

A monthly bulletin of all that is accomplished by and within our church's community

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## **Musings from Margaret**

This is not going to be a continuation of the Vicar's Diary, for two reasons:

- a) I am not the Vicar
- b) Far too much of my life seems to consist of meetings, teleconferences and email, which is desperately uninteresting to anyone else

So Keith and I will simply alternate in providing a brief introductory paragraph for the Parish Chest each month, and this month it's my turn.

Following Father Mark's departure the parish moves into an interregnum (literally 'between reigns', although it must be a long time since a Vicar has reigned over his parish). This gives us time to think about what we want to be and do as a parish, and what sort of person we would like as our next Vicar. There is a formal process to go through, including meetings with the Bishop, before we can advertise, interview and (we hope) identify our next incumbent. Meanwhile the Churchwardens are in charge of the parish, and Keith and I will be helping where we can.

We expect to be able to continue the current pattern of Sunday and Wednesday services. Our social and fund-raising activities will carry on too – not least the appeal for the repairs to the crumbling stonework on the north side of the roof.

We move into the holiday season too, and many of us will be heading off for a break of some sort. It's always interesting (and sometimes fun) to find and try out a local church wherever you are. I well remember being vigorously hugged at the Peace by a congregation of very large Texans (it was July 4th, and I think they were being generous to the loser).

There is a Wee Free church in Stornoway where I sat through an hour-long sermon and eight intoned metrical psalms, and a little village church in the Loire Valley where the congregation seemed to be competing with each other to be doing something that none of the others were – you won if you were standing up when everyone else was sitting down or kneeling, or if you sang while everyone else was mumbling their prayers.

But however strange it seemed, we were all worshipping the same God, and I'm sure he appreciates the variety. Do enjoy the summer, wherever you are, and come back refreshed and ready to help St Peter's as we move into the next stage of our life together.

***Margaret Joachim***

## **St Peter's Day**

On Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June we celebrated our Patronal Festival with a Solemn Mass for the Feats of St Peter the Apostle. The service started with a procession to the statue of St Peter where prayers were said and it finished with the glorious Voluntary from the Organ Symphony No. 1 in D minor by Vierne.

Our preacher was the Revd Anthony Ball, Vicar of St Paul, Ruislip Manor, and was a Curate here at St Peters from 1976 to 1982. His sermon looked at some of the differences between St Paul and St Peter and drew conclusions on both the strengths and human frailties of our patron Saint.

We were delighted also to welcome Jane Robinson as our Deacon at this service. She was celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her ordination to the diaconate and many of us remember with fondness her long association with St Peter's and, indeed, her training to become a deacon and the occasion of her ordination. It was also delightful to welcome a strong contingent from St Barnabas who joined us to celebrate Jane's anniversary.



*Anthony Ball, Jane Robinson, Mark Powell*

Our organist, Alexander Binns, a choir of fourteen voices and a six-piece orchestra, all under the direction of Dan Webb our Director of Music, provided some wonderful and uplifting music to make this service, yet again, a tremendous occasion.

The Mass was followed by a buffet reception in the Church Hall. There was a glass of champagne and a huge cake to toast and congratulate Jane, and also a wonderful display of food which was provided by the congregation.

## **Vicar's Farewell**

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July we said farewell to our Vicar, the Revd Dr Mark Powell, and his wife Helen who have moved to a new parish at

Melbourne in Derbyshire. The Vicar was fittingly escorted into the church by his Churchwardens and, at the end, escorted out.

In his sermon Mark said that he wanted "to talk about three hymns; not three things, but three hymns, or, if you like, three things that happen to be hymns". Mark explained that the hymns he had chosen for his final service were entirely self-indulgent. From these hymns, the three he wanted to focus on were the Conversion Hymn of Charles Wesley 'Where shall my wondering soul begin? How shall I to heaven aspire?'; 'I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'Come unto to me and rest', and 'Brother, sister, let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you'.

The first of these stood for conviction, passion and worship; the second for spirituality, prayer, refreshment, retreat and vision, and the third (his favourite hymn) for mutuality in our pastoral care for each other.

The choir voiced their thanks with two wonderful Anthems 'Like as the hart' by Howells, 'Locus iste' by Bruckner and our Director of Music played 'Hymn Prelude on Rhosymedre' by Vaughan Williams.



Mark & Helen at their farewell lunch

The members of Junior Church sang before the Peace. At the dismissal there was a final surprise – everyone sang an additional song for Mark and Helen, before we adjourned for a lunch in the church hall in their honour.

### **Churchwardens' Farewell**

Churchwarden Richard Peatfield took the opportunity at Mark's farewell party to say a few words of thanks to our departing Vicar. We are all aware that the acoustics in the Church Hall could be improved and for those who were either absent or could not hear clearly what he said, Richard has kindly given the Parish Chest permission to reprint what he said:

"I must be the only person who **has** to speak of

three things.

I am an anatomist by training, so how about some body parts:- the Feet, the Stomach, and the Heart.

I am so glad Mark now has some blue socks - they will be essential when lunching at Melbourne Hall. I suspect red socks will have to be confined to Whitsunday; maybe the yellow ones will be useful for LibDem triumphs as well as Easter Day - two occasions that others here might elide. Surely, though, the glimpse of colour between trousers and shoes gives us a clue as to what lies beneath (or above). We shall miss the red!



Deep in conversation at the farewell lunch

This speech is, by intention, a Psalm of Ascent. Nevertheless it can and I think should be argued that a Parish, like Napoleon's Army, runs on its stomach. The reason why many of us are here, both week by week and especially today, is because of the social nature of this community, and we will be forever grateful to both Mark and Helen for welding us together at Barn Dances, Quizzes, Harvest Suppers and countless Bring-and-share meals. We have never been noted for non-conformist abstemiousness when it comes to the drinks.



Wishing Mark & Helen every happiness

Suburban London can be a dreary dormitory; St Peter's has fulfilled this social role for all of us. The conviviality of the Vicarage has been an inspiration to us all.

Finally the Heart. This is a church, in which we all acknowledge that there is someone beyond ourselves that we are answerable to. For the last ten years the worship here, particularly the teaching and the liturgy has been inspirational; it seems effortless only as a product of much experience and careful planning. Allison and I realise that the decisions we will have to make for the future are not going to be easy.

These qualities deserve a wider canvas, and it is only right that Mark and Helen should move on, to what is clearly the most prestigious Parish in Derbyshire. We are sure Melbourne will enable

him to exercise and extend these talents.

I ask you to raise your glasses in gratitude for Mark's ministry here for the last 10½ years, and to wish both him and Helen every happiness in Melbourne".

### **Vicar's Thank You**

The Parish Chest has received the following from Revd. Mark and Helen Powell:

Dear all,

Thank you so much for the wonderful farewell party you gave us on 10<sup>th</sup> July, and for the immensely generous gift. The climbing rose that you gave Helen will be planted around the back door that opens onto the garden, and we will use some of your gift to buy new garden furniture. We hope to have that installed before my Collation Service in September, so some of you will be able to see it. The lovely planter from Junior Church looks good on the top terrace of the garden.

The new vicarage now looks like home; all the boxes are unpacked, everything is where we want it and the pictures are up on the walls. The garden is an absolute delight, with lovely plants and a gorgeous view of the lake, which the locals call "The Pool." Helen has a bag hanging on the kitchen door with bread for the ducks, which we feed each evening! We are sometimes visited by a pair of swans with two cygnets; they chase the ducks and geese away, so their young can get at the bread. I've also seen an enormous carp swimming by, which must be one of the quarries sought by the fishermen on the far bank!

The vicarage was built in 1845 on the site of two earlier clergy houses. The cellar of the original Elizabethan vicarage still sits below us, so our bottles of wine are now housed in grander quarters than a cupboard below the stairs!

We have met a few of the church people here, but won't see them in force until September. Cakes, jars of jam, bunches of sweet peas and delicious strawberries and cream have been brought to us as welcome gifts.

The move went remarkably well, with the men finishing several hours ahead of schedule and not breaking anything. Our neighbours here were very polite about Church Square being blocked for two days by three large removal vans. One even left his car keys with the men, in case they needed to move it!

Thank you for all the cards, gifts and flowers we also received from many of you. As I said on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2000-2011 at St Peter's has been the happiest period of our lives and we left you with great sadness for pastures new.

**Mark**

### **Dedication Festival**

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July we celebrated the anniversary of the Dedication of St Peter's Church which was consecrated on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1883. This service of thanksgiving focused on the building of St Peter's and what it represents, and on the community that meets and worships here.

There were appropriate readings from the First Book of Kings, the Letter to the Hebrews and from Matthew's Gospel, as well as an extract from the 'Sermon of St Augustine'. Special prayers were offered for the church including the Porch, the Nave, the Bell, the Churchyard, the Windows, the Choir, the Font, the Pulpit and Lectern, the Chancel, and the Altar.

The choir and congregation were in good voice with six popular hymns included in the service. There was a retiring collection for the National Churches Trust which has generously provided funds for repairs at St Peter's in the recent past. The sum of £120 was collected, slightly down on last year.

### **Another Farwell**

Sadly, the Sunday of our Dedication Festival, and just a week after our Vicar left, we had to say goodbye to Dan Webb who has been our Director of Music for two years. In an amusing speech the Revd. Keith Stephenson, who had officiated as Celebrant at the service, summarised Dan's considerable contribution to the musical life of St Peter's.



*Dan (5<sup>th</sup> from left) & the Choir*

Keith explained that over the past two years Dan had sent a weekly e-mail to the choir members after each service commenting on how the 'performance' went. The choir had now sent e-mails to Keith with comments on how he went. And the e-mails provided a lot of material – operas had been composed on less! But this material wouldn't make much of an opera because it was all good!

Looking through these messages it is clear from the warm comments that the choir will clearly miss Dan's expert, lively, challenging and humorous leadership.

The comments included: "*Dan's love of cricket, West Bromwich Albion and other sporting matters - ably assisted by his hand-held device - and above all his wonderful, patient and challenging attention to detail in our singing.*"

*Very much straight from the best Anglican tradition as far as I'm concerned ... it's been a real joy to sing with him";*

*"Every time we turn up for rehearsal he has a wry smile and some amazing story to tell us ... I love his dry sense of humour, his encyclopaedic knowledge of music and musicians, his refusal to compromise on how he want the music to sound – and his refusal to beat us up when we disappoint him. I'd like to tell him how inspiring he has been, and yet so approachable ... I will miss him;" and*

*"As well as being musically brilliant! I think he has been such a great communicator, he has cajoled, teased, challenged, taught, explained and inspired us to some really good singing. He has been realistic about what we can do but pushed us as well ... most of all, for me anyway, it has been such fun."*

## **Race for Life**

On Sunday 10th July, I ran Race for Life in memory of my sister Tara Crisp, with my daughter Emily and Tara's two daughters, Niamh and Erin.



*Emily, Sian, Erin & Niamh*

Tara had asked me to run with the girls and I was delighted that I was able to do so. We managed to raise £2088.13 (including gift aid), which was fantastic. Much of our sponsorship came from St Peters and I wanted to thank each and everyone of you for your very generous donations. Knowing how highly Tara was thought of amongst the church community, has brought us great comfort, at what has been a very difficult time.

***Sian Motyer***

## **Synod**

A meeting of the London Diocesan Synod was held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July in the OBE chapel of St Paul's Cathedral. Those members of Synod who arrived early enough would have been in

time to attend Choral Evensong in the Cathedral immediately beforehand. The meeting was chaired by the Bishop of London and representatives from the House of Bishops, House of Clergy and House of Laity.

Following an act of worship led by the Rt Revd Graeme Knowles, Dean of St Paul's, which took the form of Evening Prayer, there was a full agenda which included a formal questions session covering a variety of topics including children in care, protecting clergy housing from rogue tenants, the burdens put on Area Deans in the absence of an Archdeacon and the provision of accommodation to London clergy who leave the Church of England to join the RC Ordinariate.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2010 of the London Diocesan Fund were received together with a very interesting summary of financial trends in the Diocese finances over the past decade. These statistics are available at Deanery and Parish level.

An update was provided on the 'London Challenge 2012' on the recruitment and training of two thousand and twelve Ambassadors for Jesus Christ under-35 years of age. There will be two streams: one for those aged 13-17, and one for those aged 18-35. The Bishop of Willesden then summarised ways of getting involved and the mission opportunities available for churches during the Olympic and Paralympic Games next year.

Finally there was a lengthy, informal, discussion on 'Women in the Episcopate' in connection with the motion to be debated and voted on at the next Diocesan Synod meeting in October. A large number of people wanted to speak and around fifteen Deaneries (including Ealing) reported on the outcomes of their Deanery Synod meetings, when they voted on the resolution, and another fifteen or so individuals (both clergy and laity) rose to speak to the topic. Ealing Deanery recently voted strongly in favour of the motion but it is not possible at this point to say which way the vote will go in London as there were several voices, and Deanery votes, against the motion.

If you would like any more information about this meeting please speak to either Trevor Bates or Rosamund Rowe who are elected lay representatives from the Ealing Deanery Synod.

***Trevor Bates***

## **Christians Together**

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July Rosemary Palmer, Harold and I joined others of various denominations on a coach trip to Coventry Cathedral. Many of you will have been there and to those who haven't, do go, it's an inspiring and moving place.

The cathedral was burnt overnight in November 1940 when the whole centre of Coventry was destroyed by incendiary bombs. The decision to rebuild the cathedral was taken the next morning. Rebuilding would not be an act of defiance, but rather a sign of faith, trust and

hope for the future of the world.

This was the vision of the Provost at the time, Dick Howard, which led the people of Coventry away from feelings of bitterness and hatred. It has developed into the cathedral's world wide Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation. There is a network of over 150 organisations in 60 countries all committed to a shared ministry of reconciliation under the name of the Community of the Cross of Nails. This is after a cross that was made, just after the fire, by a local priest, from three medieval nails fallen from the ruined timber roof.

The decision was made to leave the dramatic shell of the old cathedral, making a striking monument with its red stone and delicate tracery and very tall, untouched tower and spire. The new cathedral designed by Basil Spence lies at right angles to the old. I won't try and describe it except to say that it is unashamedly modern (that is mid 20<sup>th</sup> century!) full of stained and etched glass, tapestry, sculpture, woodwork, paintings etc. from all the major post war British artists and many beautiful gifts from other countries. You may not like them all but there is certainly something to challenge, thrill and inspire everyone.

We ended our visit in the circular Chapel of Unity with the cathedral's special Coventry Litany of Reconciliation. Here it is.

'All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,

**Father Forgive**

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,

**Father Forgive**

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,

**Father Forgive**

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

**Father Forgive**

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,

**Father Forgive**

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

**Father Forgive**

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,

**Father Forgive**

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.'

As a town planner I was very interested in a notice containing an extract from a letter by Sir David Eccles, Minister of Works at the end of the war. It was written to Coventry Council who proposed to refuse permission for the building of the new cathedral because the practical priority must be to rebuild homes and schools etc. He wrote:

*"It would be an abuse of my powers to refuse a licence because some people thought this particular building useless. I hope however that the decision will be accepted on wider grounds... Can we be so sure that a cathedral would be so useless?"*

Would we get a decision taking such matters into account today I wonder?

**Christina Stringer**

## **PCC**

A meeting of the Parochial Church Council was held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July at Moullin House. During the vacancy, in the absence of a Vicar, these meetings will be chaired by the Deputy Chairman, Richard Peatfield.

The very busy agenda included a report from the Treasurer on the state of our finances and our Common Fund submission for 2012, together with a lively discussion on the proposed stewardship campaign this autumn. (The Stewardship Committee had recently met).

It was agreed to form an Interregnum Committee to look after matters during the forthcoming vacancy which will consist of the present Standing Committee members – Churchwardens, Secretary and Treasurer – and also include additional members co-opted to support the work.

Allison McAllister reported on several matters connected with the maintenance of the fabric of the buildings and she also took the opportunity to update the PCC on progress in connection with the planned £250,000 stone work project on the north side of the church building.

Under 'Junior Church', issues connected to the accommodation needs for the various age groups were discussed, and under 'Mission Committee' it was agreed that, in the absence of the Vicar, Wendy Quill would chair the committee. There were also reports on health and safety, the recent meeting of the London Diocesan Synod and the numerous social events that had occurred at St Peter's over the past two months.

Finally, it was noted that the PCC have met regularly at Moullin House for over twenty years and that this was the last occasion that this venue would be used for this purpose. A vote of thanks was proposed to Stuart McPherson and his staff and the Chairman asked that it be minuted and passed on to Stuart.

**Susan Brewin**

## **Past Times**

In the June issue of the Parish Chest it was mentioned that when St Peter's was first built the two doors on either side of the main West door were not included in the designs for the church.

**100 years ago** - the following was reported in the August 1911 edition of the Parish Magazine:

'The church council has for some weeks had under consideration the resolution passed at the Easter Vestry, drawing attention to the need for more exits from the church. This has been a long felt need, and in view of its necessity, which must have been fully realised, the Council took up the matter. Mr E J May ARIBA was asked to go into the matter and submit designs. These designs have been approved by the Council. A door will be put at the end of the North and South Aisles which will relieve the present congested conditions after Matins. Messrs Dorey, of Brentford, who, it will be remembered, were the builders of the church, have submitted an estimate for carrying out the work at a cost of £200'

The article goes on to say that meeting this charge might prove to be a problem as more than £300 was still owed on the building of the Vicarage. However, it argues that consideration be given to using the £150 raised so far for building a new Parish Hall which should, instead, be used towards defraying the cost of the doors and that this work ought to be put in hand as soon as possible.

The report continues 'the search for a site of our Parish Hall has clearly to be abandoned ... (and) in view of our indebtedness on the Vicarage, it seems nothing more than common sense to use this money for the immediate need. Of course, it cannot be done by the Church Council, which is not a legal body; the Vestry has legal standing, and the power to decide such a question, and if they decide to give the authority, it makes our course clearer. If not, the matter must be postponed till the money is raised'.

## **A Tale of Two Particular Churches**

Don Kennedy who regularly sings in St Peter's choir, has provided the following in connection with Mark's recent move from Ealing to Melbourne.

Churches "are the history of the people of the parish - the humbler under finely carved Georgian headstones, the grander commemorated by masterpieces of eighteenth-century marble in nave and chancel and side chapel. They are the living record, not the museum, of English craftsmanship. And where the Victorians have swept most of the Georgian work away, still enough remains for us to see in the eye of imagination how once the church looked when former generations worshipped in it.

Nor are the Victorians wholly to be condemned. When not restoring but starting from scratch they built some of the noblest churches we possess. More lately we have **St Peter's, Ealing**; St Mary's, Wellingborough; St Cyprian's, Baker Street; and Christ Church, Brixton; of

which we can be proud....."

*(from John Betjeman: "The fabric of our faith", first published in "Punch", 23 December 1953; reprinted in Kevin J. Gardner: "Betjeman on Faith"; SPCK, 2011)*

**St Michael with St Mary, Melbourne** - "Melbourne lies comfortably in the valley of the River Trent, yet it is unmistakably a tough northern church. The settlement was made the seat of the Norman bishops of Carlisle...They built a church commensurate with their status, a mini-cathedral large enough for future generations of worshippers and thus saved from rebuilding. It survives as one of the finest Norman churches of England...The interior is sensational, Norman in both character and detail..."

*(from Simon Jenkins: "England's Thousand Best Churches"; Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1999 / Penguin Books, 2000).*

## **Double Congratulations**

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July we toasted the Revd Harold and Christina Stringer as they celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. The Revd Keith Stephen congratulated the couple on achieving this significant milestone. Keith confided afterwards that "the wine they provided for us all to celebrate was Fairtrade - had I known before I opened my mouth to speak I'd have mentioned the fact. Its Fairtrade status made me enjoy it more when I opened my mouth to drink".



*Christina & Harold Stringer*

Christina and Harold were married in Hampshire on St Swithin's day (15<sup>th</sup> July) in 1961 and it rained!! Christina says "It was very much a home-made do and my main regret is that - as the custom was then - we went away from the reception and didn't stay on for the walk down to the beach in the dark with a swim and fireworks. It is much more sensible nowadays where the couple stay for the evening so that they can see everyone properly. There are usually people that there may not be the opportunity to see again for some time. Anyway, at least we didn't have to join the seven people who slept on the floor!"

The previous week we had toasted the health of Maurice and Cicely Pratt who had just celebrated

sixty-two years of marriage. They were married at Whickam Parish Church, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1949. Cicely lived on the Gateshead side of the river whilst Maurice lived 'over the water' on the Northumberland side. They met at a dance hall where Maurice was playing in a band and Cicely was there with a friend to dance. Maurice asked Cicely if she would go to the pictures with him that Sunday and she said she was going to Church - so Maurice went to church with her instead!



Cicely & Maurice Pratt

## **Book Review**

*Mere Theology* by Alister McGrath:

In our Dedication Festival we all say, "We will seek to understand our faith and share it, and to discover what the word of God demands of us in this place." But we probably all dread the "bus stop conversation" - a stranger asks us what it is to be a Christian and why we are Christians. We'd wish Alister McGrath would join us at the bus stop - he's much better at explaining it all. Well, Alister sends his apologies - he can't be at every bus stop in Christendom - but he also sends us his book.

It's a little book (153 pages) but deals with huge subjects and draws on McGrath's vast knowledge (its Notes are a further 20 pages, drawing on the work of authors from Augustine of Hippo to Charles Darwin and Richard Dawkins).

The huge subjects include the questions that troubled McGrath as a teenager - "What was life all about? What was its meaning?" He was a strong scientist and mathematician at school, winning a scholarship to Oxford - science and atheism seemed to exclude the need for religion. Yet the more he studied, the more he understood that science does not exclude religion. "Nature can be interpreted, without any loss of integrity, in a number of different ways. Some 'read' or 'interpret' nature in an atheist way. Others 'read' it in a deistic way, seeing it as pointing to a creator divinity, who is no longer involved in its affairs. Others take a more specifically Christian view, believing in a God who both creates and sustains the universe. One can be a 'real' scientist *with* or *without* being committed to any specific religious, spiritual or anti-religious view of the world."

And for McGrath the world and its people

resonate with the Christian vision of reality. It's comforting to think that today's greatest thinkers (like McGrath) conclude that Christianity is the best explanation for everything, and tempting just to take their word, and leave our thinking to them. But if that's our approach we're missing out on an awful lot - McGrath introduces his book with these inviting words, "Christian theology is one of the most intellectually stimulating and exciting subjects it is possible to study, rich in resources for the life of faith and the ministry of the Church." Theology is the "discipleship of the mind" - remember Christ's summary of the Jewish Law, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind."

The title *Mere Theology* deliberately echoes C S Lewis's *Mere Christianity* - expanding on many of Lewis's themes. McGrath sets out with two main aims - firstly, to show the purpose, place and relevance of Christian theology (why it's needed and what it does); secondly, to show how our Christian faith engages with our culture (as we are called to be salt and light to the world).

As McGrath is Professor of Theology, Ministry and Education, and Head of the Centre for Theology, religion & Culture at King's College London, there can be few people better placed to aid our theological understanding of these two aims.

**Keith Stephenson**

## **Exhibitions**

London has enjoyed a large number of exhibitions with a Christian theme in recent months - several of you will remember our parish outing to the exhibition last July at Lambeth Palace when it celebrated the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the library and showed several of its glorious treasures. During July I visited three such exhibitions:

Firstly, and again in the Great Hall at Lambeth Palace, was '**Out of the Original Sacred Tongues' - The Bible in Translation.**

This exhibition ran for three months and closed on 29<sup>th</sup> July. It looked at the huge obstacles that faced the early translators of the Bible into English, from Wyclif through to Tyndale, Coverdale and Knox, and at Renaissance scholarship and various English vernacular Bibles.

The centrepiece of the exhibition was a first edition of the King James Bible opened at the beginning of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Below this impressive volume was a page from an early draft written in secretary hand where each verse is numbered and marginal notes such as that at chapter 1 verse 7, 'or, called saints' with 'called to be saints' written next to it in a different hand!

The final four cases covered the development of

Bible translation over the past four hundred years including early European vernacular Bibles in German, French, Polish, Icelandic and Spanish, and into many other languages including Melanesian, Swahili, Maori, Telegu, Mohawk and Wedau (a dialect spoken in Papua New Guinea).

Secondly, at the British Museum with an entry price of £12 and running until 9<sup>th</sup> October, is **'Treasures of Heaven – saints, relics and devotion in medieval Europe'**.



*Reliquary bust of unknown saint c.1520-1530  
(© Met Museum, New York)*

In his crit. in the Sunday Telegraph, Andrew Graham-Dixon said that this "is a brave exhibition which sets out to explore the ancient Christian cult of relics and enthralling works of art created to house them". I was particularly excited by the prospect of this exhibition as I have completed a Birkbeck Diploma in Early European Medieval History and one of the units was entitled 'Pilgrimage, Saints, Relics.' And it didn't disappoint!

The exhibits have been brought together from forty museum and churches around the world, including the Vatican. Relics were often humble objects – a bone or a fragment of clothing – but they had great spiritual value. They were stored in ornate containers called reliquaries made by the most skilled goldsmiths from the finest materials available and crafted in many forms from simple boxes to elaborate architectural structures. Relics could serve as a personal focus for prayer but were also used with great ceremony in public rituals. The rulers of medieval Europe amassed vast collections of relics which gave them political power and spiritual protection. They even gave relics from their private collections as diplomatic gifts  
Thirdly, at the National Gallery with free

admission and running until 2<sup>nd</sup> October, is **'Devotion by Design'**.

This exhibition explores the function, the original location and the development of altarpieces in Italy during the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance. It puts the altarpieces in context – they were not originally intended to hang in galleries but were created for a specific sacred context forming the focus of devotion for worshippers.

The exhibition investigates the development of altarpieces, looking at changes in form, style and type. It examines not only the evolution of their physical structure but also their relationship to their frames and the monumental architecture that surrounded them.

A section of the exhibition is dedicated to altarpiece fragments, explaining the role different elements of altarpieces played in the overall ensemble and examines the reasons why altarpieces came to be dismembered (often with the dissolution of religious institutions in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) and the methods that historians now use to reassemble them.

There is also an excellent film, well worth seeing, which accompanies this exhibition and is shown continuously throughout the day

**Trevor Bates**

### Jazz Party

The annual Jazz Party took place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July. Due to the inclement weather, the party was not held in the vicarage garden but in the church and church hall which protected the band and party-goers from the elements. This is only the second time in ten years that this event had been forced indoors.

However, this did not detract from the fun where Maurice Pratt and his band entertained us with some marvellous music and a splendid tea, including strawberries and cake, was enjoyed by everyone.

Our thanks go to Allison and Matthew McAllister, Angus McAvoy, Susan and Richard Peatfield and Val and Ron Stevens who set up and cleared up afterwards.

### Year's Mind



Please remember in your prayers the following people whose year's mind falls at this time:

Joan Dewey	7 August 1995
Florence Cowdrey	8 August 1993
Lilian Shawley	22 August 2006
Gladys Gibbs	23 August 1975
Doris Ives	29 August 2000