

Outlook



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Welcome from the Outlook Editor

Miranda Reading

Welcome to the Easter edition of Outlook!

Christ has risen, Alleluia! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

The bells ring out exultantly as the light comes back into the world. Easter is the most important season in the life of the Church with the central miracle being that Christ has risen from the dead. Risen from the dead to save all of us. What a wonderful moment of pure happiness!

We now enter the season of Eastertide and St Martin has an article for us on the liturgical traditions of Eastertide on page 10-11. We all have reason to celebrate at this joyful time. We will be able to feast after our Lenten strictures and sit down with family and friends. Let us not forget at this time those who have no-one with which to rejoice for whatever reason and extend the hand of welcome where we are able.

We have a lot in this edition of Outlook. Tim Rollin explores the fascinating history of the Prince Bishops of Durham on pages 15-19, Sardinia Ma writes about ancient astronomy on page 23-24 and David Hudson continues his series on Ignatius of Loyola on pages 28-30.

Could you contribute something to the magazine? Do send us your thoughts, your prayers and your stories. All contributions welcome, large or small. All contributions and comments by 16th May 2026 please to MirandaAtStMartins@gmail.com. Thank you.



Member Editor 2025
Association for Church Editors



Fr Robert Writes....

'THE GAME'S AFOOT: FOLLOW YOUR SPIRIT, AND UPON THIS CHARGE. CRY 'GOD FOR HARRY, ENGLAND, AND SAINT GEORGE!'

Dear Friends,

For seven years I was parish priest of a church dedicated to St George, and during every one of those seven years I would go on Radio Nottingham to tell the listeners all about our patron saint. Every year I would dread it. My only media appearance would consist of me debunking myths and pointing out humbug; not very edifying. I would attempt each year to 'connect' the legend with real life, and speak about the dragon being symbolic of the battles we all face at times.

However, 5 years ago on St George's Day, I faced not so much a battle as yet another wait, (although wrestling with silence and perceived inactivity is, I would now argue, a constant battle).

This wait was for a call from my surgeon, regarding how much disbowelling was to happen, how much chemo, how much of whatever would lay ahead. Perhaps, unusually for the much maligned dear old NHS, the surgeon, true to his word, rang me at 11.30am. He explained that, as

yet, they had no clear plan as I was, quote, “an oddity” (no comments please!). “Hmmm,” I thought, how does one take that analysis?

Consequently, they were sending my results to another specialist hospital which had the expertise they felt was required to produce the best treatment ‘roadmap’. He wanted me to go for an MRI scan in between time, and the hospital would be in touch. He apologised for what may feel like a longer wait. Being terribly, British, I thanked him for his honesty, willingness to say he didn’t know, and for ringing when he said he would. All that was true, but so, too, was the intense feeling of ‘I want this sorting out now!!!’ Shakespeare was right, ‘Such outward things dwell not in my desires.’



In a strange way the season of Easter is one long wait, 50 days, until wham bam, Pentecost and the accompanying Holy Spirit arrive. This seems odd since Easter is often seen as the culmination of everything, when death is finally defeated and love conquers hate, but then there’s still Pentecost.

The waiting I experienced before I began my chemo treatment, and the feelings that went along with it are shared by thousands of people every day. Hospitals are full of people gazing expectantly at the mobile phones for *that* call or for the promised specialist to appear at the end of their bed. This waiting game is hard, it is no wonder St Paul listed patience as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit; we need God’s help with the wait.

Therefore, one could ask, is Easter just a quick distraction as we return to everyday life, waiting for the next ‘thing’? In the case of the Church’s Calander, ‘Pentecost’, or perhaps a wee feast day here and there, like St

George on the 23rd April to keep us going. We of course have to say, “No”, but why.

The ancients, inside and outside of the Church, referred to being ‘schooled’ in things. The implication was that this was not simply a piece of information imparted, but rather something that forms our being, helps make us who we are. Hence in the Church we do not simply celebrate Easter, we become an ‘Easter People’. This, the ancients knew, takes time, but ultimately we grow.

Being Easter People reorientates us towards God and at the same time enables us to orient the world with its many meanings and questions. C. S. Lewis, he of Narnia fame, once said, ‘I believe in Christ, like I believe in the sun — not because I can see it, but by it I can see everything else.’ Easter faith produces ways of seeing everything else and that the story never ends. Pentecost will come, so too those wee feasts, and all the time continually schooled we find faith in surprising places: empty tombs, hospital beds and a Roman soldier from Cappadocia, patron of the English.

As I said, I was always a pains to share something about St George that lifted our eyes beyond the Game, England and Harry. Here was a man who faith was schooled in waiting and conflict, schooled in faith, here was an ‘Easter person’.

I hope and pray that wherever you find yourself or whatever you are waiting for the hope of Easter will resonate with you in those moments.

Enjoy this time, enjoy waiting,

Your friend and vicar,

Fr Robert



Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage

Monday 3rd – Friday 7th August 2026

Join the parishes of St Thomas', Hanwell and St Martin's, Ruislip for the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage, a week of lively worship, teaching, fellowship and fun for **11-18 year olds**.

Please **reserve a space by 10 May 2026**.

If interested, email: rowlandlinder@gmail.com and alexanderhinchapman@gmail.com

Dates for your Diary!

April 2026

Monday 27th April ACPM

May 2026

Saturday 9th May Sponsored walk in aid of the Chancel Roof. Walk from Windsor Castle to Ruislip (14 miles). Walk the whole way or a leg of it. More details from Fr. Joe

Thursday 14th May Ascension Day. Mass at 9.30am and 7.30pm.

Sunday 24th May Pentecost. Masses at 8am, 9.15am and 11.15am.

June 2026

Thursday 4th June Corpus Christi. Confirmation mass at 7.30pm.

Monday 22nd June Fr. Joe's First Mass at 7.30pm

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Ask St Martin

Dear St Martin,

What is Eastertide and the liturgical traditions and symbolism surrounding it?

Dear Friends,

Eastertide is a wonderful celebration in the church; it is packed full of festivals and has lots of symbolism reflected within it too.

The first major festival we come to is the Easter Vigil, held on Saturday night (or, in some parishes, very early Sunday morning, before dawn). An Easter fire is lit and blessed, from which the Paschal candle is then lit. Once the Paschal candle is brought inside, the Exultet is then sung, which is a formal announcement of Jesus' resurrection, and we reflect on the Paschal candle and how it shares not only its light with us but also how Christ shares his light with us. Following that we hear a selection of readings and psalms which allows us to reflect on how God has always cared for his people, such as taking them out of slavery in Egypt. This especially allows us to reflect on how at Easter, God takes his people out of the slavery of Sin and breaks the prison bars of death as he brings us into the new life.

Before we gather around the altar for the liturgy of the eucharist, we remember our own baptism as we splash ourselves with the water of baptism. Here at St Martin's, we keep the wonderful and ancient tradition of

filling the font ready for the Easter Vigil and then keeping and using that Holy Water through the following year for baptisms, for sprinklings, and when we receive a body in church at the start of a funeral. All the times that we remember our own baptism.

As we move from the font towards the altar for the liturgy of the eucharist, we recite the litany of the saints. We do this so that we remind ourselves that we not only worship alone, but also with the great company of saints that have gone before and now pray for us in heaven.

We also decorate the church with flowers ready for Easter. We do this, not only as we have been in the season of Lent, a period where there are no flowers, but also it is another way we remember the new life springing up from the resurrection. It is quite traditional to use lots of lilies at this time as lilies also represent purity; however many churches have moved away from using lilies, as it is common for people to be allergic to them. Here at St Martin's, we also have the custom of having an Easter Garden in the church, which helps to focus our minds throughout the Easter season on the new growth and life we gain on Easter day, and how that continues far beyond a single day.

The Easter liturgy is filled with so much symbolism which we traditionally keep to help us call to mind and reflect on what is happening.

I hope these words help you with your Easter devotions, and give you plenty to think about as we approach that most wonderful of days.

With my sincerest thoughts and prayers,

Sanctus Martinus Turonensis

Saint Martin of Tours (with a little secretarial help from Fr. Joe Grogan)



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printers of Outlook - the St Martin's parish magazine

Raising the Roof for the Future!

After years of service to the community, the time has come to ensure our church remains a safe, welcoming place for community activities, marking key moments in family life, worship, fellowship, and service. But we can't do it alone – we need your support - help us to raise the roof!



Why We Need Your Help:

- Our roof is showing signs of wear and tear, risking potential damage to our church
- Protecting our church is essential for continuing our mission and serving the community
- Your contribution will fund the necessary repairs, ensuring the safety and longevity of our space
- We have already been awarded a grant from the

diocese for £30,000 and are able to fund £20,000 from reserves, but this still leaves £74,365 to raise.

How You Can Help:

- We will continue to seek additional grants towards this shortfall, but please do consider a generous donation to help ensure the future survival of our ancient church building
- Spread the Word – Share this campaign with friends and family to help us reach our goal

Ways to Give:

- Donate here via the website
- Donate directly at the Parish Office with reference to fundraising for the chancel roof
- Bank transfer: Account Name: ST MARTINS CHURCH
Account Number: 00525022 Sort Code: 40-11-58

Prayer for Easter

Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate
Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen
Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing
Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty
Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,
the first of the sleepers,
Glory and power are his forever and ever.

- *St. Hippolytus of Rome*



The Prince Bishops of Durham

By Tim Rollin

“There are two kings in England, namely the Lord King of England, wearing a crown in sign of his regality and the Lord Bishop of Durham wearing a mitre in place of a crown, in sign of his regality in the diocese of Durham.”
Anthony Bek, Prince Bishop of Durham (1284-1311).

The Prince Bishops of Durham had enormous power. They could hold their own parliaments, raise their own armies, appoint justices, levy taxes and mint their own coins. They were also very wealthy, since apart from their taxes, they could levy duties on mining, and had other revenue-creating rights. They really had the power of life and death over the local inhabitants. The question arises, why were the Prince Bishops created? The simple answer is they were meant to defend the north of England against the Scots while the King was otherwise occupied. As with most simple answers, there are many more questions raised than answered, chief amongst which are: why did the King trust the bishops to act selflessly to protect his interests, why were they created in the way they were, why was the church involved and did the system really work?

Answers to these questions can only be found in the convoluted and violent history of Northumbria, which is today represented by the counties of Durham and Northumberland. William the Conqueror's less than total grip on the north of England meant that many decisions had to be made quickly, so were the result of local circumstance, where frequently the status quo was an easier option.

Those amongst us who were born and raised in the south of England may well never have considered that the north is indeed another country. Certainly, Durham and Northumberland are unique. Their history is intricately bound up with that of Northumbria, which in its heyday was one of the most powerful of the English kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon times. At its height, Northumbria was a nation stretching from the Firth of Forth in the

North to the Humber in the south. In the 8th century, it enjoyed what may be thought of as its golden period, when Christianity was being spread amongst the inhabitants by the likes of Saint Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede, who, in his monastic cell in the related monasteries of Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, was also writing his celebrated 'Ecclesiastical History of the English People'. This history became and still is, a basic source for historians of the early English, though they have to be careful not to confuse 'fact' and 'myth'.

The 8th to 11th centuries, before the Norman Conquest, were turbulent times for the English. Any peace was constantly being disturbed by internal divisions, Danish invaders, Viking raids, as well as frequent incursions and occasional invasions by the Scots.



Danes and Vikings tend to be treated in history and in popular belief as two distinct peoples or nations, but in fact they were very closely related. Danes are part of Scandinavia as are Norway and Sweden. Vikings can be thought of as the piratical arm of the Scandinavians. Their objective was to plunder the territories they raided, and not necessarily settle there, though that often did happen. The Danes' objective was to settle in the land they invaded in search of living space.

The Danish invasions were so difficult to deal with that King Ethelred (of unready fame) had to try to buy them off by the payment of ransom, resulting in Danish settlements on English soil which were subject to a different legal system (known as Danelaw) from that of the English. At one time the whole of Yorkshire was Danish territory subject to Danelaw. In Northumbria, Danelaw and Northumbrian justice developed an uneasy compromise where it depended largely upon the relative power of Danish and Northumbrian settlements as to which system was followed. Northumbria was never officially subject to Danish rule.

The Viking raids began in 793 on Lindisfarne (Holy Island) on the northeast coast, where its open sandy beaches were particularly vulnerable to them.



St Cuthbert's Cross

This was why Saint Cuthbert's body which had been buried there, and had become a place of pilgrimage, was taken by the monks of Lindisfarne on its long journey firstly to Chester-le-Street and then to its final resting place in Durham Cathedral once it had been built. By the beginning of the 11th century, before the Norman Conquest, Northumbria was a shadow of its former self. Danish invasions and Viking raids had sapped its strength. Northumbria was conquered by King Athelstan to become part of England in 927, and in 944, he converted the Northumbrian 'kingdom' into an earldom.

The Earl of Northumbria whose family had long been based in Bamborough on the northeast coast, had significant regal powers over his people. However, Northumbria still felt itself to be spiritually and culturally a separate country from England.

Everything in Anglo-Saxon England changed with the Norman invasion of 1066. The Danes continued fighting in the north but their efforts were becoming half-hearted, eventually ending in their making a deal with William the Conqueror to go home in 1069. Yet Durham and Northumberland continued to fight hard for their independence, although they realised that the Normans were too strong to be met in pitched battles so settled for more guerilla-like tactics. Northumbria became the melting-pot in which the advancing Normans from the south and the expanding incursions from the Picts and Scots in the north met. William finally overcame Yorkshire and severely damaged Durham by laying the land waste and murdering the people. Many starved or were forced into slavery. Some have termed that period of savagery in Yorkshire as genocide. But it must have worked for William, since Yorkshire became part of the Norman empire.

Yet the Normans realised that Northumbria was a different story, and would be a difficult nut to crack. The Domesday Book, when it was finally completed in 1086, excluded any detail of Durham and Northumberland. The Danes had gone, most of England had been subdued, what more need William do? Of course! The Scots, always a thorn in the side of the English, and now also of the Anglo-Normans. Maybe two birds could be killed with one stone: turn the tiresome Northumbrians into allies at the same time as defending the nation against the Scots.

This is where the Bishop of Durham takes centre stage. Durham, which was founded in 995 is centred on a virtually impregnable promontory with sheer sides, defended on three flanks by the River Wear. The Cathedral was in the process of being built and the bishop's palace was in Durham Castle. The two most powerful individuals in Durham at this time were the Earl of Northumberland and the Bishop of Durham. The Bishop of Durham had traditionally been elected by a college of monks, descended from the monks of Holy Island who had founded Durham Cathedral. However, after the conquest, William was not willing to let this custom continue and took upon himself the task of appointing the bishop. This would allow him to control one of the two and to an extent, bypass the powerful family of the Earl. His first appointment was in 1071 when the last Anglo-Saxon bishop of Durham, Aethelwine died and William Walcher of Lorraine (a Frenchman) was appointed. Walcher was effectively the first Prince Bishop of Durham.

Walcher was also appointed Earl of Northumberland, so he had the spiritual and executive powers of both roles. Occasionally during the period of the Prince Bishops, the two roles were combined, but this was not the general rule. Subsequent appointments continued to benefit the political aspirations of the Bishop of Durham, though these were mostly limited to the county of Durham itself. The Earl of Northumberland had to be satisfied with what was left of Northumbria. To preserve the status quo, a 'governor' of Northumbria could be either the Earl of Northumbria or the Bishop of Durham. It was clearly important from William's point of view to try to limit the Earl's powers. He was the more likely of the two to resent any attempts to reduce that power. The Prince Bishop being William's creation, owed his loyalty as

much to William as to God, for just as William appointed them, so too might he dismiss them. No doubt corruption existed from time to time, but so long as the Prince Bishops carried out their primary task of protecting the north country from the Scots, they were safe in their posts.

The list of Prince Bishops over the generations is a lengthy one covering the period from 1071 to 1836, though the powers of the Prince Bishops were steadily being whittled away after Bishop Tunstall accepted the religious reforms brought about during the Reformation in 1559. The longevity of the system is an indication that it was effective. Certainly from 1071 until the Reformation there was no real need or demand for change.

I was in the Chorister School of Durham Cathedral in the mid-fifties, where the four 'houses' were named after prince bishops. The mere atmosphere of the College Close and its buildings, the clergy scurrying about looking holy, the regular visits to the Cathedral for church services, walking (not running) in the cloisters, had made a deep impression on me, and to an extent fixed in me my impressions of a Christian life.

Sir Walter Scott expressed it so much better:
*Grey towers of Durham
Yet well I love thy mixed and
massive piles
Half church of God, half castle
'gainst the Scot
And long to roam those
venerable aisles
With records stored of deeds
long since forgot.*



Durham Cathedral from Durham School Chapel Hill



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14 MILES – WALK ONE LEG OR THE WHOLE WAY

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Bookworm

Who do we think they were?

By Valery Cowley

Silently podding lentils (slivers of green felt) as I was playing Billah, Rachel's maid-slave in 'Jacob's Ladder' by Laurence Housman, at Halifax Playhouse in 1962, I began my quest to explore the often ignored or misrepresented women in the Bible. I did not know that Billah became Jacob's concubine and bore for Rachel, his barren wife, Dan and Naphtali, who became two of Israel's twelve tribes.



Billah Rachel Leah Zilpah

Joan Taylor and Helen Bond have focussed on Jesus' Female Disciples in 'Women Remembered' (2023) with its helpful further reading suggestions. Where and who were the various anonymous myrrh-bearing women featured in icons? Joanna, in red, from Luke's account, features at the back our St Michael's Resurrection window (see my guidebook on our stained glass).

Where and who were the women who do not appear in Last Supper paintings?

Mary of Magdala is a composite, confusing figure, variously portrayed in film and in a study by Susan Haskins (1993).

Paula Gooder in 'Phoebe', Paul's deacon and benefactor, and 'Lydia', a well-to-do disciple in Acts, has written readable and scholarly re-settings of our picture of early Christian women. Junia, the widow Prisca and Tabitha, resurrected by St Peter, are also being examined.



Jesus' mother has had much attention, though we only glimpse her in the New Testament. With Salome, a midwife, Mary features in the 'prequel' to the Gospels, the second century Protoevangelium of James. Mary's cult as an impossible ideal has even been used to control and repress women.

Kate Cooper's 'Band of Angels': The Forgotten World of Early Christian Women' (2013) is worth seeking out.

Divine Proclamation By Sardinia Ma



For over two thousand years, China was ruled from a centralised court with civil service departments managing affairs in the Kingdom. One of them was Astronomy. A team of astronomers observed the sky each day and reported to the emperor of any unusual signs; as rulers believed they ruled by the Mandate of Heaven and they acted accordingly to the signs given.

From the Imperial archives in year 5 BC The Annals of Han Dynasty* - the Department of Astronomy recorded:- *“In the 2nd year of the Jaiping period, 2nd month, a Huixing Star, a Comet or a Nova appears near Altair, it remains*

visible for more than 70 days”. Did the time match the descriptions in the Bible of bright stars in sky, caravans of shepherds, three wise men from the East and the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem?

In the year 33 AD in the month of April, the Chronicles of Emperor Guang Wu – The Day of Gui Hai* - recorded these: - “The eclipse of Gui Hai – the sun was eclipsed, the sun and moon were veiled together, heaven and earth became dark as ink”. It was a supernatural darkness that covered the world at noon.

This strange darkness alarmed Emperor Guang Wu as the ancient Chinese believed it was a sign the heaven was angry. He wrote: - *“The Ying and Yang had wrongly exchanged, the sun and moon have been obscured, the sins of the people are now on the head of one man”**. In order to calm the public he granted amnesty to his subjects. He didn't know that thousands of

miles away near Jerusalem Jesus died on the cross to redeem the sins of the world.

3 days later in the Annals under entry of Bing Yin*, it noted: - *“The Astronomers recorded a radiant halo, like a rainbow surrounding the sun”*. The Ancient Chinese believed a solar halo carries deep meaning of reconciliation between heaven and earth. Was that the day the body of Jesus disappeared from the tomb?

How amazing that a pagan king of the East saw the signs. I believe God wanted the whole world to know that Jesus came to this world to redeem our sins. God’s love and mercy for humanity transcends race, border and creed. Light and goodness always overcome darkness and evil. In this turbulent and increasingly lawless world, more than ever we need to pray for a fair, decent, compassionate and peaceful world.



* Christian Way and ancient manuscripts of the Annals of Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) Astronomy Dept.

A Whirling Wonder! By Geoff Smith

Whenever visiting a city in the UK, I always try to attend Evensong in the Cathedral. As a chorister it was my favourite service, not only for the variety of wonderful settings for the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis plus responses but also the opportunity to sing an anthem. A regular haunt is St Georges at Windsor, which never disappoints. When travelling it is somewhat more difficult, although I was privileged to have communion at St. Peters in Rome and likewise at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre after following the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem was a special moment too.



I was pleasantly surprised therefore to experience a different type of service recently in central Turkey. With 90% of the population being Muslim I attended a Sema ceremony which was very tranquil and spiritual. Founded by Mevlana Celaleddin-Rumi (1207-1273) a poet, Islamic scholar and Sufi mystic, whose tomb I had seen in Konya, he initiated the form of ritual

meditation. Now I've been to shows featuring Flamenco dancers in Spain and Fado singers in Portugal but the Sema was no tourist attraction but a serious service.

Mevlana maintained that contemporary science confirms that the fundamental condition of our existence is to revolve. He maintained there is no object, or being, which does not revolve, and the commonality amongst humans is the revolution of the electrons and protons in their atoms, which constitute all things from the smallest particles to the stars in the sky. As a consequence of this belief, everything revolves and man carries on his life, his very existence by means of the revelation of his atoms, in the structural elements of his body. The circulation of our blood originates from the earth

and returns to it by revolving with the earth itself. All of these are, he claimed, natural, unconscious revolutions. Man however is the possessor of a mind and intelligence which distinguishes him from, and makes him superior to other beings. Thus the whirling dervishes cause their minds to participate in a shared similarity and revolution of all other beings. The ceremony represents a mystical journey of man's spiritual ascent through the mind and love to perfection. Turning towards the truth, a dervish grows through love, deserts his ego, finds the truth and arrives at "Perfection" enabling the service to all creation and all creatures without discrimination in regard to belief, class or race.

The five dervishes wore tall felt head-dresses (representing the ego's tombstone), white skirts (representing the ego's shroud) and are spiritually born to the truth by removing their black coats (their human body) and holding their arms in a crisscross position, they represent the number one and testify to God's unity. They take a little while to get going but gradually their arms unfold, the right one directed towards the sky ready to receive God's beneficence whilst gazing up, the left points toward the earth as they turn in an anti-clockwise direction pivoting around the heart. This is their way of conveying God's spiritual gift to the people and embracing divine watchfulness for all mankind and all creation with affection and love.



Like most religious services, the Sema consists of different sections. It starts with a eulogy sung hauntingly by one of three musicians, followed by a drum symbolizing the divine order of the creator. Then follows an instrumental improvised on a reed flute. The dervishes then greet each other (several times) and once in a hypnotic state begin to whirl. This section was quite mesmerising and tranquil until finally the ceremony ended with a prayer for peace of the souls of all prophets and believers. After completion of the Sema all dervishes return silently to their cells for meditation.

I came away uplifted, and although I understood little of what was going on, felt privileged to have attended. Although I enjoyed the experience, it was not a patch on the BCP morning mass on a Sunday at St Martins where whirling is definitely not on the agenda!



Contributed by Pawprint

Pathways in Spirituality

By David Hudson

Two Paths, One Gospel – Finding God in All Things

Franciscan spirituality has a beautiful instinct: God is close — very close: in creation, in people, (especially among those who are overlooked – the least, the last, the poor, the oppressed); but always very close to everyone. St Francis could call the sun and moon “brother” and “sister” because he saw the world as gift, not as a ‘background noise’ to life.

In one way or another we can all feel this very special closeness - a precious closeness that we all seek, and can find. St Bonaventure talked of God’s “vestiges” being imprinted throughout creation; the beauty, form and content of the divine artist being left as signs of God’s presence action and outpouring love. And this spiritual connection to God, expressed by Augustin of Hippo “My heart is restless until it finds its rest in you”.

Ignatian spirituality shares that same warmth and closeness, but adds a simple question:

Where is God meeting me today — in this real life, as it is?

For Ignatius, “finding God in all things” did not mean that everything is easy, or everything that happens is God’s will. Rather, that God is present and at work in the ordinary moments of life, and even in the hard ones, but always drawing us towards love and communion.

Sometimes it is as simple as noticing a quiet peace while helping a neighbour, a nudge to apologise, or a deep gratitude during a walk. Sometimes it is recognising God’s strength when we feel weak, feeling warm and content when we



are resting or feel our spirits rise when we hear a moving piece of music.

One of the most practical ways of growing in this “finding God in all things” is to cultivate attentiveness – **pay attention** to the current moment? Practice pausing for a moment and asking:

What am I feeling right now?
Where did I give love today?
Where did I hold back?
What am I grateful for?

“Paying attention to” sounds like quite a small action - but it’s a doorway to cultivating a growing loving relationship by having a real attentive presence:

- allowing time to get to know another
- being patient as the friendship deepens
- a desire to truly want to know God and our fellow Christians
- being humble and free from pride and arrogance
- and recognizing our own faults.



When we truly pay attention, we stop treating someone as a task, a problem to solve, a background character in our daily life. We allow them to become real, accepted, and loved. We notice what is real, for example another person’s face, their tiredness or joy, the worry behind their words, and what is happening to ourselves; perhaps an irritation, a warm affection, a sadness and so on.

Love starts with a choice – I’m going to pay attention to you – I’m going to notice you – I would like to get to know you – both in a physical and spiritual sense, with people you meet and with God.

Finding God in all things begins with paying attention, because, paying attention is the doorway to being grateful, and gratitude helps us to recognize God's presence in ordinary life.

Over time, daily life itself can become like a continuous prayer: the kettle boiling, the school run, the commute, the hospital visit, the conversation you didn't want to have. In these situations a quick arrow prayer or breath prayer may help: "Lord, help me see you here." Or, in Franciscan spirit: "Thank you for this gift — show me how to love." And when we begin to notice God's presence more clearly, a new question follows: How do I respond?

This leads us into our next theme: discernment — learning how to choose the good and right way of living, the way of Jesus - when several paths become possible.





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Meanwhile in America.....



Contributed by Jack Sheen

Hidden Churches of London

St Vedast-alias-Foster

By Mary Coulthurst

There are in London (and particularly in the City) a number of small churches hidden away by buildings which have grown up around them.

One such church is St Vedast-alias-Foster in the heart of the City of London, a stone's throw from St Paul's Cathedral. St Vedast is one of very few City churches which are open every day of the week, with lunchtime services held from Monday to Friday and a weekly Sunday morning sung Eucharist. During the week worshippers are drawn largely from City workers but as the parish has very few permanent inhabitants within its boundaries the Sunday congregation is gathered from a wide geographical area, stretching from the Barbican estate to Greater London and its neighbouring counties.



Between the 17th and 20th centuries thirteen historic parishes have been united with that of St Vedast. In full, naming each of the associated parishes, it has the longest parish name in England! Members of the PCC act as titular churchwardens to each of these historic parishes.

On the Sunday before Christmas I had the privilege of being invited, along with fellow members of the London Historians, by the Rector to St Vedast's Carol Service which was combined with the morning Eucharist. This was a wonderful experience, as was the excellent lunch provided for us in the rectory afterwards.

There has been a church dedicated to St Vedast on the site in Foster Lane (two minutes from the

Cathedral) since the 12th century. It is an unusual dedication within England, the only other church currently named for the saint being in Tathwell in Lincolnshire. The foundations may be connected with Flemish merchants working or living in London.

St Vedast was a 6th century missionary Bishop of Arras in Flanders, who died in 540. He is chiefly remembered for his missionary work among the people of what is now northern France. He belonged to the first generation of Gallo-Roman bishops trying to convert the pagan Franks. There are many versions of the name Vedast, ranging from Vast to Vaast to Fastre, Fouster and Forster until we come to Foster, hence St Vedast-alias-Foster. Some of the legends and works of St Vedast are celebrated in the stained-glass windows of the church.

The church is situated in Foster Lane. Originally the parish was centred on Foster Lane, Gutter Lane and part of Cheapside and first referred to in a document dating from the time of Archbishop Theobald (1139-1161). The population of London was expanded rapidly between 1100 and 1200. Many of London's inhabitants at this time were newcomers to England, including merchants from Normandy which was under English rule until 1204. Foster Lane was the production area for goldsmiths while Gutter Lane was the area for silversmiths and embroiderers. The saddlers were near neighbours.

The church underwent several alterations, enlargements and restoration many times during the following years with a chapel dedicated to St Dunstable in the 15th century, and altars to St Mary and St Nicholas added in the 16th century. There is no record of how the church fared in the Civil Wars of the 17th century but given that the Parliamentarians stabled horses in the chancel of St Paul's Cathedral St Vedast is likely to have fared badly!

The church of St Vedast was one of eighty-six parish churches which were badly damaged or destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666. Repairs at St Vedast were carried out in 1672 but were not considered to be satisfactory. Sir Christopher Wren was asked to rebuild the church.

The Wren church was constructed largely by the old foundations and so returned much of its former irregular plan.

Sadly, on the 29th December, 1940, a night when great devastation was inflicted on the City of London by enemy bombers, St Vedast suffered severe damage from incendiary bombs. John Betjeman, visiting the site the next morning said 'there was no church behind the doors, just an arcade and a heap of rubble to the sky and a smashed font and a brown smoke streak across the stone steeple.'



It was not until 1953 that anything constructive was done to allay the situation, when architect Steven Dykes Bower began work on the restoration of the church. Sir John Betjeman was greatly involved in this (as he was in the salvation and restoration of many London churches, Holy Trinity in Sloane Square where Fr Nicholas Wheeler and our own Fr Yarrow have served being one of them). Betjeman, one time poet Laureate, was on the PCC of St Vedast's at the time.

To provide for the smaller congregations of the 20th century (the population of the city had fallen dramatically since the mid-century) a collegiate style of seating was introduced, giving the impression of a large choir with pews running the length of the church. There is an almost imperceptible taper to the pews and floor pattern which give a false perspective towards the altar making the church look longer than it actually is. The panelling and pews are modern but designed in harmony with the 17th century furnishings; the modern ceiling is also close to the Wren original. The church was reconsecrated on 25 April, 1962, by the Bishop of London.

St Vedast's has a warm and welcoming atmosphere and is well worth a visit should you be in the area of St Paul's Cathedral. The church is normally open on weekdays from 8am to 4pm for private prayer and viewing, with a lunchtime Mass at 12.15pm. You would be made very welcome as a visitor.

A Trip Down Memory Lane

By Sardinia Ma

Walking down the street where we used to live, my heart quickened. At the top of the street there was once a Chinese medicine shop but now it is replaced by a metro station. The alleys, the church, the school and some old houses remained but many were replaced by apartment blocks. The street looked familiar yet different.

The house I was born in is unrecognisable; it had been converted to a restaurant by the new owner. Built in late 20s, it had 4 floors with large rooms, an inner courtyard, a roof terrace and a bomb shelter. Mother told us stories of a large family, 4 generations lived under the same roof; each occupied one floor with their maids. The kitchen and dining room were on the ground floor, at meal times the cook would strike the gong as it needed to be loud for those on the upper floors.

In 1938 Japan carpet-bombed Guangzhou for weeks, the house was hit and the outer walls were blown off. So when I came along years later, the house had a sad worn look about it. In hot summer nights we kids sometimes slept on the roof terrace. We stared at the bright twinkling stars in the dark sky and awed by their mystery. I wondered then how big the universe was, would we fall off from its edge? Could we go to the moon like the moon fairy?* Where and what would we be when we grow up? Little did I know then that I would spend the rest of my life far away.

We kids used to perch on the balcony people-watching to the street below. There were family dramas, street artisans made figurines from candy flour, kids played hop-scotch or danced with long rubber bands to songs. Each night we were sent to sleep by classical music blasted from our cousins' gramophone on the floor above. Despite the lack of food, we were happy.

I walked from floor to floor trying to find any trace of our home but there was none. I thought if only China in the last century was stronger and wiser, her people would not have to suffer so much turmoil. My heart was heavy.

When I stepped into the garden of the church next door, it was as if time went backwards and I saw myself running around and playing on the swing and slide. The marble floors, the banisters on which we often slid down (much to the indignation of the care-taker), the walls, pews and the big round glass window in the foyer look just as I remembered. Back then, we literally spent everyday in church; kindergarten, fellowship activities and Sunday services. My mum played the piano and our cousins sang for the choir. Our parents were married and we were baptised there. It was also where the family hid whenever the Japanese came to rampage.



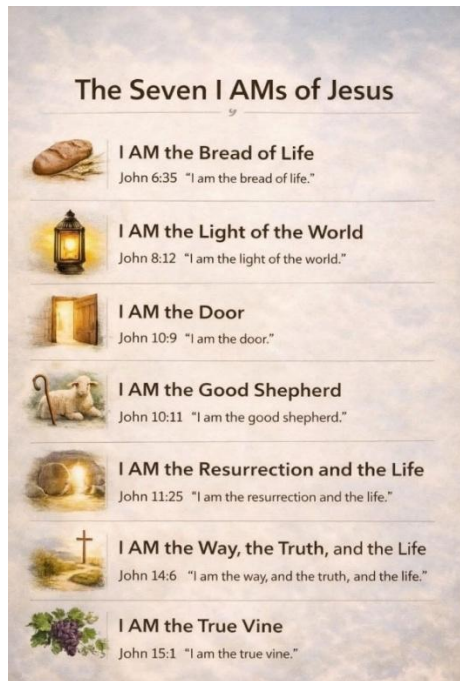
I chatted to two friendly “church watch” ladies about our connections to this church; they were amazed and happy that I came back. The church is now well attended and celebrated their centenary in 2024. One photo on the wall “The choir of 1953” caught my eyes. Later my 87 year old cousin who now lives in US confirmed that she was the girl in the first row, how amazing. I lingered for hours, touched the pews, banisters, walls; they were the tangible links between my memory and childhood. I thought I heard a whisper: “welcome home child”. My eyes welled up and I didn’t want to leave.

At the end of the street there is a Buddhist temple; it once was part of Yue State Palace 2000 years ago. I remembered the Festival on the 7th of July (Lunar calendar); there was a

huge display of miniature houses with furniture, figurines and replicas of ancient society. I used to stare for hours and was mesmerised by them.

The school next door is now a big and modern primary. Further down the street our family friend Dr. Wong's big house is now a kindergarten. I walked up and down the street chatting to people, I didn't know anyone; it seems everyone we knew then had left. I wondered where they are now and what had happened to them? People I chatted to were very friendly and hospitable, they made me feel welcomed (to be continued).

* Moon (autumn) Festival – To commemorate the love story between a girl from the moon and a man on earth.



Contributed by Pawprint

Celebrating a Wonderful Achievement in our Choir By Dr. Viktoriia Goncharova

We are delighted to share joyful news with our church community: our chorister Aara Thevarajah has successfully passed the *Voice for Life* examination of the Royal School of Church Music, achieving the prestigious Silver Award. Heartfelt congratulations to Aara on this remarkable accomplishment!



Aara Thevarajah

Aara first joined the choir of St Martin's Church as a very young girl. Over the years, step by step, she has grown into a confident and expressive musician, carefully mastering the many disciplines of church singing and musicianship. Together with her sister, Prashi, Aara has been a dedicated and valued member of our choir for nearly a decade. During this time, she has not only contributed consistently to the ensemble but has also performed solo with sensitivity and poise, supported younger choristers, and helped foster a warm and encouraging musical environment within the choir.

The Silver Award examination is a significant milestone and a demanding challenge. Candidates are required to demonstrate a high level of vocal and musical proficiency. The performance component includes singing a hymn, a psalm, an unaccompanied piece, and two contrasting anthems from different musical periods. Beyond performance, the exam also tests a chorister's comprehensive understanding of music theory, terminology, and sight-reading skills. In addition, candidates must show a solid knowledge of

the structure of the liturgical year, key church seasons, major feasts, and the meaning and function of prayers within the Anglican tradition. This holistic approach ensures that award holders are not only skilled singers but also well-rounded church musicians.

Aara and I have worked closely and diligently in preparation for this examination. It is especially meaningful to note that it has been eight years since our choir last celebrated this level of achievement. Our wonderful sopranos, Pamela and Isabella Burchell, were the previous recipients of the Silver Award, and it was important for us to revive and continue this tradition. Maintaining such continuity is essential for preserving the musical and educational legacy of our choir across generations.

This achievement is not only a personal triumph for Aara but also a proud moment for the entire choir of St Martin's Church. It reflects the dedication, perseverance, and shared commitment to excellence that define our musical community. We warmly congratulate Aara and extend our appreciation to all choir members who contribute daily to the life and spirit of our church.

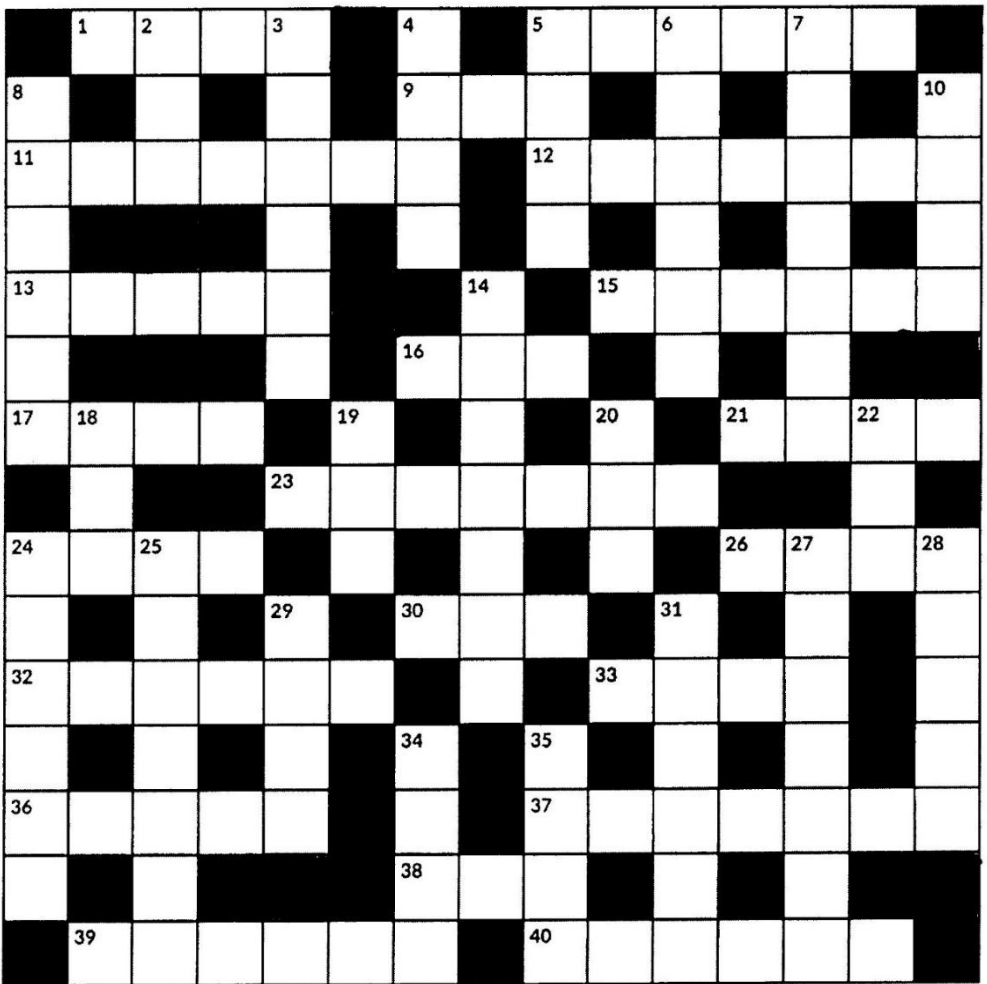


As we celebrate this success, we also take this opportunity to wish everyone a joyful and blessed Easter. May this season of renewal bring you peace, inspiration, and abundant happiness. May your hearts be filled with light, and your homes with warmth and kindness.

Dr. Viktoriia Goncharova,
Director of Music

St Martin's Crossword

By Jude



Across

1. *With 8 down*, annual commemoration of the crucifixion of Christ. **(4,6)**
5. Feast commemorating His death and resurrection. **(6)**
9. "Jesus' words to the invalid at Bethesda: "Rise, take up thy __, and walk." **(3)**
11. Variously translated as Teacher or Master, Mary's exclamation on seeing the resurrected Christ. **(7)**
12. Blessed bread given to the congregation at the end of the liturgy, especially in the Eastern Church. **(7)**
13. The main church of a city or town in Italy. **(5)**
15. You make these to atone or redress! **(6)**
16. A chocolate one may be my reward for setting this crossword! **(3)**
17. One of two English archbishops. **(4)**
21. Composer whose many sacred works include St Matthew Passion and St John Passion. **(4)**
23. Modern city of Turkey, site of Antioch. **(7)**
24. The first Man. **(4)**
26. Plural of 22 down. **(4)**
30. *With 33 across*, "In the beginning was __ __ ..." *John 1:1* **(3,4)**
32. This composer's sacred works include A German Requiem and Geistliches Lied. **(6)**
33. *See 30 across*. **(4)**
36. Fifty righteous people could have saved this city. *Gen. 18:26* **(5)**
37. This wicked city was spared, after Jonah was sent by God to preach to its inhabitants. **(7)**
38. Mesopotamian god, regarded as the head of the pantheon. **(3)**
39. Italian Benedictine monk of the Abbey of Bec, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093. **(6)**
40. "The horse is prepared for the day of __, but safety is from the Lord." *Prov. 21:31* **(6)**

Down

2. Item of Coronation Regalia signifying the Christian world. **(3)**
3. Several of 13 across, perhaps. **(6)**
4. Month of the Hebrew calendar in which Passover is celebrated. *Deut. 16:1* **(4)**
5. Idyllic garden in Genesis. **(4)**
6. One of the women present at the crucifixion and who brought spices to anoint Jesus' body. **(6)**

7. _ of Rome was an early Christian martyr who disguised herself as a man and became an abbot. (7)
8. See 1 across. (6)
10. Holy Communion. (4)
14. Sayings attributed to Jesus but not found in the Canonical Gospels. (7)
18. One of the Testaments. (3)
19. Biblical town of the tribe of Benjamin. *1 Chron. 8:12* (3)
20. "It is easier for a camel to go through the _ of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." *Matt. 19:24* (3)
22. "And he took the _, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;" *Matt. 26:27* (3)
24. Head of a community of nuns. (6)
25. The angel of the abyss, or bottomless pit. *Rev. 9:11* (7)
27. To exorcise, to free from demonic possession (archaic). (7)
28. Joseph _ founded the Mormons in 1830. (5)
29. In Islam, the leader of prayers. (4)
31. Female headgear associated with Easter, historically as a sign of religious devotion and renewal. (6)
34. Son of Shem, grandson of Noah. His descendants lived in modern-day Syria. *Gen 10:22* (4)
35. To rebuff, ignore, or spurn disdainfully. (4)

Solution to Last Edition's Crossword

¹ C	A	² N	O	³ N	I	⁴ C		⁵ C		⁶ B		⁷ F		⁸ D		
O		E		A		O		⁹ L	A	E	T	A	R	E		
¹⁰ N	U	B		K		N		U		L		T		A		
C		U		¹¹ E	S	T	A	B	L	I	S	H	E	D		
¹² L	U	C	I	D		E				E		E				
A		H				¹³ A	M	P	L	E	F	O	R	¹⁴ T	H	
¹⁵ V	I	A		¹⁶ S		P						O			A	
I		D		¹⁷ T	I	T	U	¹⁸ S				F			L	
S		N		O				P			¹⁹ C	A	M	E	L	
²⁰ T	H	E	O	L	O	²¹ G	I	A	N			A			E	
		Z		E		A		R			²² C	A	N	A	L	
²³ B	Y	Z	A	N	T	I	N	E			R		K		U	
U		A				T		R			²⁴ E	L	I		J	
²⁵ S	E	R	V	I	C	E		I		T		N			A	
H						R				²⁶ B	R	E	A	D	T	H

KIDS ZONE



Kids Zone....Kids Zone....Kids Zone.....Kids Zone.....Kids Zone..

Hello! Welcome to the zone for the Kids of St Martin's! This is intended to be *your* space with things that interest *you* as well as things relating to you and your doings. This space will encompass BWI news and Young Church.

We'd also like to welcome contributions to the Kids Zone from our younger readers. It can be something you've done at school, a favourite pet, something that you've done at school or simply your feelings about God and the Christian world. Send your contributions of 50-300 words to MirandaAtStMartins@gmail.com by the 16th of May 2026.

Kids Zone....Kids Zone....Kids Zone.....Kids Zone.....Kids Zone..

Word Search



All the words listed below are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. After you have found all the words, arrange the leftover letters in the correct order to form the mystery answer. The theme is the Last Supper.

Bread, Break, Disciple, Do this, Drink, Humble, Jesus, Judas, Remember, Table, Twelve

Credit: Yoli

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Welcome to your regular update from BWI Primary School!

It continues to be a positive and enriching time at BWI Primary School as we strengthen our partnership with our fellow Ecclesia schools, Holy Trinity, St Mary's and St John's. Staff from across the four schools have recently come together for joint training, allowing us to collaborate as one partnership team and continue developing the quality of teaching and learning for all our children.

We have also appointed a new Christian Distinctiveness Lead who will work across the partnership to support and develop collective worship and Religious Education, ensuring that our provision remains engaging, reflective and spiritually enriching for our school communities.

During Children's Mental Health Week, pupils across the partnership took part in activities focusing on belonging, kindness and wellbeing. It was wonderful to see the children reflecting on how they support one another and live out our shared values.

We also continue to work closely with Bishop Ramsey School. Recently, some of our pupils were invited to attend a preview of their production of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The performance was fantastic and made even more special as several former BWI pupils were performing on stage, making it a proud moment for our community.

Mrs Rodenas



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St Martin's Church Parish Directory

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Associate	Fr. Michael Bedford	Tel: 020 8866 4332 E: mabedford07cr@gmail.com
All clergy can be contacted through the Parish Office		
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	Alison Rollin	149 Bury Street, Ruislip, HA4 7TQ Tel: 01895 675493
Licenced Lay Minister	Vacancy	
Wardens	Jaqueline Alderton	Tel: 07944 878203
	Peter Golby	Tel: 07908 408108 E: pgolby@live.co.uk

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Rainbows (9 th Ruislip)	Cat Reid	Tel: 020 8866 1988
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Sacristy Team	Diane Roberts & Alan Seymour	Tel: 020 8868 5557
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Sidespeople	Sarah Jacob & Alan Seymour	Sjacob325@gmail.com Tel: 020 8868 5557
Thursday Lunches	Sweelin Cunliffe	Tel: 07931 134507
Toddler Group	Vacancy	
Tower Captain	Judith Roberts	Tel: 01895 638143
Young Church 9.15am	Vicky Golby	Tel: 07770 782922
PCC Secretary	Catherine Tugnait	Tel: 07902 613854
PCC Treasurer	Danny Dartnail	Tel: 07932 604042

PCC Electoral Roll Officer	Jo Wild	Tel: 01923 820331
Parish Clerk/Admin/Webmaster	Gill Dargue	Tel: 01895 625 456
Bible Reading Fellowship	Alan Seymour	Tel: 020 8868 5557
BWI School	Rachel Blake	Tel: 01895 633 520
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Christian Aid	Jack Sheen	Tel: 01895 634755
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Cursillo Representative	Chris Hoppett	Tel: 01895 672463
Director of Music	Viktoria Goncharova	
Flower Arranging	Jan White	Tel: 07747 463646
Friends of St Martins	Jacqueline Alderton	Tel: 01895 676194
Guides (2 nd Ruislip)	Lin Gregory	Tel: 01895 905 511

Please submit all items for the June/July issue to MirandaAtStMartins@gmail.com by 16th May 2026.

Don't forget to include your contact details if sending material by post. Outlook is published every other month. The next edition will be June/July 2026.

ABC SCRIPTURES



A true friend shows
love at all times.
Proverbs 17:17



Be courageous
and strong.
Deuteronomy 31:6



Create in me a
pure heart, O God.
Psalm 51:10



Draw close to God,
and he will draw
close to you.
James 4:8



Every good gift and
every perfect present
is from above.
James 1:17



Fear the true God
and keep his
commandments.
Ecclesiastes 12:13



God is love.
1 John 4:8



Honor your father
and your mother.
Exodus 20:12



In the beginning God
created the heavens
and the earth.
Genesis 1:1



Jehovah is my
Shepherd. I will
lack nothing.
Psalm 23:1



Keep on asking, and
it will be given you.
Matthew 7:7



Love one another.
John 13:34



Make disciples of
people of all the
nations.
Matthew 28:19



Not forsaking our
meeting together.
Hebrews 10:24



O Hearer of prayer,
to you people of all
sorts will come.
Psalm 65:2



Put on the
complete suit of
armor from God.
Ephesians 6:11



Quick to listen, slow to
speak, slow to anger.
James 1:19



Remember, then, your
Grand Creator.
Ecclesiastes 12:12



Search for
Jehovah while
he may be found.
Isaiah 55:6



Teach me, O Jehovah,
the way of your
regulations.
Psalm 119:33



Under his wings you
will take refuge.
Psalm 91:4



The voice of
Jehovah is powerful.
Psalm 29:4



When I am afraid, I
put my trust in you.
Psalm 56:3



Examine me, and
know my anxious
thoughts.
Psalm 139:23



"You are
my witnesses,"
declares Jehovah.
Isaiah 43:10



His zeal like a
warrior.
Isaiah 42:13

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We have found that when you start providing a little help at home to older people, it can help prevent accidents and delay the need to move out of their own house. Our CAREGivers build a strong relationship with their clients which allows them to spot any changes in their health or behaviour and take the necessary actions to prevent the situation from getting worse.

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The background of the advertisement is a photograph of a Coopers Residential building at night. The building is a two-story structure with a prominent half-timbered gable roof. The ground floor features large windows and a central entrance, with a blue 'coopers' sign above the door. To the left, a modern, curved glass and metal structure is illuminated with blue light. The foreground shows a road with light trails from passing vehicles, suggesting a busy urban environment.

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