

Outlook



Parish Magazine

February/March 2026



Vol: 25 | No:3

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Welcome from the Outlook Editor

Miranda Reading

Welcome to the Lent edition of Outlook!

January and February can often seem a bit dismal. As I write, the wind is blowing a gale outside and it's pouring with rain. But as Christians, as we approach Lent, we look forward with anticipation to the Lent season, with Ash Wednesday this year taking place on the 18th of February. As Christians worldwide are marked with a cross of ash – *'From dust you came and to dust you shall return'* (Genesis 3: 19) – we begin a penitential season which is somehow filled with quiet joy.

How can we live a holy Lent? This question has been asked many times and answered by much better writers than me. But a personal reflection, for me, Lent is a drawing in of the Spirit, marking the days of Lent with bible readings and special prayers, lighting a candle each day for quiet meditation and really trying to do good in the world. Lent is the quiet time of the soul as we walk with Christ in his last journey.

Why not try to do something different this year to make Lent a special time? Donate something to a charity you don't normally give to. Write a special prayer to repeat each day. Fast for a day, even if you have never fasted before. Talk to someone new. However you mark Lent, make it meaningful for you.

Could you contribute something to the magazine? Do send us your thoughts, your prayers and your stories. All contributions and feedback by 16th March 2026 please to

MirandaAtStMartins@gmail.com. Thank you.



Member Editor 2025
Association for Church Editors



Fr Robert Writes....

Dear Friends,

Hardly a day goes by where I am not made profoundly aware of the gift of this parish church to Ruislip, and to me!

Having just exited Christmas, with stubborn pine-needles and rough crib straw still underfoot we approach the next season in the life of the Church. This next season seems to resonate with the stones of our church in a particular way. The season is, of course, Lent and the stones speak of generations who have knelt in hope of forgiveness and fresh starts.

This is not just an esoteric hope of the pious, but one graphically portrayed on our north-west and south-westerly aisles in ochre paint. On those walls we have on one side the seven deadly sins (Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath and Sloth), and on the opposite wall the seven acts of mercy (feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead.) When one compares the two lists it is perhaps no coincidence the acts of mercy are much harder to see! Perhaps, time and light on the work is reflecting the human condition.

It is of course the 'human condition' that makes Lent such an important season. The awareness of our shortcomings has meant that we need help to succumb to acts of mercy rather than deadly sins.



During the early years of this parish church the medieval strictures of Lent would have been at their height. In the days long before Detox, your Lenten diet in Ruislip would have been bread, beer (basically liquid bread), and vegetables for 40 days for all people. As a cheeky 'treat' you were allowed a bit of fish or beaver(!) because it too came from the water. There was little opportunity for the likes of me to have a pre-season sneaky *Cadbury's Creme Egg*, this was tough discipline, not for the faint-hearted.

Underlying this discipline was what the American Catholic Theologian Frederick Bauerschmidt has called a 'metaphysical image'. What this means is that a metaphor defines and shapes a person so that it produces specific sorts of people who are rooted in specific values. In other words these disciplines were adopted not to create mere obedience, but to transform the person. Hence, they are observed not out of mere piety, but in order to become the thing they represent, i.e. Jesus. Thus, our Lenten observances should move us from the North-west wall to the South-west wall as we become more 'Christ-like'.

Of course, like all movements and journeys, they start with a moment of recognition. A family trip or holiday begins with the desire to share a space and period of time with those closest. The recognition of this prompts the journey. Lent begins with the recognition on Ash Wednesday that we are 'dust and to dust we shall return'. Thus, the journey begins with humility, the humble acknowledge of the need for help.

There is a wonderful story from Abba Poemen, one of the early Church desert Fathers, that is worth repeating:

It was said about an old man that he endured seventy weeks of fasting, eating only once a week. He asked God about certain words in the Holy Scripture, but God did not answer him. Then he said to himself: "Look, I have put in this much effort, but I haven't made any progress. So now I will go to see my brother and ask him." And when he had gone out, closed the door and started off, an angel of the Lord was sent to him, and said: "Seventy weeks of fasting have not brought you near to God. But now that you are humbled enough to go to your brother, I have been sent to you to reveal the meaning of the words." Then the angel explained the meaning which the old man was seeking, and went away. Along with fasting there must be humility! Fasting opens the way; it is a means to an end; it is not the end itself.

The experience of Abba Poemen's fasting old man gives us an important reminder about Lent. Lent is also about feasting. Lent without joy is not Lent; Carnival and Easter without repentance are meaningless. These two aspects are key to the season, as they point us to the future that will confront us all. Both our fasting and our feasting will be recorded in the 'book of life' and reported to us before the fearsome judgment seat of Christ if we take seriously a third wall painting in St Martin's above the door in the St Michael's chapel.



Therefore, even though this letter has been looking back, gazing at the medieval, we should remember that Lent is, in a sense, always future-oriented even as it looks back.

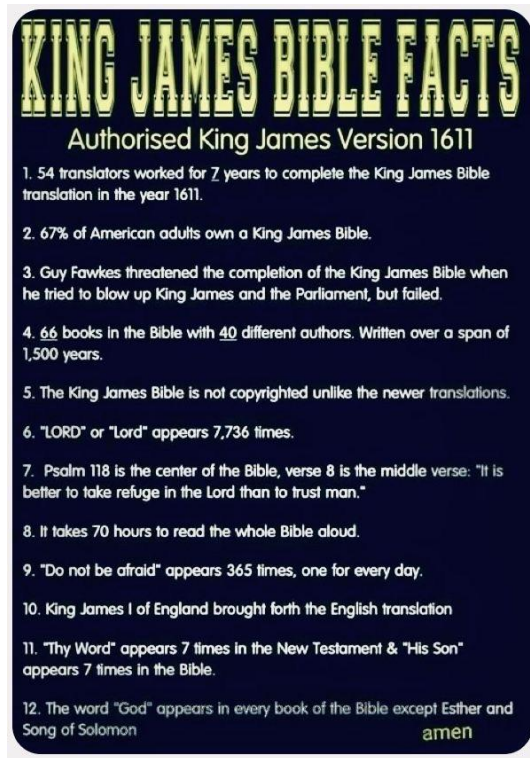
Lent grants us, even if only for 40 days, a foretaste of the Kingdom, a glance at what is ultimately important. Therefore, whether you fast like Abba

Poemen's old man or reflect upon the walls of St Martin's, take the chance to begin a new journey.

Have a blessed and Holy Lent.

Your friend and priest,

Fr Robert



Contributed by Pawprint

Dates for your Diary!

February 2026

Monday 2 nd Feb	Candlemass. Mass at 7.30pm
Sunday 8 th Feb	Volunteer Sunday. Come along and see how you can help St Martin's! Between 9.15 and 11.15 mass.
Wednesday 18 th Feb	Ash Wednesday Masses at 9.30 and 7.30pm
Wednesday 25 th Feb to Wednesday 18 th March	Lent Course, every Wednesday, 8pm, Bec room
Wednesday 25 th March	Annunciation of the Lord. Mass 7.30pm
29 th March to 5 th April	Holy Week
Monday 27 th April	ACPM

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Our vision - 'My Cup Overflows' Psalm 23:5





Ask St Martin

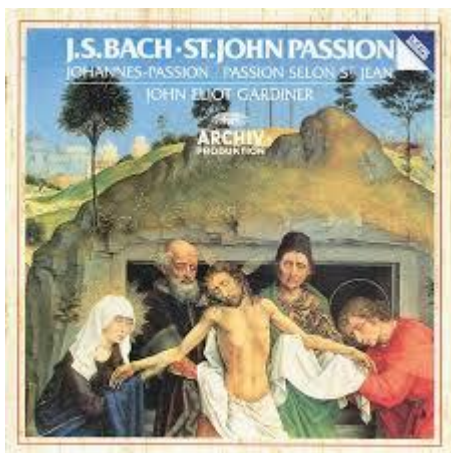
Dear St Martin,

Can you recommend some sacred music to listen to during Lent?

The world of music is something that we as humans have been using for millennia to express our feelings, our inner pains, our great joys, and to express that which words fail to express. And it's something we bring to our faith, too and something we use to elevate our faith. This is not something new; we see in Exodus 15 Moses and the Israelites singing after crossing the Red Sea, Jesus and the Disciples sang as they left the upper room on the night before Our Lord's passion, and often when we read of Biotic visions in the Bible we read of the angels singing, such as in Isaiah, Revelations, or even when the angels brought the message of Jesus's birth to the shepherds in Luke's Gospel. Whilst this is not a tract on why we sing in church, it is important we acknowledge that we are not new to singing or hearing music in church. Despite congregational hymn singing being relatively new in the Church of England, as it was only permitted within worship from the 1820s, there is still a wealth of hymns and music for all seasons, including some ancient hymns translated by the likes of John Mason Neale.

If you would like to try something different this Lent and want to listen to some sacred music to reflect upon and with, there is a great wealth of music from the classic greats like Bach's Passion Oratorios to shorter pieces or more modern pieces.

Amidst the range, there are some wonderful examples of ancient hymns such as *Ex more docti mystico* (*The fast, as taught by holy lore*) from the 6th Century and attributed to Pope St Gregory the Great or *Attende Domine* (*hears us, O Lord*) or sometimes known as the Lent Prose from the 10th Century. Another ancient text that is used during Lent, specifically on Palm Sunday, is *Hosanna to the Son of David*. this text is taken directly from the Bible (Matthew 21:9) as Jesus enters Jerusalem at the start of Holy Week. There are many composers who have set that text to music, amongst the most famous would be Gibbons and Weelkes.



If you are looking for an epic, larger work to listen to though Lent or to have playing in the background whilst you work, then look no further than one of J. S Bach's Passions. Whilst Bach wrote a passion for each of the Gospels, the authenticity of his *St Luke's Passion* has long been disputed, and his *St Mark's Passion* has since been lost. However, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* is probably the most famous and can be easily found in the original German or in English translation. As you listen to it you will possibly recognise some of the

music as hymns we sing in church. The most iconic of these chorales is *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* (*O Sacred Head, So Wounded*).

Other larger works include *The Seven Last Words of Christ*; the two most famous settings of this would probably be Haydn's and Théodore Dubois. Or two wonderful pieces of Victorian Church music are Stainer's *The Crucifixion*, and Maunder's *Olivet to Calvary*. A more modern piece of English Church music is William Lloyd Webber's *The Saviour*.

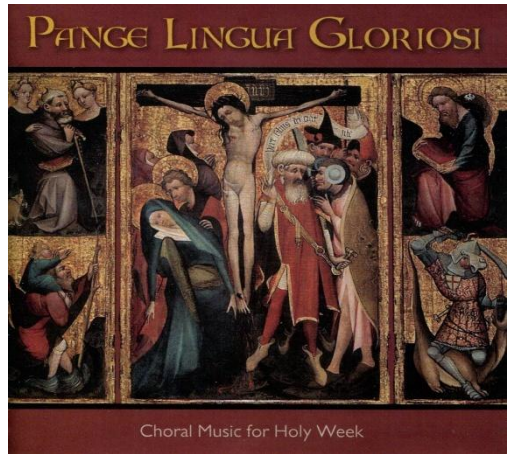
Some shorter pieces you could listen to are *Into the Woods my Master Went* or *Faithful Cross, O Beautiful Tree*.

One CD I have found that I think is well curated and recorded is a compilation entitled *Pange Lingua Gloriosi - Choral Music for Holy Week*, which can be found on YouTube, Amazon Music, and Spotify.

Whilst the list of potential music for Lent and Holy Week is far, far longer, I hope you find something in these recommendations that fills your heart and helps prepare your heart through this season of Lent.

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

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- Donate here via the website
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- Bank transfer: Account Name: ST MARTINS CHURCH
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Prayer for Lent

**Lead me from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.**

Lead me from fear to trust, from hate to love.

**Lead me from war to peace, let peace be in our
hearts, our world and our universe.**

Contributed by Janet Tippetts



Beaten by the Mob

By Dr Jide Menakaya

As the year 2025 drew to a close, many of us availed ourselves of the many planned activities in our communities and beyond to celebrate Christmas. I wonder, if I may ask, which one of them you found most enjoyable? Was it the carol singing? Or was it the annual carol service of nine lessons?

Outside church settings, it has become quite common for celebrity concerts of songs, music, prose and poetry to be staged at prestigious venues across the country. Within the plush environment of these concert halls, with their highly engineered acoustic systems, advanced lighting, climate controlled air conditioning and velvet covered seats, sophisticated attendees are treated to an amazing menu of awe inspiring music by highly talented musicians that transports them to a celestial place. Such music is designed to captivate the listeners, to reflect on and to catch a glimpse of heaven. At the end, the audience applaud loudly the passion of the performers and wonder at the incredible talent they have just witnessed.



Another way to experience stunning music is a flashmob. Imagine that you are at the shops, at the coach station, the railway station or airport concourse getting that last minute present or embarking on a journey to see friends or family for Christmas.

Within the cacophony of noises in these places, you hear the quiet rhythmic beat of a snare drum getting louder. Around you other people are also looking in the direction of the drum and the lone drummer. As the drum beats, it is accompanied by the plucking of violin strings and followed sequentially by the sweet melody of flutes, clarinets, trombones, trumpets, oboes, piccolos, saxophones, violins, English horns, cellos and violas.

The myriad of performers playing these delicate instruments suddenly appear from nowhere. Almost as if prompted, the entire noisy concourse quietens down and transforms into a concert hall as passengers and shoppers unexpectedly become concert goers. They are literally stopped in their tracks as they listen to the sweet music unfolding unfiltered in front of them and soaring to the heavens above them. They listen but don't stop there. They engage directly with the musicians in close proximity to them feeling, hearing and seeing how the instruments work and contribute to the whole piece. They find all sorts of vantage points to get the best views. My favourite are the toddlers carried atop their carer's shoulders for an unrestricted view. The surprised audience take out their mobile phones and cameras to film the whole performance. All this happens outside the usual confines of a concert hall for some of the very sophisticated equipment used to bring such wonderful music to life. See: <https://youtu.be/RyiLIx2sEI>.

As the piece, Bolero by Ravel, comes to its finale, all the instruments perform as one in a rousing orchestral symphony before this experience is concluded with a final beat of the timpani. The surprised but pleased onlookers applaud loudly the passion of the performers and marvel at the unbelievable courage of the musicians bringing music directly to where the community is. Meanwhile the musicians pack up their instruments and melt away into the crowd in a flash as if the performance never happened.

All over the world whether in intimate refined settings or in outdoor uncontrolled environments, musicians are deploying innovative methods to bring their work as close as possible to their local communities. Whether at scheduled events in churches, theatres, concert halls schools or community centres or at surprise performances by 'flash mob' musicians on the high street, train stations or airport concourses, great music stops us all in our tracks, lifts our spirits, and gets us reflecting on the heavenly beauty of the world around us. In my opinion, the courage and talent of the musicians that produce such inspiring performances for society benefit is incredible.

I don't know about you, whenever I enjoy beautiful music, irrespective of where it is, I feel beaten, but in a delightful way, by the mob.

Bookworm

The Legacy of Anglo-Saxon Spirituality

By Valery Cowley

'Called to be Angels' (1998) by Douglas Dales is a good, short introduction. A more substantial classic is Henry Mayr-Harting's the 'Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England' (1972 & later editions). 'Christ Within Me', edited by Sr Benedicta Ward, provides 'Daily Readings from the Anglo-Saxon Tradition'.



Pope Gregory the Great sent St Augustine from Rome to Canterbury in 597 AD, which formed the basis of the whole body of the church in England through teaching, prayer, persuasion and example, drawing on the writings of St Paul. Priests were to be shepherds seeking and saving the lost, with the Eucharist central to their mission,

reconciling the active life with the passive. Gregory's 'Life of St Benedict' built on earlier lives of the desert fathers St Anthony and St Martin. In the 9th century, King Alfred, router of Viking assaults, ordered Gregory's 'Pastoral Rule' to be translated from Latin to English. Praying Christians were to be a transformative force. After 640, Iona, Northumbria, Lindisfarne, York, France via Columbanus, Wales and Ireland became major contributors to the wonders of healing souls and restoring people to God's image.

St Cuthbert, ca. 634-687, Melrose monk and Prior of Lindisfarne, whose coffin, portable altar and pectoral cross are exhibited in Durham, is still much revered for his orthodox and catholic influence on the English church's character.

On Iona, King Oswald of Northumbria became a Christian and conquered in the sign of the Cross. Lines from the poem, 'The Dream of the Rood' are inscribed on the 8th century Ruthwell Cross, Dumfriesshire. Oswald gave

Lindisfarne to St Columba's successor, Aidan in 635 and a vision of Aidan's heavenward soul inspired Cuthbert's vocation.

Monastic life issued in mission and desert hermits were admired for their obedience and self-sacrifice, inspiring 'the white martyrdom' of ascetic prayer. Angels are friends of the saints, guiding and protecting humankind. Thirty years of settled life at 7c-8c Jarrow prompted Bede the historian to build up England's spiritual life. Abbots Benedict and Ceolfrith adorned Jarrow's church with works from Gaul and Italy and the illuminated 'Lindisfarne Gospels'.

Abbess Hild of Whitby accepted the miraculously gifted poet, Caedmon the herdsman, whose celebration of God's creation was paralleled in the visual arts of stone, ivory and painted manuscripts. The heroism of warriors is celebrated in the 8th century poem, 'Beowulf', battling two monsters and a dragon and is echoed in the spiritual warfare of Guthlac of Crowland.

The 10th century saw a revival of learning in Latin and Anglo-Saxon in the reformed monasteries. Aelfric of Winchester wrote powerful homilies. Boniface and Alcuin relied on the Roman see. Boniface felt an outsider among his fellow Frankish bishops, so friendship and learning, especially those of Abbess Eadburga of Minster in Thanet were vital to Alcuin who extolled friendship rooted in the love of Christ. Dunstan, teacher and ascetic, educated at Glastonbury, benefitted from both Celtic and Anglo-Saxon traditions. He created a Benedictine monastic centre of learning and art, especially music, and King Edgar appointed him Archbishop of Canterbury. Royal and ascetic Aethelflaeda nurtured Dunstan's contemplative life. Thus Glastonbury became an influential mirror of the Kingdom of Heaven committed to Christian education and example.

Revered as a saint in his lifetime and a protector of England against the Vikings, Wulfstan, the last Anglo-Saxon Bishop of Worcester after the Norman Conquest, was devoted to Dunstan.

A Christmas Sermon

By Fr. Robert Chapman

John 1.1-5, 9-14

The other morning I was reflecting on today's gospel and mentioned to Sarah this was the third time this had appeared in as many weeks, so what can I say? Her suggestion was simply say:

"This gospel is so important that it has appeared three times,... and then sit down". I look at her quizzically, and ummed suspiciously.

You're all looking at me hopefully, wondering if I have taken her advice. Sadly, for those longing for a quick exit, the richness of John 1 prohibits that.

I began Christmas Day by quoting, 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us'.



I repeat that today, 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us'.

But what does it mean? Of course, thanks to a multitude of Christmas celebrations we know that the 'Word' is Jesus, and thus God, and that he dwelt among **us**. It is this, 'us' I stressed on Christmas Day.

2000 years have conditioned us to think of this gospel in those terms, but what would those first Christians have made of these words?

The word for 'Word' is a Greek word: 'logos'.

Logos was used in pre-New Testament times and in Ancient Greece to describe speech connected to rhetoric, an argument that formed a logical

proposition. Plato and Aristotle saw '*logos*' like this. Other Greek philosophical schools, such as the Stoics and Neo-Platonists, saw the word '*logos*' in a broader sense, a sense beyond simply a logical argument. *Logos* was, for them, the generative principle for the universe and creation, a foundational concept or rule describing how something is created or generated. It is that St John employs and develops. Hence, it is no surprise then that St John echoes the creation narrative in the book of Genesis ('In the beginning God created...'), when he says at the beginning of the gospel, 'In the beginning was the Word...'

The word *logos* is used elsewhere in the New Testament but mainly in that other Aristotelian and Platonic sense connected to argument and rhetoric, i.e. preaching.

Yet, as I said, St John sees *logos* the Word as so much more. St John sees *logos* as the fulfilment and hope of the Old Testament wisdom writers, as they saw wisdom as the divine. Hence, Hellenistic Jewish writers such as Philo saw *logos*, like earlier Greek counterparts such as Zeno, as the pure logic that pervades everything created, something that can neither be, quote, 'dissolved or separated' (Philo, *De Profugis*).

Of course, logically, the only thing that is that complete is God, hence, John is able to logically say, 'the Word was with God, and the Word **was** God!' Much to the chagrin of Jehovah's Witnesses who retranslate or mistranslate that section saying, 'the word was **as a** God'.

What do all these philosophical ramblings mean to us?

First, they point to the shared nature and unity of Jesus, 'the Word', with God the Father.

Secondly, they remind us of the implicit nature of our faith that seeks and longs and journeys. 'Logos' is a slippery term that, like all words seeking to define the divine it misses as well as hits the target.



This is an important reminder that, unlike many of the packages we received on Christmas Day, the gift of God in Christ Jesus does not come neatly wrapped and tied-up with a pretty bow. As the letter to the Hebrews (4.12) reminds us, in connection to scripture, the 'Word' –

logos is 'living and active'. How much more living and active than is the Word of God, Jesus! It is this 'Word', this 'logos', Jesus, that will return again one day victorious as the Book of Revelation says in chapter 19 verse 13.

So Sarah was quite right, this gospel is so important that it keeps appearing, we can't escape it, neither should we attempt to.

The wonder, joy and love is that this inexplicable and unfathomable God should come to us, as Archbishop William Temple said of this chapter:

'...it is God's Nature to reveal or communicate Himself... the world exists as the arena of God's self-revelation.' (*Readings in St John's Gospel* 1947 p. 5) This is then, 'the true light coming into the world', as verse 9 says.

It is allowing this light to pierce the darkness of the world that is also referred to in this chapter. As we begin this new calendar year, and as we approach the Feast of Epiphany, when that light was revealed to the non-Jewish world symbolised by the Magi, let us look for light. Let us look for the word being made flesh around us and in this parish church. Let us allow the light to pierce the dark recesses of our hearts and lives, so that the Word may be made flesh in us.

May us welcoming that coming of the Word and its light be our new year's resolution.

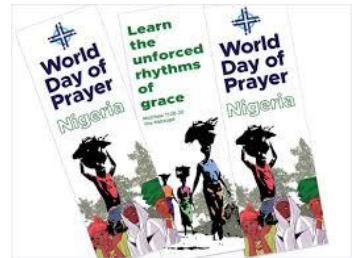
Amen.

World Day of Prayer 2026

By Lesley Knee

On Friday March 6th 2026 the focus for the World Day of Prayer for 2026 will be “I Will Give You Rest, Come” - a quotation from Matthew 11:28-30 - and will be held at St Giles Church in Ickenham. The World Day of Prayer supports women in expressing their faith and speaking about their lives in prayer and worship before God and in the community, which thereby creates a wonderful wave of prayer which encircles the globe.

Five churches locally take part: in Ruislip- St Martins, the R.C. Sacred Heart and the Methodist church and in Ickenham the URC and St Giles’.



The service this year has been prepared by the women of Nigeria, where the Christianity of the south is challenged by other beliefs mainly in the north. It has the largest economy and population numbers (around 200 million) of the whole African continent, with over 250 different ethnic groups and twice as many indigenous languages ~ hence English, a reminder of the country's former colonial status [it became independent in 1960], is the official language. Its strengths are medicine, politics and the law, engineering (especially for the oil industry), education, literature, and the visual arts. Sadly, especially in rural areas, the position of women in society still requires empowerment, as will be revealed in the service.

Please do come (men welcomed to) and collect your service pamphlet. A collection will be taken at the end - you can declare Gift Aid – and the funds are then distributed world-wide, as will be explained. There will be a sumptuous tea thereafter in the nearby Church Hall. Further details from Lesley Knee or Sherryl Butcher.

2.00pm on Friday 6th March at St Giles' Church, Ickenham UB10 8BE

Pathways in Spirituality

By David Hudson

Two Paths, One Gospel

From the heartbeat of Franciscan Spirituality - following in the footsteps and teachings of Jesus and allowing God's love to guide us - we turn to Ignatian Spirituality, which in many ways feels like a kindred spirituality – One Gospel, Two paths.



St Francis of Assisi teaches us to love Jesus with a simple, joyful heart, to treasure creation as God's gift, and to stand alongside the poor and forgotten. St Ignatius of Loyola helps us to do something very similar in a practical way: to notice where God is at work in everyday life, and to choose the loving

path with greater freedom. Both traditions are grounded, hopeful, and active, they invite us not only to pray, but to live and to act out how Jesus taught us to live.

Ignatian spirituality began with Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), a Spanish soldier who once dreamed of honour, romance and adventure. In 1521 he was badly wounded by a cannon ball in the battle of Pamplona. During a long recovery, he read about Jesus and the saints. As he was recovering at Loyola, his home, he began to pay attention to what was happening inside him. Some thoughts left him restless and empty. Other thoughts about following Christ, reading about the lives of the saints, and serving others left him quietly strengthened, drawing him towards faith, hope and love.

After recovery, Ignatius set out as a pilgrim. He spent a number of months in the town of Manresa, praying, serving the poor, having conversations with

people and facing his doubts and fears. One day while sitting by the river Cardoner, he received a deep gift of understanding – as if God had opened his eyes and everything looked new. This experience helped shape his conviction that God can guide us through the movements of our hearts – **if** we learn to pay attention to what and how we are feeling.

Ignatius later studied at Paris University, gathered companions of a like mind, and in 1540 their group was officially recognised as the Society of Jesus — the Jesuits. They became known for education, helping people grow in faith through prayer that is honest and real, and mission – to go at the bequest of the Pope, to far distant lands and spread the Gospel there.



From his experiences and conversations with people, Ignatius wrote a small but powerful guide called the Spiritual Exercises, designed to help ordinary people deepen their friendship with Jesus and make good choices.

Contained within it was the Examen that helped Jesuits to stand on their own two feet in far distant lands and discern what God was guiding them towards.

Over the next few episodes we will explore some of the important aspects of Ignatian Spirituality that can support and enrich our love for God, God's people, God's world – of finding God in all things through discernment and the inner movements of our heart.



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Meanwhile in America.....



Contributed by Jack Sheen

Curate's Corner

By Fr. Joe Grogan



During my time at Mirfield, I not only completed the Church of England's training for those about to be sent to curacy, but also a degree in Theology, Ministry, and Mission from Durham University. Sadly, I never got to attend lectures in Durham, and I completed them all in Mirfield. However, as part of the degree, I had to complete a dissertation. I thought the best thing to do would be to combine this degree with that of the Music degree I read for at Oxford Brookes, and I read and researched into the Choral revival the Church of England experienced during the Victorian era.

Now I hope that doesn't sound too dull and that you are interested in carrying on reading. I have already spoken to a few people about it during my first six or so months with you at St Martin's. But I thought it might be interesting to talk a little about it now and what it might mean for us, as the question for 'Ask St Martin' was about sacred music.

The dissertation itself is a little over 12,000 words with 137 footnotes and the better part of a year's worth of work (and if anyone is interested in reading it they are more than welcome to a copy). And whilst it might be a little unusual to sum something like that up in a few words and so early into an article about it, I think it is more than possible in this case. I think the main reason the Choral tradition went through a revival in the Church of England during the Victorian Era was because, someone cared. Whilst it is far more complicated than that, and was far more than just one person, it was many people in many different aspects and people bringing different skills and different talents, but someone cared. And the effects of those people caring can still be felt today, all over the world.

Arguably, the only reason we have robed choirs in parish churches across not only England but across the world comes from this choral revival and the

work of Samuel Sebastian Wesley at Leeds Parish Church (now known as Leeds Minster), who himself was greatly helped and supported in his musical development by Maria Hackett. Maria Hackett was a completely unknown woman before starting a campaign of letters, unsettled and concerned by the treatment of choirboys, which began when she saw her own charge, a choirboy, poorly treated at St Paul's Cathedral. Maria became known as 'The Choristers' Friend', knowing many of the cathedral choristers from around England by name, encouraging and supporting many in their education and musical development, such as Stanford and the aforementioned S.S Wesley.

But that was because someone cared. Whilst the story is much more than that, it offers a small insight into how one person caring and taking action can have such a large impact. This is not a tract or sermon about how we, as individuals can have such a large impact just by caring and showing even a fraction of God's love in the world, let alone how much more we can do when we act as a Parish Church, or even how much more that effect is magnified when we act together as the Church of God. I think it is good to reflect on it and remind ourselves of that fact, as it can easily be forgotten.



The Victorian era, and just before, was a complete melting pot of ideas, development, changes, and growth. And there is so much more to that story than the small insight I have given, and people from the church often jumped on the developments happening in the world to help the Church.

With the power of just one person helping ringing in our minds, we can now turn to our own Parish Church. At the start of February, we have a chance to think about all the activities we have going on at St Martin's on a Sunday. We are calling it Volunteering Sunday. If you are reading this after the 8th February you need not fear, you are never too late. We have a wonderful

parish that is buzzing with activity; however, to sustain that, it takes a great team of volunteers. Some of these might feel like they bring so little but that is never the case. Even spending an hour in church once a week, being a welcoming face as people come in, can mean so much. And without this great team of volunteers, we would soon all feel the effects. So if you would like to know more about all the things that go on, often behind the scenes, do hang around between the masses on Sunday 8th February, or come and have a chat with me.

Please do pray about how you might be able to help.

With every blessing,

Fr. Joe



Contributed by Pawprint

A Trip Down Memory Lane

By Sardinia Ma

I lived in 3 cities and 2 continents with different cultures for the first 18 years of my life. I have hazy recollections of a happy childhood in Guangzhou China. As the years have gone by, the urge to find out more about my birth place has grown ever stronger. So in November 2025 I decided to go on this memorable journey with nostalgic anticipation.

In 1949 China was on her last legs at ground zero after a “Century of Humiliation”*, 14 years of brutal Japanese invasion and then a civil war. The late 50s saw famine, mismanagement and foreign sanctions, life was hard and food was scarce but despite this we kids were loved and happy. Our home, a 4 storey house built by my grandparents became our sanctuary. We went to the kindergarten and the primary school next door and attended the church next to it.



Guangzhou is the capital of Guangdong Province and sits at the southern tip of China on the banks of Pearl River. 2200 years ago Guangdong and North Vietnam were a State called Yue which was conquered by the Qin army (221-201BC). Guangzhou became an ancient trading port in the 10th century and was

called the ‘Sea Silk Road’. Trade flourished between China and other countries in Asia, N Africa & Arabia. Custom & Excise was set up in 780-805AD, and in 1080 Guangzhou Sea Trade Regulations were established and it was the first of its kind in the world. It was also the first port of call by Marco Polo in 13th century and missionaries in the 16th century.

The population consists of various ethnic groups who migrated from the North of China, South Asia and foreign merchants who came to trade and stayed on; there are Arab descendants who still live in the city today.

When we stepped off the plane after a tiring 13 hours flight, a huge modern state-of-the-art airport greeted us. We were overwhelmed by the transformation; streets are wide, clean and brightly lit, cars replaced bicycles, automated metro stations with frequent trains- run on time, clean and cheap -stretch to all corners of the city; announcements are made in Mandarin, Cantonese and English.

China has a policy of connecting towns with a population over 500K with bullet trains. We went to Guizhou in one and the ride was smooth and fast; the cup of coffee on the table did not shake once despite a speed of 300 miles/hr. The train stations are big and modern, trains are on time and efficient. If one doesn't like the food on board, one can order "take-away" from restaurants along the route and the food will be delivered at the next stop. Shenzhen (the Silicon Valley of China) has drones delivering "takeaways". Drones are incorporated into many usages such as farming, construction and fire fighting in China.

The hotel we stayed was world class with AI featured rooms and often we came across robots working as Bellboys. In China, mobile phones are the main tool for functions in daily life, cash is hardly used.

Young men in this region are entrepreneurial and adventurous; many work overseas in S. E. Asia, America, Canada, Caribbean and as far as East Africa for over 200 years, contributing to these countries (my family included). It was no surprise that many heroic revolutionists who overthrew the Qing Dynasty and the founding father of the first Republic of China – Dr. Sun - came from this region.

(To be continued)

*1840-1945 China was forced to sign many unequal treaties by foreign powers.

Church Welcome!

By Mary Coulthurst

If you haven't made a new year's resolution yet there is still time: spare an hour or two a week to help with the Church Welcome Scheme.

This scheme is in dire straits! Last year, out of 41 available hours to cover, only 12 were filled. Of those 12 only 7 were active due to health problems with volunteers. Since then, two volunteers have passed away (between them covering 4 hours) and we are left with only 5 hours covered.



We really need your help! A new chart will be placed on the table at the back of the church and I would encourage you, if you are at all able, to volunteer for some time. Spending an hour or two a week in the church is a rewarding and useful experience; just read Geoff Smith and Janet Tippetts' recent articles in Outlook and you will be inspired. This is not an onerous task. For the most part you will have the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful atmosphere in our church, meditating, praying or reading.

Many people come into the church during the day for a brief visit. Some just need a few minutes alone, others will welcome the opportunity to chat with someone. Often just a smile and a word are needed. Most people are very grateful that the church is open and express awe and pleasure with its welcoming atmosphere. There are booklets, leaflets and information boards available to help with any questions regarding the many interesting aspects of the church.

Please consider helping out with this task. If you wish to find out more, please contact me at mary@essylcats.co.uk.

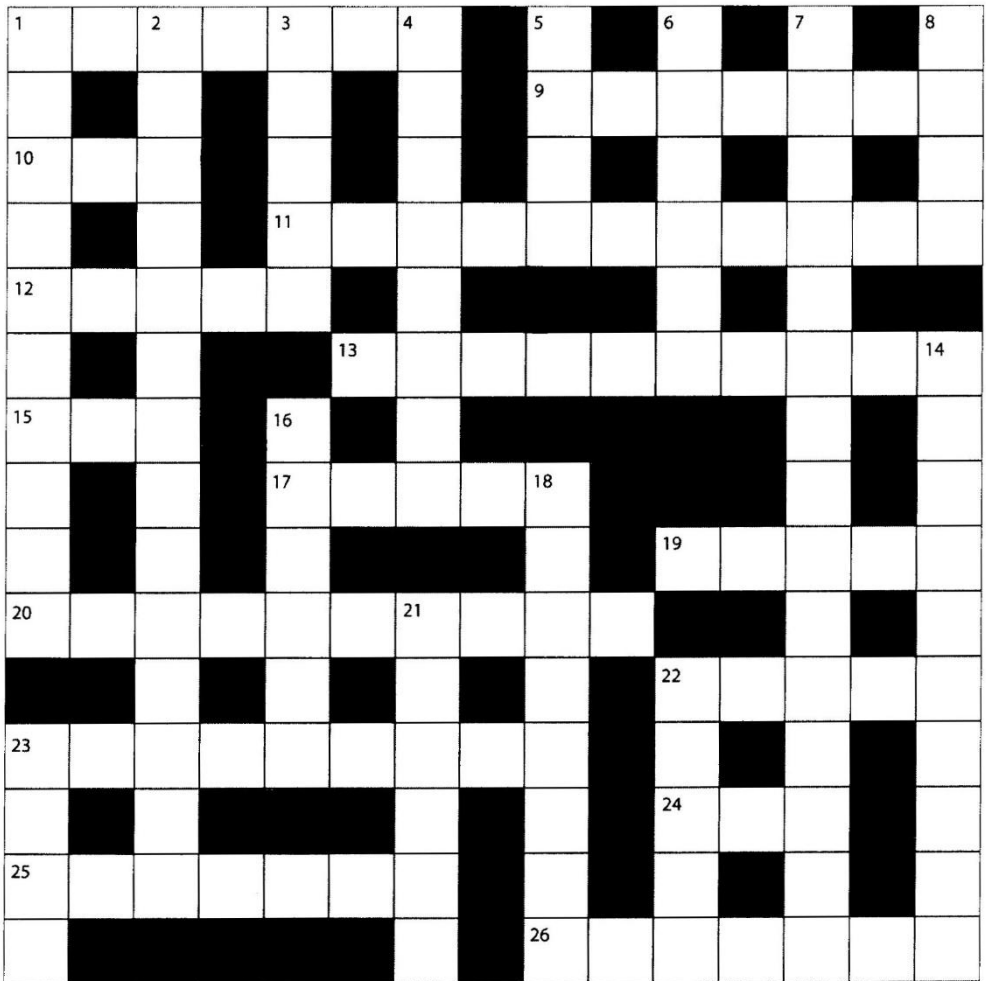
Christmas at St Martin's!

Christmas was a joyful time at St Martin's, with people from the church popping up all over the parish. The Nine Lessons and Carol Service was attended by over 250 people and our Christmas Eve masses were bursting at the seams. Well deserved thanks go to everyone who had a hand in doing something, our priests, churchwardens, social committee, readers, sides people, flowers and trees and many others. Here are a few pictures of the church at Christmas!



St Martin's Crossword

By Jude



Across

1. Authoritative, as in the _ Gospels. (7)
9. Latin for 'rejoice', _ Sunday is the fourth Sunday in Lent. (7)
10. The crux or central point of a matter. (3)
11. The Church of England became the _ church in 1534. (11)
12. Expressed clearly; easy to understand. (5)
13. Benedictine Abbey in North Yorkshire. (10)
15. Paul travelled from Puteoli to Rome along the _ Appia. (3)
17. Companion of Paul, sent to 22 *Down* to reorganise the corrupt church. (5)
19. "It is easier for a _ to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." *Mark 10:25*. (5)
20. Scholar of religion. (10)
22. In biblical times, such a waterway was principally used for irrigation or drainage. (5)
23. The _ Empire adopted Christianity as the official state religion in the 4th century. (9)
24. Priest who raised Samuel but failed to restrain his own wicked sons Hophni and Phinehas. (3)
25. Something commonly held in Church. (7)
26. The _ of the Ark of the Covenant is a cubit and a half (approx. 70cm). *Ex. 25:10* (7)

Down

1. Personal aide of a Cardinal, present at election of a new Pope. (10)
2. Babylonian king who had Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego thrown into a fiery furnace. (14)
3. Adam and Eve before she ate the forbidden fruit. (5)
4. "Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we are exceedingly filled with _." *Ps. 123:3 KJV* (8)
5. Society; association. (6)
6. The Creed is an expression of Christian _ . (6)

7. "Dear Lord and __, __, __": Popular hymn usually sung to the tune 'Repton'. **(6, 2, 7)**
8. "He shall come again to judge the quick and the __." **(4)**
14. Praise be to God! **(10)**
16. "...as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, __ waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." *Prov 9:16-17 KJV* **(6)**
18. 1970s feminist magazine, so named as a sardonic reference to Eve's creation. *Gen 2:21-22* **(5, 3)**
21. Legwear traditionally worn by Bishops. **(6)**
22. See 17 Across. **(5)**
23. The Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the midst of a burning __. *Ex. 3:2* **(4)**

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 March 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 animals in Noah's Ark.

Bears, Cats, Cows, Doves, Giraffes, Hippos, Lions, Ravens, Rhinos, Sheep, Turtles, Zebras

Credit: JTP

<https://www.christianbiblereference.org>

What's on at Bishop Winnington-Ingram Primary School

Our vision: 'My Cup Overflows' Psalm 23:5

A community that gives each child an outstanding spiritual, academic and practical education and instils an awareness of the overflowing joy, love and peace that comes from God's love for us, so that they are able to achieve their potential and truly experience 'life in all its fulness' (John 10:10).



Welcome to your regular update from BWI Primary School!

The Christmas season was a particularly joyful time for us at BWI.

We celebrated with our amazing nativity performances, a special visit from Santa, an unforgettable experience listening to David Walliams speak about his brand-new book *Santa and Son* and a trip into Ruislip where our children sang beautifully for the Mayor of Hillingdon. Our School Council also had the privilege of visiting 10 Downing Street and the Houses of Parliament—an experience that truly brought learning to life.

We also shared some exciting news at the end of last year. Mrs Blake wrote to parents to explain that on 1 December, BWI and Holy Trinity formally federated. I would like to echo her heartfelt thanks to the governors for their leadership throughout this significant process, and to parents for their engagement and support. We are now proud to be known as the Ecclesia Partnership, a group of schools united by a shared belief in collaboration, faith, and flourishing communities.

This term began with a small flurry of snow during Forest School, much to the delight of our children—some of whom were seeing snowflakes for the very first time. Mini snowmen, snow angels, and lots of laughter made for a truly magical experience. Our Reception and Year 1 children have also taken part in pedestrian training, learning important lessons about staying safe near roads.

As we look ahead, we have many exciting trips and experiences planned for the year to come, and we are grateful to walk this journey alongside such a supportive and caring church community.

Thank you once again for all that you do for our school. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership with St Martin's as we move forward together in faith and fellowship.

With warmest wishes and blessings,

Mrs Rodenas



www.bwicofe.co.uk

St Martin's Church

Parish Directory

Vicar	Revd Dr Robert Chapman	13 Eastcote Road, Ruislip, HA4 8BE Tel: 01895 633040 E: frrobertbchapman@gmail.com
Curate	Fr. Joe Grogan	Tel: 07505 477203 E: fr.joe.grogan@gmail.com
Associate	Fr. Michael Bedford	Tel: 020 8866 4332 E: mabedford07cr@gmail.com
All clergy can be contacted through the Parish Office		
Lay Pastoral Assistants	Nina Gibbins	59 Kingsend, Ruislip, HA4 7DD Tel: 01895 639494
	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
St Martins Outlookers	Vacancy	
Sacristy Team	Diane Roberts & Alan Seymour	Tel: 020 8868 5557
Safeguarding Officer	Judith Kaplan	Tel: 01895 672 619
Servers	Fr. Robert Chapman & Alan Seymour	Frrrobertbchapman@gmail.com
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
Brownies (9 th Ruislip)	Fiona Sweet	Tel: 07946 521997
Children's Society	Peter Trott	Tel: 01895 675760
Christian Aid	Jack Sheen	Tel: 01895 634755
Church Grounds Upkeep	Malcolm Roberts	
Church Hall Bookings	Gill Dargue	Tel: 01895 625 456
Church Welcome	Mary Coulthurst	c/o Parish Office
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 October/November issue to
MirandaAtStMartins@gmail.com by 16th March 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 April/May
 2026.

LITANY OF *Gratitude*

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Jesus, hear us.

Jesus, graciously hear us.

God the Father, have mercy on us.

God the Son, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.

- For the gift of life,
- For the gift of salvation,
- For Your great mercy and forgiveness,
- For every grace,
- For the supernatural life in our souls,
- For Your divine indwelling,
- For eternal life with You,
- For all virtues,
- For our Baptism,
- For our Confirmation,
- For the Holy Eucharist,
- For the sacrament of Confession,
- For every sacrament,
- For all our prayers,
- For Sacred Scripture,
- For Sacred Tradition,
- For the Magisterium,

We thank you, Lord

- For the Holy Church,
- For Mary, our Mother,
- For all the saints and angels,
- For our Holy Father, the Pope,
- For our bishops, priests, and deacons,
- For our family and friends,
- For our talents and skills,
- For our joys and delights,
- For every blessing,
- For our trials and sorrows,
- For the challenges we face,
- For the opportunities to grow,
- For everything we learn,
- For all the beauty around us,
- For everything You do for us and give us,
- For Your infinite love,

We thank you, Lord

Let us pray.

Dear Lord, increase our gratitude. Give us hearts of thankfulness and praise. Fill us with Your love that we may pass it on to all those we meet.

Amen.



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Some people have lived in the same house for decades and it can be heart-breaking to leave it for an unknown place that might not feel as welcoming, familiar and have the cherished memories as your home does. It can also be extremely confusing to move someone with dementia out of familiar surroundings.

If you or your family member is struggling with day-to-day tasks, feeling lonely, need someone to take them shopping, attend medical appointments, or just need someone they can count on to provide care and help that is needed. That is exactly what we do at Home Instead. We provide bespoke, flexible older person's care that is dignified thanks to our compassionate, friendly CAREGivers.

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.

The background of the advertisement is a long-exposure photograph of a street at night. On the right, a two-story Tudor-style building with white timber framing and dark brickwork is visible. The ground floor of this building houses a 'coopers' residential branch, with its name illuminated in blue above the entrance. To the left of this building, a modern, curved architectural structure with glass panels and blue lighting is visible. The foreground shows the street with horizontal light trails from passing vehicles in shades of blue and yellow. The sky is a deep, clear blue.

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