waters. But towards its conclusion, the imagery changes. God is no longer simply the shepherd guiding his flock: he becomes the generous host who welcomes his guest to a feast. "*Thou shalt prepare a table before me… and my cup shall be full.*"

This is the key to de Wit's choice. The Good Shepherd is also the one who feeds his people. The green pastures, the prepared table and the overflowing cup all speak of the same divine generosity. And in a Benedictine refectory, where monks gather several times each day to receive their food, this message becomes wonderfully immediate.

There is a further connection with the Last Supper at the other end of the room. In the Gospel of John, Christ declares: "*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep*" (John 10:11). The Shepherd does not merely provide food and protection; he gives himself. At the Last Supper, this self-giving takes its most extraordinary form when Christ offers his own Body and Blood as the food of eternal life.

The two paintings therefore illuminate one another. The Shepherd who prepares the table is the same Lord who becomes our heavenly food. His care extends beyond our earthly needs to the salvation of our souls.

Beneath de Wit's painting is an inscription proclaiming that the Good Shepherd has risen, having laid down his life for his flock. The Shepherd is not simply a comforting figure from the past. He is the risen Christ, whose care for his people continues in the life of the Church.



What, then, should the monks remember as they sit down to eat beneath these paintings? First, that his daily bread is a gift. However ordinary the meal, it comes ultimately from the generosity of God. Secondly, that the food which sustains his body points towards a greater nourishment: the grace of Christ, received above all in the Eucharist. And finally, that he belongs to a flock. He does not eat alone, but with his brothers, sharing both the gifts of creation and a common journey towards God.

The lesson is not confined to monasteries. Every Christian meal can become a small act of faith. When we give thanks before eating, we acknowledge that life itself is received rather than possessed. When we share our food, especially with those in need, we imitate the generosity of the Shepherd who provides for his flock.

And perhaps there is one final thought. Psalm 23 ends with the promise of dwelling in the house of the Lord for ever. The table prepared for us here on earth is therefore only a foretaste of something greater: the heavenly banquet, where hunger and want will finally disappear. For the monk looking towards the Good Shepherd, even the simplest supper becomes a reminder of that promise.

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

# The stained-glass windows of the Lady Chapel (1)

The Lady Chapel's stained-glass windows have watched over generations of worshippers, witnessed countless Masses and heard innumerable prayers. Yet how much do we really know about them? Who are the saints they depict? Who paid for them? Who made them? And what can they tell us about the people who worshipped here more than a century ago?

St Paul's Church was built during a period of remarkable expansion in Westham. During the late nineteenth century, Weymouth was growing, and the existing provision for worship could no longer adequately serve its increasing population. The new church, designed by George Halford Fellowes-Prynne (1853–1927), was begun in 1894 and consecrated in 1900. The Lady Chapel was added in 1903, while further work on the church continued into the following decade.

Fellowes-Prynne was one of the important architects associated with the later Gothic Revival and the Anglo-Catholic movement.

Five windows are arranged around the altar. From left to right, they represent St Margaret of Antioch, Our Lady with the Christ Child in the central position, St Mary, St Martha and St Agnes. Two further windows on the adjoining side wall depict St Martin and St Alban.

The arrangement is not simply decorative. It places the celebration of the Eucharist within the wider company of the saints, reminding us that the Church at prayer is never limited to those physically present in the building.

The chapel dates from 1903, but the windows were not necessarily installed at the same time. Indeed, their inscriptions, differing styles and the available architectural evidence suggest that the decoration developed over a period of years.

The principal name associated with the Lady Chapel glass is Percy Bacon Brothers, a London stained-glass firm established by Percy Charles Haydon Bacon (1860–1935). Percy Bacon was an artist and sculptor who had studied continental European art, including in

Munich, Milan, Venice and Paris. His workshop belonged to the flourishing world of late Victorian and Edwardian ecclesiastical art, reviving the visual language of medieval Christianity.

The business included his brothers Archibald Arthur and Herbert Joseph Bacon. Its work appeared in churches throughout Britain and beyond, and its windows were sometimes signed with the firm's name or a distinctive emblem of three bees — a playful reference to the three Bacon brothers.

At St Paul's we have something particularly valuable: actual signatures. The windows of Our Lady and St Alban bear the inscription **PERCY BACON BROS LONDON**, providing direct evidence of the workshop responsible for their manufacture.

However, one of the seven windows is very different in style from the others: that of St Margaret. In *The Buildings of England: Dorset*, the architectural historian John Newman, in the Pevsner series, attributes it to A. O. Hemming & Co.

Alfred Octavius Hemming (1843–1907) was himself an accomplished stained-glass artist. Having trained as an architect and worked for the celebrated firm Clayton & Bell, he established his own London studio in 1883. His business continued after his death under Rupert H. Corbould. This also means that the window, made around the 1930s, was not personally designed or manufactured by Alfred Hemming, who had died decades earlier.

There is another fascinating artistic question. Percy Bacon Brothers sometimes manufactured stained glass to designs supplied by other artists, particularly George Fellowes-Prynne himself. A specialist account of Fellowes-Prynne's work at St Paul's attributes the designs of the church windows to the architect.

It is therefore possible that Fellowes-Prynne helped shape the artistic programme of the Lady Chapel, even where the windows were physically made by Bacon's workshop.

Next month we will start examining each window and their inscriptions (some in English, some in Latin) separately, starting with St Margaret.




## St Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin & Martyr
## 25 November

Few saints have left such a colourful legacy as St Catherine of Alexandria. She has a monastery on Mount Sinai, countless paintings, a place among the most popular saints of medieval Europe, and even a firework named after her. Yet there is one intriguing difficulty: modern research questions whether she ever existed.

According to tradition, Catherine was born into a wealthy family in Alexandria, Egypt, towards the end of the third century. Exceptionally well educated, she studied philosophy and became a Christian while still young. When the Roman emperor began persecuting Christians, Catherine boldly confronted him, condemning his cruelty and defending her faith.

The emperor, usually identified in the legend as Maxentius, summoned fifty philosophers to expose her supposed ignorance. Instead, Catherine answered their arguments so persuasively that they converted to Christianity. Enraged, the emperor ordered their execution. He then tried imprisonment, torture and promises of wealth and marriage to make Catherine abandon Christ. She refused, declaring that she had already given herself to her heavenly Bridegroom.

Finally, she was condemned to die on a spiked wheel, designed to tear her body apart. According to the legend, the wheel shattered when she touched it. Catherine was subsequently beheaded, and angels carried her body to Mount Sinai. The famous monastery

there, one of Christianity's oldest continuously inhabited monasteries, bears her name.



It is from this extraordinary episode that we get the Catherine wheel, both the familiar firework and her unmistakable symbol in Christian art. She is often depicted with a broken wheel, a sword, a crown and a book: signs of her martyrdom, noble birth and learning.

Her popularity in the Middle Ages was immense. Students, teachers, philosophers, lawyers and even wheelwrights claimed her as their patron. She was numbered among the Fourteen Holy Helpers, saints especially invoked in times of danger and disease. Pilgrims travelled to Sinai to venerate her relics, while churches throughout Europe were dedicated to her. Most famously, Joan of Arc said that Catherine was one of the heavenly voices guiding her mission.

But historians have found no contemporary evidence for Catherine's life. Detailed accounts appeared centuries after her supposed death. This uncertainty led to her removal from the General Roman Calendar in 1969, although her memorial was later restored in 2002. The Eastern Churches, meanwhile, have maintained a strong devotion to her.

Catherine represents something particularly valuable: the conviction that faith and reason are not enemies. Her intelligence is not surrendered when she becomes a Christian; it becomes an instrument of her witness. And her courage reminds us that truth is not determined by whoever possesses the greatest power. Perhaps that is why her story has endured. Whether we encounter her in stained glass, a medieval manuscript or the spinning sparks of November fireworks, Catherine still challenges us to use both our minds and our courage in the service of Christ.




## Food and the Bible (1)

When we open the Bible, we enter a world in which food plays a surprisingly important role. From the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden to the wedding feast of the Lamb in the Book of Revelation, eating and drinking are woven into the story of salvation. But have you ever wondered what people actually ate in biblical times?

***A world where food was a gift from God*** — One of the most striking features of the Jewish religion was its wonderfully practical understanding of God's goodness. Unlike certain ancient philosophies that regarded the material world as inferior or even evil, the Jewish people believed that creation was fundamentally good. The earth, its plants, its animals and everything necessary for human life were gifts from a generous Creator. And so eating was not simply a biological necessity for Jewish people. It was an opportunity to acknowledge God's goodness and give thanks.

The Jewish people developed a rich tradition of blessings associated with eating and drinking. Before enjoying food, they acknowledged the God who provided it; after eating, they gave thanks for what they had received. When the Gospels describe Jesus taking bread, blessing it, breaking it and distributing it, he is acting within a deeply rooted Jewish tradition.

***Bread: the heart of every meal*** — If we could travel back to first-century Palestine and sit down at an ordinary family's table, one thing would be certain: there would be bread. Bread was not merely an accompaniment to a meal. It was the meal's foundation. In Hebrew, the expression for eating bread could simply mean eating a meal.

Bread was so important that people treated it with considerable respect. It was considered improper to place raw meat upon it, to put a hot dish directly on top of it, or carelessly to throw away its crumbs. Even small pieces were worth gathering.

There were important differences between the bread eaten by the poor and that enjoyed by wealthier households. Poor families commonly ate barley bread, which was cheaper but coarser and less desirable than wheat bread. Wealthier people preferred bread made from fine wheat flour. This distinction appears in the Gospel account of the feeding of the five thousand. St John specifically tells us that the boy who offered his lunch had five *barley* loaves and two fish (John 6:9). It is a small but revealing detail: this was the simple food of an ordinary, probably poor, family.

Flour was generally prepared at home. Grain was ground between two stones, often by women, in a process that required considerable effort. The finest flour could be used for special cakes, pastries and offerings, while coarser flour produced the everyday loaf.

The dough was prepared in a wooden trough and usually left to rise with a little fermented dough retained from an earlier batch. This was similar to the use of a sourdough starter today. Jesus refers to precisely this process when he compares the Kingdom of Heaven to yeast that a woman mixes into a large quantity of flour until the whole batch is leavened (Matthew 13:33).

For Passover, however, bread had to be made without leaven, recalling the haste with which the Israelites departed from Egypt. This was the unleavened bread that Jesus and his disciples would have known from the Passover tradition.

Bread was commonly shaped into flat, round loaves. The dough might be baked in a small clay oven or directly against a heated surface. Bread was generally baked frequently because it quickly became stale, especially in warm weather. In some households it would have been baked every day or two. Imagine the smell of freshly baked flatbread filling the little streets of Nazareth in the early morning. It would have been one of the most familiar smells of Jesus' childhood. *(Source: Henri Daniel-Rops, Daily Life in Palestine at the Time of Christ)*

# Finnish Salmon Soup (Lohikeitto)



A week or so ago, I prepared this traditional Finnish salmon soup for the first time. It is creamy and delicious, and fresh dill gives the whole dish its distinctive character. Unlike many creamy soups, it remains surprisingly light. The secret is not to overcook the salmon and to add the dill only at the very end. Served with good rye bread and butter, it makes a lovely, satisfying meal.

**Ingredients:** 500 g skinless, boneless salmon fillet; 500 g potatoes, peeled and diced; 2 medium carrots (about 180 g), sliced; 1 large leek, thoroughly washed and sliced; 20 g butter; 800 ml fish stock (or vegetable stock); 200 ml cream (single, double, oat, soya… whatever you prefer); 2 bay leaves; 5–6 whole allspice berries (optional; I didn't have any); at least 30 g fresh dill, finely chopped; salt and white pepper; 1–2 tsp lemon juice (optional). Serves four.

**Method:** Melt the butter in a large saucepan over a medium-low heat. Add the sliced leek and cook gently for 4–5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened. Add the carrots, potatoes, bay leaves and allspice berries. Pour in the stock, bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 12–15 minutes, until the vegetables are just tender. The potatoes should hold their shape rather than begin to disintegrate.

Meanwhile, cut the salmon into generous pieces. Once the vegetables are cooked, stir in the cream and bring the soup back to a very gentle simmer. Add the salmon and cook for 4–6 minutes, depending on the thickness of the pieces, until just cooked through. Avoid boiling vigorously, as this can make the fish dry and cause it to break apart. Remove the bay leaves and allspice berries. Stir in the fresh dill, season with salt and white pepper, and add a little lemon juice if desired. (*Apologies for the photos, they were taken for my "diet diary". In the photo on the opposite side ignore the creamy mushroom-chicken stew next to the pulled pork and the sweet potatoes… that's for next time perhaps.*)

# BBQ Pulled Pork with Roasted Sweet Potatoes



This is one of those (many) dishes which I always make in my Ninja using the pressure cooker, which achieves in little over an hour what would otherwise take most of the day.

**Ingredients:** 1.5–1.6 kg boneless pork shoulder; 1½ tsp salt; 2 tsp smoked paprika; 1½ tsp garlic granules; 1 tsp onion granules; 1 tsp black pepper; 2 tbsp dark brown sugar; 1 tbsp oil. For cooking: 250 ml apple juice; 100 ml water; 1 tbsp HP sauce; 1 tbsp rice vinegar. For the BBQ sauce: 200 g tomato ketchup; 80 g dark brown sugar; 65 g honey; 2 tbsp HP sauce; 2 tbsp rice vinegar; 2 tsp Dijon mustard; 2 tsp smoked paprika; 1 tsp garlic granules; ½ tsp onion granules; ½ tsp black pepper; 150 ml strained, degreased cooking liquid. For the sweet potatoes: 4 medium sweet potatoes; olive oil; salt, pepper, dried herbs.

**Method:** Remove the rind from the pork. Mix the salt, paprika, garlic, onion, pepper and sugar, then rub into the meat. Heat the oil in the Ninja using Sear/Sauté and brown the pork for 2–3 minutes on each side. Pour in the apple juice, water, HP sauce and vinegar. Pressure-cook on HIGH pressure for 70 mins, followed by 20 mins of natural pressure release. Remove the pork, allow it to rest, then shred.

Meanwhile, combine the BBQ sauce ingredients, adding 150 ml of the strained cooking liquid. Simmer for 10 mins until thickened. Mix generously into the shredded pork, reserving some sauce for serving, and cook for another 3–5 minutes.

Wash the sweet potatoes and cut them lengthways. Score the cut surfaces diagonally in both directions, without cutting through the skins. Brush with olive oil and season with salt, pepper and herbs.

Pour 250 ml water into the Ninja pot and place the potatoes cut-side up in the Cook & Crisp basket. Select Steam Air Fry at 200°C for 20–25 minutes, until tender. For more caramelisation, finish on Air Fry at 200°C for another 5–8 minutes. Serve the sweet potatoes alongside generous portions of pulled pork, spooning over a little extra warm BBQ sauce.




## Know the Bible! - Ecclesiastes

*(© bibleproject)*

The Book of Ecclesiastes is one of the most unusual books of the Bible. While much of Scripture encourages us with promises of hope and blessing, Ecclesiastes confronts us with uncomfortable questions. Why do good people suffer while the wicked prosper? What is the point of working hard when everything we achieve will eventually disappear? And how can we find happiness in a world where so much lies beyond our control?

Ecclesiastes belongs to the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. Its central character is called *Qoheleth*, a Hebrew word meaning someone who gathers people together to teach them. Traditionally identified with King Solomon, *Qoheleth* may also represent a later teacher adopting Solomon's voice. Interestingly, the book contains two distinct voices: the Teacher, who explores life's mysteries, and an anonymous author who introduces his teaching and draws the final conclusions.

The Teacher's message begins with a startling declaration: *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* The Hebrew word translated as "vanity" is *hevel*, whose basic meaning is vapour or smoke. This is important because the Teacher is not simply claiming that life is meaningless. Rather, he describes it as fleeting, unpredictable and difficult to grasp. Like smoke, life appears substantial, but when we try to hold on to it, it slips through our fingers.

Consider how much effort we invest in building successful lives. We pursue careers, accumulate possessions, seek recognition and plan for a comfortable future. Yet time continues its relentless march. Civilisations rise and fall, fortunes disappear, and even our greatest

achievements are eventually forgotten. Death makes no distinction between rich and poor, wise and foolish, powerful and powerless. Whatever our circumstances, we all share the same human destiny.

Even wisdom and righteousness offer no guarantee of happiness. The Book of Proverbs generally teaches that wise and virtuous living brings blessings, but Ecclesiastes reminds us that reality is more complicated. Good people sometimes suffer terribly, while dishonest people enjoy prosperity. We cannot explain every injustice or control every outcome. The world does not always operate according to our expectations.

Does this mean that we should abandon hope and simply pursue pleasure? Quite the opposite. Surprisingly, Ecclesiastes repeatedly encourages us to enjoy life's ordinary blessings: a good meal, friendship, family, meaningful work and the warmth of the sunshine. These things are not insignificant distractions from life's deeper purpose. They are gifts from God, to be received with gratitude rather than taken for granted.

The secret is learning to accept that we cannot control everything. Much of our unhappiness comes from expecting life to unfold according to our plans. When reality disappoints us, we become frustrated or resentful. Ecclesiastes invites us instead to live faithfully in the present, appreciating what God gives us without demanding certainty about tomorrow.

The book concludes with a powerful reminder: *"Fear God, and keep his commandments."* This does not mean living in terror of God, but recognising his authority and trusting his wisdom. We may not understand life's apparent injustices, but we can trust that God will ultimately bring everything into judgment. Evil will not have the final word.

For Christians, this hope finds its fulfilment in Jesus Christ. His Resurrection reveals that death, which Ecclesiastes sees as the great equaliser, is not the end of our story. God's justice and mercy extend beyond the limits of our earthly existence. Ecclesiastes therefore offers neither despair nor easy optimism. It teaches humility before life's mysteries, gratitude for its blessings and faithfulness amid uncertainty.

# The Psalms

*Psalm 66: Through suffering to thanksgiving*

Psalm 66 begins with a joyful summons to the whole world: *"O be joyful in God, all ye lands: sing praises unto the honour of his Name."* It celebrates God's mighty deeds and his faithfulness to his people. Yet beneath its joyful opening lies a profound reflection on suffering and deliverance. The psalm moves from the praise of the whole congregation to the thanksgiving of an individual worshipper. These two parts belong together: what God has accomplished for his people throughout history is also experienced in the life of each believer.

The opening verses proclaim God's majesty and irresistible power. But his glory is revealed above all through his saving acts. The psalmist invites the congregation: *"O come hither, and behold the works of God: how wonderful he is in his doing toward the children of men."* He recalls two decisive events in Israel's history: the crossing of the Red Sea and the passage through the Jordan. These were not simply remarkable occurrences belonging to a distant past. Whenever Israel gathered for worship, it remembered God's deliverance as the foundation of its own existence. The God who rescued their ancestors remained present and active among them.

Yet the psalm does not present salvation as an easy journey. Its joyful praise suddenly gives way to the memory of severe trials: *"For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried."* Silver is purified through fire, and God's people have likewise passed through oppression, humiliation and danger. *"We went through fire and water: and thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."* The road to freedom has led through suffering.

This is one of the psalm's deepest insights. God's faithfulness does not mean that his people will be spared every trial. Rather, suffering itself can become part of the mysterious process through which God purifies and delivers them. Israel's history reveals divine grace working through human weakness and adversity. For Christians, this points towards Christ, whose victory over death was accomplished

through the Cross. The way of salvation is also the *via crucis*, the way of the Cross.

In the second half, an individual worshipper steps forward to offer thanksgiving. Having endured distress and prayed for deliverance, he now comes into God's house to fulfil his vows: *"I will go into thine house with burnt-offerings: and will pay thee my vows."* His experience mirrors the history of Israel: he too has been brought through suffering by God's mercy.

His thanksgiving, however, is not merely private. *"O come hither, and hearken, all ye that fear God: and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."* Personal gratitude becomes public testimony, strengthening the faith of the congregation. The psalm then reminds us that sincere prayer requires a heart turned towards God, rather than one deliberately attached to sin.

Psalm 66 teaches us to recognise God's faithfulness both in salvation history and in our own lives. Our sufferings need not be meaningless, our prayers are never merely private, and our thanksgiving belongs to the worship of the whole Church. We praise the God who leads his people through suffering into the freedom of his grace.

### *Reflective questions*

1. Can I recognise God's presence and faithfulness even during periods of suffering or uncertainty?
2. Do I see life's trials as occasions of spiritual growth?
3. How often do I share with others the ways in which God has helped me?
4. Do I approach prayer with sincerity, repentance and trust in God's grace?

***Prayer*** — *Almighty God, who led your people through the waters into freedom, and through suffering into the joy of salvation, strengthen our faith when we face trials. Purify our hearts, teach us to trust in your mercy, and help us to recognise your saving hand in our lives. May our thanksgiving join the praise of your whole Church, 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

You are warmly invited to join us for worship at St Paul’s and Fleet. Whether you are a long-time member, a visitor, or simply exploring faith, you will always find a place among us.

*All are welcome.*



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