

# The Newsletter

Number 110 - All Saints 2023

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Events which mark the passage of time – one thinks of birthdays, anniversaries, etc. – are a common feature of our human life; they have also been a specific hallmark of the Church since earliest days.

One only has to think of the feasts and celebrations observed in the Hebrew Scriptures and faithfully commemorated by the Jewish community in our own day, to realise that we stand in a long tradition.

St George's, Paris, has, over the years, had its fair share of commemorations of one kind and another. This is evident from a glance at our informative archives. As we approach a significant stage in our journey together - our Bicentenary Year 2024 - it is fitting that our Council member and longstanding parishioner, Julia Campbell, is researching our history as a Chaplaincy. We look forward to reading the fruit of her labours in the pages of this Newsletter over the course of next year.

Without anticipating the results of Julia's research, it is, I think, evident that we can look back with thankfulness to God for a rich and colourful past, while looking to the future with clear-sighted, expectant hope.

One sign of this looking forward has been our Chaplaincy Hymn Search which has produced a text already hailed by eminent hymnologist Emeritus Professor Richard Watson as "superb". Prof. Watson adds, "I hope it becomes widely known..." That hope will surely be advanced by its use in our own worship, starting in 2024.

Meanwhile, I leave you to peruse the pages of this well-stocked edition of our Newsletter, but not before evoking in the words of another hymn that 'hope' which is the gift of God to his Church. In his Vexilla Regis Prodeunt, the

sixth-century priest-poet St Venantius Fortunatus of Poitiers penned some memorable lines, superbly translated here by the English priest-poet Alan Gaunt (1935-2023):

*We hail the cross, faith's one true hope:  
God's passion set in time and space,  
by which our guilt is blotted out,  
engulfed in such stupendous grace.*



Indeed, we have much to look forward to!

John C

## FROM THE CHAPLAIN'S DESK

Writing this to you all at a time of heightened national and international tensions makes for a choice: do I focus on the local life of our Chaplaincy, or do I take this opportunity to encourage you more generally? John's imaginative and wide-ranging Newsletter demonstrates something of our common life – its continuities and the eruptions of joy that mark life in Paris. So, I'm going to try for the latter – encouragement.

One of the features of modern media is the way it has fragmented public conversations both in the UK and here in France. Consensus is hard to find amongst current divisions, binaries harden and unsolvable problems abound; trust in institutions, including churches, is at an all time low. The passionate search for the feet of clay in our heroes has found much material and nowhere we are told can we find explanations capable of bearing the weight of our hopes and aspirations. Our hope in universal human values corrodes in the acid bath of the climate crisis and the inability of democratically elected governments to get to grips with global problems challenges narratives about human progress and the greatness of the human spirit. So far, so grim! But we have a hope that, while not a sticking plaster, is nonetheless able to account for the joy we have in believing.

Scripture records the conversation God has with humanity prodding us to be the people he created us to be rather than the people we want to be:

*You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt*

yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord. Leviticus 19.17-18

And pre-eminently in Jesus God challenges us:

'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Luke 10.43-46

Paradoxically that message is so powerful that, even in the face of the decline of the institutional churches in Europe, it continues to shape the modern world. The Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann (1921-1983) argues that the paradox of the problem lies not outside of but within the way in which we practice our faith, in the way we live out Christ's promise to bring us the fullness of life:

'The world has become secular not because it has become 'irreligious', 'materialistic', 'superficial', not because it has 'lost religion' – as so many Christians still think – but because old explanations do not really explain. Christians often do not realise that they themselves, or rather Christianity, has been a major factor in this liberation from old religion. Christianity with its message offering fullness of life, has contributed more than anything to the liberation of man from the fears and pessimism of religion. Secularism, in this sense, is a phenomenon within the Christian world, a phenomenon impossible without Christianity. Secularism rejects Christianity insofar Christianity has identified itself with the 'old religion' and is forcing upon the world those 'explanations' and 'doctrines' of death and life which Christianity has already destroyed.'

It's a life-changing idea that we are called not to be 'religious'; not to speak to our neighbours about Jesus as if he's the best spiritual chemical to combat the bed-bugs of daily life, not to teach our children that believing in Jesus is like a long-term life habit, akin to music, poetry or sport. Schmemmann argues that the power of the Christian faith lies in the way that Jesus's radical message of God's mercy and the deep, eternal, divine will for human flourishing has already transformed our minds, our lives and our communities in ways which resonate in contemporary debates thanks to the faith of the Church.

So, in Timothy Radcliffe's disarming way we can also ask 'Why be a Christian?' What difference does our churchgoing, our submitting to the disciplines of Christian living, our participation in Christian community make if the values that Jesus taught are already enshrined in the best of human society?

Like any healthy family don't we need to learn how to live together in truth; acknowledging that sometimes in the past we've had sinners who are not simply 'bad-eggs' or 'rum characters' but downright scoundrels? Don't we need to acknowledge that hearing God in Scripture is an active communal activity as much as an individual practise and that we each of us need to be nourished in the Eucharistic life of the Risen Christ?

That's why I continue to believe one of the most radical responses to current dystopias is belong to a real human Christian community. To bring our children, our nearest and dearest, our neighbours to join in a radical and life-altering practise. Here we are continually challenged by the Word of God to live the beatitudes, to treat our neighbour as we would have ourselves treated. Here we are fed a transforming diet far more potent than anything imaginable here on earth: the very Body and Blood of Christ. Here we have real, challenging, lovely, unique and gifted people to love. To be salt and light, to be leaven in the loaf of our daily lives.

All that is a particular challenge to the congregations at St George's because we are dispersed over such a wide area, often travelling hours to attend worship. Age, infirmity, or family commitments might make our participation feel, in comparison with those next to us in the pew, slight - but I would encourage you all: God is on your side! We also need to ensure that you can participate as fully as possible and find what you need to flourish. In order that, wherever we find ourselves, in whatever we do, we can live and love confident in St Paul's words,

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12.21

Fr Mark

## OBITUARIES

**Sheila Bennett** was a familiar, companionable figure around St George's for many years. Sheila died during the summer, and a Requiem was held for her in September. We are grateful to Fr David Houghton, who preached at the service, for the text of his homily...



'You know, O Lord, the secrets of our hearts'...

Once upon a time a young lady set off from sleepy Weston-Super-Mare on the adventure of a life. Off she went to live and work in Paris and be 'one of the girls' at UNESCO, actually in the Department of Human Rights.

Some of us here have made that same journey. Perhaps we have to say that we know little of the early days of Sheila. There is a big gap – rather as in the life of Jesus – but we come with fragments, precious fragments, dear to us. Yet Sheila is before us today simply as a woman created by God out of love and for love. Who knows of the loves of Sheila? For she was for sure a class act, a beauty: she brought grace, delight, fun; yet no doubt also she knew disappointments, unfulfilled ambitions. We love her and give thanks that Sheila was loaned to us as a companion. So, what of these fragments? Of secrets quietly revealed to us? I am merely just one friend among others, but allow me to count first music – Rossini, Wagner, Mahler (she tried to teach me to give Mahler more attention), then Sheila's foie gras; the delight of her flowering terrace; the cats and her love of my dog Zach. There are some many other parts – you will know them as glimpses into the person, Sheila, created and loved by God.

Ignatius of Loyola wrote that our purpose here on earth is 'to praise, reverence and serve God', and that our 'one desire and choice should be only that which leads us to the purpose for which we are created'. Well, I can't quite hear Sheila echoing those words, but nonetheless she kept them and lived them...

Sheila knew beauty in all its ways, and so she praised life, especially by her love – and profound knowledge – of music. Sheila was a regular at the Opéra de Paris and travelled widely for an Opéra production. In recent years she enjoyed the Rossini Festival at a Spa town in the Black Forest, she even came to see me and go together with me to 'A Love of Three Oranges' in Mannheim. Sheila was not so impressed! And beyond the spectacle of the stage, she enjoyed Janacek, Mahler, Quartets, the piano...

And as for reverence – here I think it is shown in her hospitality, a table prepared with rich food and wines. Did you taste her home-made foie gras? Beyond praise, even if, as we have just heard, King Charles does not care for this joy! And she honoured and treasured animals: her Mimi and my Zach. As soon as I arrived here in 2002, I received a note from Sheila (whom I had yet to meet) to say that the first point I needed to know as Chaplain would be who could look after Zach when I had to be away. And there were the details, the address, which road to take....and so Zach's holidays were sorted out in a moment!

And Sheila's warm heart was no more obvious than in the service she gave to immigrants in her quartier, offering her culinary gifts in classes, quietly attending to those tasks regularly in retirement. With her excellent French, she was known and loved by neighbours, and she gave in diverse ways to the life of this Church of St George.

Just mentioning retirement... I sense that Sheila had that special gift, able to use each time of life as can be best appreciated and enjoyed. In work she was assiduous, dedicated, a professional, a team member. Then in her long retirement years she turned to music, long chats on the telephone, her cats and, especially, travel. Until very recently Sheila would set off alone for India, which she adored. She remained determined to make the most of what was given.

There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens  
a time to be born and a time to die,

a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,  
a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
a time to search and a time to give up,  
a time to keep and a time to throw away,  
God has made everything beautiful in its time....

These words of the 4th century BC teacher and philosopher are of a lone voice, one unsure about organised religion, yet sensitive to the injustices of the world, for whom the meaning of life is to search for truth and to forsake vanity. I offer them in honour of our dear friend here, who remained simply herself, living life fully until the last days, always looking forward. Why, only in February when we had dinner together, she asked if she could join me for the Wagner Ring Festival in Budapest next summer...

There is, you will notice, something unusual, perhaps poignant, about this occasion today. An absence of family. As to Sheila's kin, we know nothing. For many of us - perhaps you - the praise, reverence and service to God is expressed through family, friends, partner, spouse; yet Sheila remained single.

Her giving and receiving took a distinct path. For the single state is not easy. There is freedom, but also the trap of undesired solitude and loneliness, no sharing of joys, sadness, decisions, wonders, anxiety, laughter. The single life holds complex layers of being and loving.

But we are not actually single. Our Christian identity is of a Body that needs each part. So, we come today to the Divine Table of the Lord to share the risen life offered in Jesus.

Hear these words of Shelley in Love's Philosophy:

*The fountains mingle with the river  
And the rivers with the ocean,  
The winds of heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion;  
Nothing in the world is single,  
All things by a law divine  
In one another's being mingle—  
Why not I with thine?*

'Nothing in the world is single, all things by a law divine.' So dear Sheila, we commend you, dear soul, created by God, that now you will take the place kept for you in the eternal home. Words from the Gospel of Matthew:

Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden,  
And I will give you rest.  
For I am gentle and lowly in heart,  
And you will find rest for your souls.

**Owen Parkes**, former organist of St George's, Michael Stoddart, remembers Owen Parkes, a familiar figure in the ranks of the Choir and around the church...

I first met Owen Parkes nearly forty years ago in Krakow when we were both singing with a Boys' Choir based in northern France, aptly called Les Rossignolets de Roubaix. I immediately appreciated his wonderful sense of humour (especially in his descriptions of the tour organiser, Leopold) and his keen powers of observation and curiosity.

Indeed, his curiosity and imagination are two of his characteristics that I found the most endearing. We kept in touch, both through Les Rossignolets, more often in Roubaix, or sometimes with combined skiing and singing trips in Germany and Austria, as well as occasional visits to St George's.

A few years later, Elisabeth (my wife) and I moved 'permanently' to Paris where I became organist at St George's and where of course we got to know Owen a great deal better.

As I was looking for work, I was again struck by Owen's imagination and indeed his great kindness. He had a huge wealth of ideas that he tapped into for me, and indeed it was largely down to him that I started working for the then computer giant Bull, supplemented by translation work. He had both the contacts and the know-how to put me in touch with the right people.

I haven't yet mentioned what perhaps meant the most for me and that was his love and skill at singing. Of course, he had no mean advantage over the rest of us mortals by birth and childhood, but I always loved the ease with which he handled his voice, particularly in the early years. It was always a pleasure to accompany his innate musicianship and natural voice. Whether week by week in St George's or in concerts across Europe, I have many very happy memories of working with him, where both his singing and his (often wicked) humour brought me great joy.

While ferociously atheist, Owen demonstrated a love, caring concern and spirituality that far exceeded that seen in many church-going Christians. I hope he is pleasantly surprised by where he now finds himself.

No description of Owen would be complete without a deep recognition of Margaret, the real love of his life. While he could be both intensely private, and quite unconventional, I saw over the years his profound affection, respect and passion for her. With her typically north-eastern, direct, and practical nature, she perfectly complemented his more capricious temperament. His loss is felt keenly by all who knew and loved him, but none more so than her.

**Scott Sullivan.** *Long-time worshippers at St George's will recall Scott Sullivan, who died at his home in the US earlier this year. Scott's rugged features were a well-known presence, Scott himself being particularly appreciated for his wonderful Sunday-lunch cooking of authentic Cajun dishes from his home state of Louisiana.*

*The following are extracts from an Obituary published in his old newspaper, the Baltimore Sun...*

Scott G. Sullivan, a Baltimore Sun city editor and Paris bureau chief who later joined Newsweek magazine, died June 25 of heart failure at his companion's home in New Iberia, Louisiana. He was age 85.

"Scott was brilliant and highly accomplished," William F. Schmick III, former Baltimore Sun city editor, wrote in an email. "He came to The Sun from Yale, where he was editor of the Yale Daily News, a grueling job, while also being elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Within a few years of graduating, he published a novel about his college days, 'The Shortest, Gladdest Years'".

Scott Gregory Sullivan, son of Dr Maurice Sullivan, head of the dermatology department at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Beatrice Adams Sullivan, a homemaker, was born in Cleveland, Ohio. After graduating from Gilman School in 1954, he earned a Bachelor's degree in 1958 from Yale College, where he was a Magna Cum Laude graduate. Mr. Sullivan was a Henry Fellow at St Catherine's College, Cambridge University, where he obtained a second Bachelor's degree in 1960 in European history, and a Master's degree in 1963.

That year, he joined The Sun rewrite desk and later was its City Hall reporter. He was appointed city editor, and at the time, was thought to be the youngest city editor of a major American newspaper.

Robert A. Erlandson, a retired Sun reporter and foreign correspondent, was also a colleague of Mr. Sullivan's. "Scott was one of the best editors at handling copy," Mr. Erlandson said. "He had the ability to make a story better without doing damage and was good at what he did." David Ettlin, who retired as The Sun's night editor, recalled in an email how Mr. Sullivan transformed his professional life.

"Scott was the editor who took a chance on promoting me from part-time editorial assistant to reporter in 1968, when he could have found someone with far more experience," he wrote. "I will never forget that gift, which changed the course of my life. I wonder how many other lives he affected in such a profound way."

He was The Sun's bureau chief in Paris, and after leaving the paper, joined Newsweek in its Paris office. He later was the magazine's chief diplomatic correspondent in Washington from 1976 to 1979; and then its European regional editor from 1979. After leaving Newsweek in 1998, he went to work for the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA) as its public affairs adviser.

Through the years, his work earned him numerous awards including the George Polk Award for foreign journalism in 1986. The French government recently named Mr. Sullivan a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, which is the highest award of merit, both civil and military, that the government can bestow.





Mr. Sullivan retired in 2005, and arrived in New Orleans the same day as Hurricane Katrina, family members said. He proceeded to immerse himself in the intellectual and social life of the city.

He was the author of “A History of the Marshall Plan” and numerous other books.

While living in Paris, Mr. Sullivan was a longtime communicant of the American Cathedral where he served as a vestryman for a decade, and as a delegate to the Anglo-Roman Catholic World dialogue.\*

He was predeceased in 1971 by Mary Cecile Clarke whom he married in 1959; his wife of nine years, Peggy Polk, who died in 2015; and another daughter, Maeve Mauricette Sullivan. A marriage to H  l  ne Mireille Henry ended in divorce.

\* Before coming to us at St George’s [Ed.]

Mary Ann Warrick adds the following:

This newspaper obituary traces Scott’s public life well. Privately, however, he was much more. This is intimated in the quotation from David Ettl  n about Scott having changed the course of his life and that of others. Scott had that kind of discernment for his neighbour which he had difficulty seeing in himself. But for those of us who loved him, we knew that he walked faithfully in the footsteps of Saint Paul, another misunderstood genius.

## THE CHAPLAINCY AUTUMN RETREAT 2023

An unseasonably warm October weekend saw members of our Chaplaincy spend time together in a historic Norman abbey on what is becoming an annual event...

On Friday 6th October, nineteen members of our church joined Fr Jeffrey at L’Abbaye de St-Wandrille, also known as l’Abbaye de Fontenelle, for the annual Chaplaincy Retreat.

The Abbey is located near Caudebec-en-Caux above the Seine, northwest of Rouen. The Abbey itself consists of several structures, including housing for the Benedictine monks who inhabit the monastery, as well as various places of worship. Some of the buildings are mostly ruins dating back to the seventh century and others are quite modern. The Abbey also offers lodging and boarding accommodation for retreatants in a modern facility – L’H  tellerie – which is located on a separate property about half a kilometre away from the Abbey.

The Retreat focused on the teachings of Saint Paul, and in four sessions Fr Jeffrey explored with the retreatants the life of Saint Paul, the scope of his writings, his struggle with the relationship between Jewish law and Christian faith, and the personal relationship with God that Christ offers to those who believe in him and that is evidenced in the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. Fr Jeffrey’s four talks were accompanied by very active question-and-answer sessions that addressed, among other topics, the relationship between Paul and Peter, the interplay of Paul’s epistles with the Acts of the Apostles and the gospels, Paul’s views on human sexuality and the status of women in the early Christian church.

The sessions on St. Paul were augmented by opportunities offered by the Abbey to join the Benedictine community in daily Mass and evening prayers (mainly in Latin, sung to Gregorian chant), and to tour the abbey grounds and

buildings. The schedule also allowed the retreatants unstructured time in which they could appreciate the beauty of the Normandy countryside on an unusually warm and sunny autumn weekend.

L’H  tellerie is a comfortable, modern facility suitable for boarding and lodging and conferences, but access from it to the Abbey was challenging for some, especially after sunset. Despite this b  mol, the weekend was, by general consent, a spiritually satisfying and enlightening time together. Thanks are extended to Fr Jeffrey for his organisation and contribution to its success.



Following the Parish Retreat, during which Fr Jeffrey spoke about the Apostle, here is a topical reflection by poet Malcolm Guite (from the Church Times)...

### Saint Paul

An enemy whom God has made a friend,  
A righteous man discounting righteousness,  
Last to believe and first for God to send,  
He found the fountain in the wilderness.  
Thrown to the ground and raised at the same moment,  
A prisoner who set his captors free,  
A naked man with love his only garment,  
A blinded man who helped the world to see,  
A Jew who had been perfect in the Law,  
Blesses the flesh of every other race  
And helps them see what the apostles saw —  
The glory of the Lord in Jesus’ face;  
Strong in his weakness, joyful in his pains,  
And bound by Love, who freed him from his chains.



### COMMUNAUTE MALGACHE

Le p  re Nicolas Razafindratsima nous rappelle certains   v  nements qui ont rythm   l’ann  e de la communaut   malgache de Saint-Georges...

## Vie de la communauté depuis la réunion l'assemblée générale du 08 juin 2023 :

Réunion du comité paroissial du 28 septembre 2023  
Célébrations et vie pastorale Les messes régulières du 1er et 3e dimanche se sont poursuivies, de même que les services par visio-conférence les 2e dimanche du mois à 16h30. Une pause a eu lieu au mois d'août, et les services ont repris début septembre. Le 'Malagasy day' a été célébré le 11 juin. La communauté a animé la messe avec la chorale, et préparé le déjeuner paroissial de ce jour. L'homélie a été assurée par le P. Mark. Une prière œcuménique a réuni les Malgaches de différentes confessions le 24 juin, en lien avec la fête nationale. Le dimanche 2 juillet, Mgr Ranarivelo Samoela Jaona, évêque d'Antananarivo, de passage à Paris, a célébré et prêché à la messe malgache. Cet été, deux mariages ont été célébrés : celui de Blaise Rantoanina et So Won Kim ; et celui de Steve Andrianarisoa et Mihary Rakotson. Il y a eu également deux obsèques, ceux de Mr Joseph Ranaivoson et de Mme Sahondra Rakotoarisoa.

### Ecole du dimanche :

Deux nouvelles monitrices vont commencer à intégrer l'équipe de l'école du dimanche, en appui aux trois anciennes monitrices qui, progressivement, allègent leur participation. Les enfants préparent actuellement l'arbre de Noël, prévu pour le samedi 23 décembre après-midi. Mary Jane Wilkie, la nouvelle responsable de la protection (safeguarding) à St-Georges, a assisté à la messe malgache du 17 septembre et a fait connaissance avec les responsables de l'école du dimanche. Dans les semaines qui viennent, elle essaiera de voir comment former l'équipe de l'école du dimanche aux modalités de la protection (les vidéos sont en anglais).

Les différents projets à venir :

- Renouveau du conseil d'administration de l'association ACAMA
- Organisation d'un souper/dîner...

**Madagascar** : *Le Père Nicolas nous informe du Conseil des églises chrétiennes, institution qui agit comme témoin de l'Évangile au sein du pays, qui traverse des jours difficiles...*



La communauté malgache de Saint George est membre d'une association œcuménique regroupant, outre les Anglicans, les Catholiques (organisés au sein de l'aumônerie des Malgaches en France) et les Protestants luthéro-réformés (issus de l'église protestante FPMA ou Fiangonana

Protestanta Malagasy aty Andafy). L'association, fondée en 1993, a pour siège notre église.

Le nom de cette association est FFKM-France. Le sigle FFKM signifie « Fiangonana Kristiana Malagasy » (Conseil des églises chrétiennes malgaches) et désigne une institution qui, à Madagascar, rassemble les principales églises chrétiennes du pays.<sup>1</sup>

À Madagascar, avant la création du FFKM, les chrétiens étaient partagés entre plusieurs dénominations qui ne collaboraient guère. Afin de promouvoir l'œcuménisme, le FFKM a été fondé formellement en janvier 1980, par les dirigeants de quatre Églises : l'Église catholique (EKAR – Eglizy Katôlika Rômana), l'Église protestante réformée (FJKM – Fiangonan'i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara), l'Église luthérienne (FLM – Fiangonana Loterana Malagasy) et l'Église anglicane (EEM – Eklesia Episkopaly Malagasy).

Après sa création, le FFKM a œuvré pour instaurer davantage de communion entre les Églises chrétiennes malgaches. Cela a conduit par exemple à la reconnaissance réciproque du baptême au sein des quatre Églises, à faciliter les mariages interconfessionnels, ou encore à la publication de recueils de chants chrétiens malgaches pouvant être utilisés lors de célébrations œcuméniques.

Au fil du temps, le FFKM est également devenu une figure majeure de la scène politique et sociale malgache, dénonçant l'injustice, portant la parole des faibles, recommandant une posture démocratique et des actions pour le développement. À plusieurs reprises, il est intervenu comme médiateur lors des crises politiques survenues dans le pays, notamment en 1991, 2002 ou 2009. Une élection présidentielle est prévue en novembre 2023 à Madagascar. Toutefois, un grave contentieux a éclaté, portant sur les modalités d'organisation de l'élection et sur la légitimité du président sortant à se représenter. Certains ont demandé le report de l'élection, d'autres ont défendu son maintien. Des manifestations de protestation ont lieu à Antananarivo, violemment réprimées par les forces de l'ordre. À la mi-novembre, la situation est confuse et on craint, pour les prochaines semaines, une montée des tensions et des violences.

Dans ce contexte, le FFKM a tenu, encore une fois, à intervenir et à se poser en médiateur pour apaiser les tensions politiques. Mais, avec une situation économique et sociale très dégradée, son autorité semble s'être effritée. Le risque de désaccords sur la conduite à tenir face aux tensions politiques et sociales existe aussi au sein des responsables des Églises membres.

Dans les Béatitudes, Jésus a dit : « heureux ceux qui ont faim et soif de la justice, car ils seront rassasiés » (Mt 5.6) et « heureux les artisans de paix, car ils seront appelés fils de Dieu » (Mt 5.9). Pensons à mentionner Madagascar et ses 30 millions d'habitants dans nos prières. Et que les Chrétiens, à Madagascar et ailleurs, soient toujours des promoteurs de la justice et des artisans de paix.

<sup>1</sup> Les deux entités, FFKM-France et FFKM à Madagascar sont toutefois indépendantes juridiquement



## AS NOT WRITTEN BY...

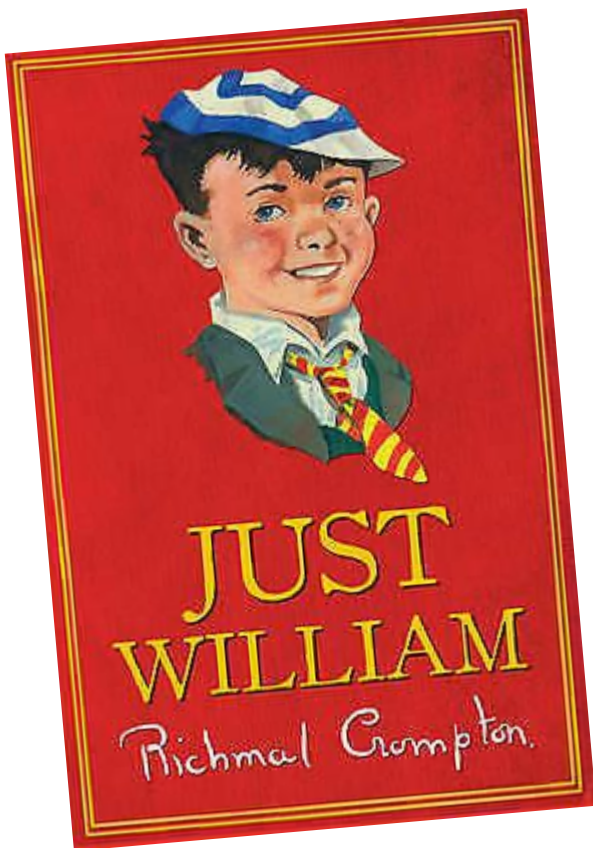
The Newsletter is pleased to publish another article in the occasional series 'As Not Written By...' This time we feature a pastiche of a 'Just William' adventure, penned by Robin Baker...

Background to the 'Just William' books: William Brown is an eleven-year-old boy, eternally scruffy and frowning. William and his friends, Ginger, Henry, and Douglas, call themselves 'The Outlaws', with William being the leader of the gang.

Ginger is William's faithful friend and almost as tousled, reckless and grimy as William himself. He has been known to take over in William's absence and is his best friend. Henry brings an air of wisdom to the otherwise non-academic 'Outlaws'. Never liking to own up to being at a loss, he can always deliver the knowledge that 'The Outlaws' need.

William's family cannot understand William. Only his mother has any sympathy for him, though his father sometimes shows a side of himself that seems to admit he was once like his son. Another recurring character is Violet Elizabeth Bott, the lisping, spoiled daughter of the local nouveau riche millionaire (whose companionship William reluctantly endures, to prevent her carrying out her threat "I'll thcream and thcream 'till I'm thick").

So, as not written by Richmal Crompton



### Just William and 'Les Andouillettes'

None of the Outlaws had ever been to France before. That is hardly surprising as none of them had even been abroad before. But they had now been learning, or perhaps it would be truer to say they had been taught, French, for over a year, and Mrs Brown was anxious to know whether any knowledge of the language had penetrated those tousled skulls. So, working via an agency and in conjunction with the other parents who could not hide their pleasure at the thought of having to manage without their sons for a

whole day of the school holidays, she had engaged a Mademoiselle Dubois, who spoke English and had evidently never heard of the Outlaws. Thus the Outlaws found themselves at St Pancras and boarding Eurostar.

However, once on the train, horror awaited them. Sitting prominently in their carriage, almost glowing with triumphant pride, was Violet Elizabeth Bott. "Hello William", she crowed. "Aren't you glad to see me? I am joining your visit to Paris." "No you're not," shouted William. "This visit is boys only. Girls are not allowed." "Yes I am" replied Violet Elizabeth, "and if you don't let me I'll thcream and I'll thcream and I'll thcream 'till I'm thick" The man in the seat next to her rose hastily to his feet, his eyes searching round the compartment for an alternative place. Not finding one, he sat down again and fixed William with a pleading gaze of supplication. "Well", said Henry, "we have a French lady looking after us, so we would have to ask her."

When they got to the Gare du Nord, Mademoiselle Dubois, who had been told to look for four scruffy boys, recognised them easily but was puzzled by the presence of Violet Elizabeth Bott. When asked if she would take her too, she replied "Parles-tu un peu la langue française?" "Je veux bien l'essayer. Maman m'a bien payé des leçons de français". "Très bien" replied Mademoiselle, "Tu peux te joindre à nous."

"Alors commençons par un tour en bateau sur la Seine. Mais pour arriver à notre point d'embarquement, il nous faut d'abord prendre le métro." So she led her five charges down into the métro and onto the train. William wanted to leap over the barrier for a free ride, but she frustrated his ambition by having already bought their tickets. In a jiffy they emerged at street level, walked along the Seine and boarded the boat.

Of course all the Outlaws wanted to be on the upper deck of the boat, whereas Violet Elizabeth Bott wanted to be inside, but the Outlaws won the majority vote. William and Ginger searched diligently for a way of pushing Violet Elizabeth into the river, but the boat designer had clearly thought of that in advance and there was none available. There was a multi-lingual commentary given on the boat, but as all the passengers talked together when any language other than their own was being broadcast, nothing could be heard. Realising this, Mademoiselle added her own commentary but, as she spoke only in French, nothing in the way of knowledge was imparted, at least to the Outlaws.

When they got off Henry said, "I want to see the égouts". "But zhat is what you call ze sewers," replied Mademoiselle. "Yes, that's what we want" chorused the Outlaws. "No, no, no, that's disgusting," screamed Violet Elizabeth. "Mais de toute façon," interjected Mademoiselle, "c'est l'heure du déjeuner." "Pouvons-nous manger des frites?" said Henry, to the astonishment of all the others. "Mais bien sûr" said Mademoiselle, "Que tu parles bien le français ! On va vous en trouver." And shortly thereafter, each had ordered in French a "saucisse-frites" at the nearby café. "Tu veux surement ramener un cadeau pour la famille" said Mademoiselle to William. "Wot?" he replied. "Your parents 'ave given you zis day 'ere", insisted Mademoiselle, "and zey will expect a present." "Don't think so." said William, whose knowledge of the presents that he had

given to his parents was simultaneously complete and non-existent.

“What would you like to give? ‘ow about some French food?” William began to take an interest in the idea, as it might involve some benefit for him. “Wot you suggest?” he asked. “Zere is a very delicious French speciality that you would never find in England, and I know an excellent shop for it near ‘ere. You just need to fry them. ‘Ow many there are in your famille?”

And so, in no time, William walked out of a boucherie proudly clutching a packet of andouillettes.

The next day the Brown family sat down expectantly for lunch. A pungent smell emanated from the kitchen and a mildly nervous Mrs Brown entered the dining room, carrying a plate full of sizzling sausages. She gave one to each member of the family. At first, nobody moved but then the bravest, Mr Brown, cut a piece, put it in his mouth and started to chew. His face turned green, and he spat it out. He then rose from his place and walked rapidly towards the cupboard where he kept his cane.

William rose too, and fled.

*(Robin Baker confesses that he actually much enjoys eating andouillette!)*

## POETRY CORNER

*We already know that the Chaplaincy harbours a huge range of talent. In this issue we highlight the hitherto unsuspected poetic gifts of Adrian Shaw. Here Adrian introduces us to an intimate, child’s view of past discovery...*

### Church

I loved it when Dad took us to church.  
A reassuring presence then to us kids,  
he was at ease in the pew  
with its threadbare scarlet runner  
and scratchy hassocks stuffed with sawdust  
or wool too coarse to weave,  
and we stood and knelt when he did  
or sat, legs dangling,  
squirming a bit sometimes I suppose,  
but on our best behaviour: we’d promised.

Church was endlessly mysterious.  
The quick and the dead:  
where did that leave me,  
ponderous even then,  
in the Divine Order?  
And all those amazing lists,  
taxonomies of creation  
and hierarchies of the blessed,  
and all those hymns and chants  
that everyone joined in:  
how did they know what to sing –  
and they all did – even though  
there were no notes?

And the magic moment,  
the one that made scrubbed face, combed hair,  
Sunday best and polished shoes all worthwhile,  
the moment the service was for, really,  
everything else only padding:  
“Vouchsafe”, they sang,  
and my child-year-old soul knew heaven.  
The initial tang, the chew,

the burst of sweetness, filling the mouth;  
I turned it over and over,  
round and round,  
delighting in the sheer flavour of it,  
a great soft gobstopper of a word,  
more treasured than any Action Man  
or die-cast twenty-five-pounder  
that shot spent matches into the rockery.

Afterwards we were sent out into the churchyard  
where Dad’s ashes now lie buried,  
to run around and let off steam  
while the grown-ups sought  
their own epiphany at communion.  
I was happy then: I had already had mine,  
already knew the wonder of the Word.

## A WORD IN YOUR EAR: “UNE PUCE À L’OREILLE”

*Maxine Arnoult takes us back to the origin of a common expression in English...*

This expression goes back a long way. It appeared in English for the first time about 1430 and was a translation of a work in French of about a century earlier by the Cistercian monk Guillaume de Deguileville.

Intriguingly, the French expression then had a different sense, of provoking or having amorous desire, though de Deguileville used it figuratively for a spiritual emotion that was evoked by the contemplation of great wonders. The amorous sense was still in the French language when Jean de la Fontaine wrote in the seventeenth century:

*A longing girl  
With thoughts of sweetheart in her head,  
All night will sleepless twirl.  
A flea is in her ear, ’tis said.*

In modern French, to have a flea put in your ear is that somebody is putting a suspicion into your head. The same expression occurs, with much the same sense, in other European languages, including German, Italian and Greek. In Dutch, it’s a way to say that you’re fidgety or restless. In English it principally refers to a stinging reproof, though to send a person away ‘with a flea in their ear’ can mean to snub them or angrily refuse a request.

The root association must surely be the result of getting a literal flea in one’s ear, something that wasn’t so rare in earlier times when hygiene was poor and houses — and their occupants — were often infested with fleas. A flea entering one’s ear would jump about in its attempts to get out and bite in frustration. It’s hard to imagine anything more vexatious or frustrating — it’s known to have driven some people almost mad (the old remedy was to pour oil into the ear, which drowned the flea).

It’s curious how so many different implications have been drawn from one simple circumstance. A flea moves fast, so it may have suggested something desirable but unattainable, or a thing that’s excitable and uncontrollable like a sudden passion. A flea may have been thought to be an external





influence that whispered messages of distrust or ardour into the ear. English speakers may have judged that the physical and emotional discomfort aroused by a flea in the ear resembled severe criticism or rebuke. Finally, it may be that several of these ideas fused in various language versions of the expression.

Courtesy of the Newsletter of the Royal British Legion, Paris Branch ([www.rblfrance.org](http://www.rblfrance.org))

## GIFTS TO ST GEORGE'S

An occasional series on the gifts given to St George's. You'll find the icon of Saint Anne, Our Lady and the Child Jesus in the Chapel...

### What is an icon?

For the Orthodox an icon is a sacred image, a window into heaven. An image of another reality, of a person, time and place that is more real than here and now. Anglicans accept as canonically binding The Second Council of Nicaea which is recognized as the last of the first seven ecumenical councils. Following a wrongheaded attempt at heading off Muslim criticism of imagery used in Christian worship the use of icons was enthusiastically supported by the Western Church in Council before the Emperor.

More than art however, icons have an important spiritual role, Michel Quenot in his book, *The Icon: Window on the Kingdom*, writes that an icon is "theology in imagery, the icon expresses through colour what the Gospel proclaims in words". And for this reason the rules regarding the creation of an icon are rigorous. The iconographer must prepare themselves for the task of painting an icon by following a strict discipline of fasting and prayer. They must quiet their spirit and submit themselves to God. The icon they create will not be signed because accolades or applause are not expected when the icon is completed instead it is to inspire and lead others into worship. The following is a prayer recited by an iconographer prior to starting to work:

O Divine Master of all that exists, enlighten and direct the soul, the heart and the mind of your servant: guide my hands so that I might portray worthily and perfectly Your Image, that of Your Holy Mother and of all the Saints, for the glory, the joy, and the beautification of Your Holy Church.



As the primary purpose of the icon is as aid to worship its design follows strict traditional conventions using line and colour to convey the awesome mystery of the invisible, divine reality). Unlike Western religious art icons are not created to force an emotional response; faces don't show emotions but instead portray virtues such as purity, patience in suffering, forgiveness, compassion and love. Instead, icons depict silence – have you noticed there are no open mouths! Instead an icon invites the Christian to enter into contemplation, prayer, and silence.

### How did it come to St George's?

An anonymous donor wanted to present an example of the work of a French iconographer, Mme Nicole Seuvic, to St George's. Her work uses traditional methods The icon requires a very particular technique handed down through the centuries, consisting first of a careful preparation of the support, often a plank of lime or beech, or cypress, reinforced to prevent it warping. The board is first "marouflaged" with a thin cloth (used cotton cloth, old sheet, gauze, muslin, etc.). For this operation, the support is

first coated with a thick layer of undiluted and very hot base glue (a mixture of rabbit glue, or hare glue, and hot water, prepared in a water bath); immediately after that, the canvas, which itself has first been soaked in glue, is placed on the board. A thick layer of glue is added on top of it and left to dry. The next step is to coat this support. This traditional coating ("levkas", from the Greek adjective leukos which means "white") is a mixture of glue, and whiting or chalk, diluted in water and heated in a water-bath. Between 12 and 15 layers of it are applied on the marouflaged board. Finally, the surface must be thoroughly and carefully sanded, until its texture is perfectly smooth and of a bright white.

After the picture is traced onto the board but before adding the colours, it is necessary to lay real gold leaves on the whole background of the icon where the characters will stand out. It is a difficult and painstaking technique. The most traditional technique is called "water gilding", which allows to "burnish" the gold, namely, to make it shine by rubbing it with an agate. Then the colours used for writing an icon come from natural pigments, either of mineral or organic origin. Icon painting has used for many centuries (at least since the 8th or 9th century) the technique of egg tempera: the coloured pigment is mixed with an emulsion called medium resulting from a mixture of egg yolk and clear water, with a few drops of vinegar for preservation.

## Who was Saint Anne?

Anne (in Hebrew, Hannah which means 'grace') is the traditional name of the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary. All our information concerning the names and lives of Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of Mary, is derived from apocryphal literature, the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Protoevangelium of James. Though the earliest form of the latter, on which directly or indirectly the other two seem to be based, goes back to about A.D. 150, we can hardly accept as beyond doubt its various statements on its sole authority. In the Eastern churches the Protoevangelium had great authority and portions of it were read on the feasts of Mary by the Greeks, Syrians, Copts, and Arabians. But in the Western Churches it was rejected by the Fathers of the Church (St Jerome was, typically, very rude about the Pseudo-Gospel of James! But its contents were incorporated by Jacobus de Voragine in his "Golden Legend" in the thirteenth century. From that time on the story of St. Anne spread over the West and was amply developed, until St. Anne became one of the most popular saints also of the Latin Church.

The mother of Mary is mentioned in the Koran though not by name and it was after (successfully) imploring Anne's prayers in the middle of a great storm that Martin Luther became a monk. Alongside being invoked for the protection and aid of mothers, grandparents, pregnant women, children, unmarried people, teachers, carpenters, childcare providers, seamstresses, lacemakers, second-hand clothes dealers, equestrians, stablemen, miners, lost things, loving homes, poverty and sterility in the High Middle Ages she was considered patron of sailors, fishermen and her prayer was asked in the event of storms. It's perhaps unsurprising therefore that she became the patron of Brittany from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## Why Saint Anne?

Of course, as Anglicans the silence of scripture is critical; Article VI (Of the Sufficiency of the holy Scriptures for salvation) writes that '*Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation...*' But that still leaves an enormous scope for imaginative prayer, personal reflection and contemplation of the Mysteries of God!

A cursory glimpse at history reveals a constant lament, from the Greeks onwards, that 'things aren't what they used to be' and today that includes the shape and texture of family life. Because often it's members of our own families we feel sharply that its not only unhistorical but unhelpful to try and lay claim to a non-existent Golden Age of family relationships. Anne, who traditionally struggled with her fertility, and whose quality of life and security, like Elizabeth, would have depended on her male relatives allows us to imagine that Our Saviour might have heard stories about family life not unlike our own day. It's unlikely that Anne lived alone; more commonly women, without the male relative necessary for an independent household, were

woven into a larger family unit. Perhaps Anne, with her daughter Mary, were part of a larger number of women in the family of one of her brothers, her nephews or her late husband's family? How did she negotiate relationships within such extended family networks? What sort of currents of love and obligation, resentment, duty, economic necessity were woven together in Anne's life?

Perhaps more pertinent for us as a Church family is how Anne handed on her faith? Unless you want to imagine that Jesus had an atheist granny and cut his theological teeth convincing her that God was real it's likely that Anne had a real, living faith that she wanted to pass onto her daughter and then her grandson. How did she do that? Prayer undergirds everything we do, and in St Monica's case, was all she had to hold onto in the face of her son's indifference. But Mary was a believer so how did Anne talk about God with her? How did Anne tell the foundational stories that linked Our Lady to the living tradition but enabled her to find her own voice with which she could give her *fiat* to the Archangel Gabriel? I was brought up with the idea that Mary visited Elizabeth alone, carrying the stigma and shame of an unmarried mother. But would a mother, however shamed by her daughter's inexplicable pregnancy, really allow her to hare off to visit her favourite aunt alone? Perhaps Anne went along? Perhaps, as a spare female, she felt she could be spared the census count and went along with her heavily pregnant daughter to Bethlehem? Perhaps, as part of Joseph's household, she fled with her daughter and grandson into Egypt?

Not everyone is fortunate in their family. Not everyone experiences the love of a grandparent, unconditioned by the need to impose bedtimes or table manners, which is seemingly so different to that of a parent. But perhaps Our Lord was that fortunate, perhaps he did find out his grandmother when he saw his mother tired, irritated or overwhelmed. How did Anne model loving to avoid becoming part of the problem rather than part of the solution?

And that brings me finally to why I find Anne a helpful person to have in my heart as I meditate on the humanity and divinity of Jesus and the person and role of Mary in the Gospels. We are all bound into family relationships, sometimes they work and sometimes they become difficult, sometimes we unreflectingly assume that this is the way the world is for everyone and sometimes we feel terrifyingly alone. Anne, on the edge, finding her small biological place in the story of the God's dealing with his people, found a way of handing on her living faith. My she pray that I can too.

## FROM THE CHAPLAINCY REGISTERS

### Holy Baptism

4 <sup>th</sup> August	Samuel John ROGERS
13 <sup>th</sup> August	Khamaël Claire Elizabeth WRAGG
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Victoria MALLINSON-MACARI
5 <sup>th</sup> November	Soatina Zoé RANIAVO
19 <sup>th</sup> November	Tamzin DUBUISSON
19 <sup>th</sup> November	Cosma Lucy Françoise CHONÉ

19<sup>th</sup> November Woodrow Loup Georges CHONÉ

**Funerals**

11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 Sheila Bennett  
13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 Susan Glyn  
6<sup>th</sup> December David Heys

**Confirmation**

From the 1030 congregation:

Adrian Mallinson, Samuel Rogers, Edward, Tyger Dupré, Bartholomew (Bart) Konechni, Pamela Hamilton, Thomas (Tom) Partridge, Michael (Mike) Orrin, Olivier (Oli) Gorans,  
And from the 1630 congregation:  
Ornella Rabarison (15), Rowan Rabarison (21), Grace Razafindratsima (15), and Timothé Razafindratsima (17).

**GIVING TO ST GEORGE'S PARIS**

St George's is entirely self-funding. Can you help maintain our work and worship here in the heart of Paris?

In 2022 St George's Church Council adopted the following as our Vision Statement

**St George's exists to glorify God, inspired by our Anglican heritage, to proclaim the reconciling love of Jesus.**

We do this in lots of different ways: not just in our regular round of worship, through the daily offices and Eucharist offered carefully and with devotion; and teaching, in sermons, regular courses of instruction and preparation for the Sacraments; in pastoral care through visiting, telephone calls and online support but also in enabling all who worship here to grow in their discipleship including not just spiritual direction and vocational discernment but in living out their baptismal vocation in serving those in need.

Alongside all the things that are working well this year we are working hard on welcoming others to Sunday Lunch. The Malagasy Community are worshipping more regularly on Sunday at 16h30 and the new French language Eucharist on Saturday at 18h00 is finding its feet. But whilst we're praying and working to grow we currently need your generosity more than ever.


Can you help by giving, a one-off donation, or regularly to support the life and work of St George's, Paris?

For some, deciding how much to give is as easy as calculating a percentage of one's income. Others may want to take advantage of France's generous income tax reductions\* for those giving to churches and other charities.

There are new ways for you to give – making it easier and more straightforward!

- 1) Setting up a *virement permanent* with your bank. You'll find all the details below – this allows your church to budget your giving effectively.
- 2) Giving online via HelloAsso. This method allows you to claim your fiscal deduction from the French tax authorities. You can give regularly or make a one-off donation via this method.
- 3) If you **don't** pay French tax or are visiting St George's, you might like to use the new ACTOLL contactless giving baskets in church. You choose the amount you want to give 2€ for a candle or from a range of 5, 10, 20 or 50€. Simply pass your debit card over the reader and you'll receive a simple message indicating your gift has been received.

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# SAINT GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, PARIS

## 1824 – 2024

This year we're celebrating our Bicentenary with a range of celebrations to honour the work, worship and witness of the generations who built St George's. The programme has been planned by the Bicentenary Committee, ably stewarded by Elisabetta Hicks. We're very grateful for their ideas and passion! Fixing on 3 points we're celebrating the people of St George's, our ongoing commitment to Christian Unity and our life in Paris in 3 main events:

### **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February 1100h**

#### **Solemn Eucharist**

As we celebrate the Dedication of our current church our guest preacher at the Solemn Eucharist will be the Rt Rev'd & Rt Hon. Richard Chartres, formerly Bishop of London. There will be lunch in the Parish Hall following the Eucharist – please book your tickets via the Parish Office.

### **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1500h**

#### **Choral Evensong**

The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, the Rt Rev'd Robert Innes will preside at Choral Evensong on the Feast of St George with invited Ecumenical guests. All are welcome to Evensong and the Reception in the Parish Hall which follows.

On **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 1800h** the memory of Richard Wallace will be celebrated at the reopening of Chateau Bagatelle.

On **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September at 1100h** the Rev'd Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch will be speaking on *Marriage: a moving target in Christian history*. After lunch there will be responses from French scholars. An opportunity for questions at 1500h will end with Evensong at 1630h.

Along with a Reception (details to follow) we're looking forward to singing the new St George's hymn, the result of our international competition for words and music during the year, buying up lots of the St George's Bicentenary goodies and welcoming visitors to Paris for the Olympics and Para-Olympic Games.

And there's lots more to come...

