

New Prospect

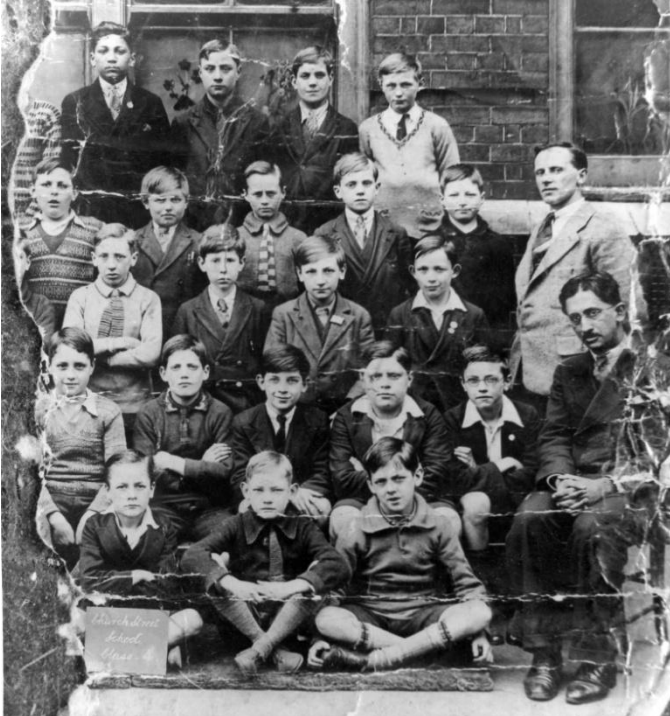


The Parish Magazine of St Mary Stoke Newington

November 2010

50p

Growing up in Stoke Newington



My dad, second from top left, at Church Street (now William Patten) School. Aged 13 in 1930.

Everyone that grows up in a specific area will have a different story to tell, because even in the relatively small borough of Stoke Newington there were many housing estates, primary and secondary schools and boundaries set by parents.

I was born on the 5th of November 1958 in the Bearstead Memorial Hospital, Lordship Road. My family were living in the council estate on Portland Rise. We moved in 1961 to St. Johns Court, Queen's Drive, and lived there until the end of 1970 – a wonderful place for a child to grow up, with Finsbury Park at one end of the road and Clissold Park at the other end. From our kitchen we could look out across the filter beds to the Castle pumping house on Green Lanes – a scene no longer available since the new estate was built on the filter bed site. The lower end of Queens Drive, from Brownswood Road to Green Lanes was lined

with bombed, derelict and slum houses. St. John's Church stood proudly on the corner of Queens Drive and Gloucester Drive, and was very popular for weddings – as young children we would always go up to watch the procedures afterwards, the confetti throwing, the photographs. This is the church where I was christened in 1959.

I started at the nursery at Ambler school in 1962 and carried on there through primary school until 1969. The final year of primary education was at a brand new school – Parkwood – in Queens Drive.

Once or twice a month I would accompany my father to the heart of Stoke Newington – time to catch up with friends, visit my uncle Syd in Marton Road – he ran a transport company from here – and go to Harry's – a barber shop in Church Street. We would visit my great-aunt in Sanford Lane, say hello to the owners of the two greengrocers on Stoke Newington Road, Grieves and Eaton's; pop in to George Taylor's in Victorian Grove, then a trawl through Kingsland Waste, occasionally having pie & mash at Cooke's in Dalston.

My family were very well known in and around Church Street and Stoke Newington Road. For years, my Grandfather had run a piano removal company here and his uncles and cousins were wheelwrights in Albion Road.



My mum outside 48 Church Street in 1937.



My Cousin Janet's wedding in 1969 at St. Mary's.

In December 1970 we moved to Somerford estate in Stoke Newington road. My first job was as a newspaper boy at Hull's in Stoke Newington Road. In 1973 I started work as a Saturday boy at Farleigh Garages at 144, Stoke Newington Road.

All these businesses are now gone, Stoke Newington people have changed, houses once considered slums are now refurbished and worth over £500,000. Educated professional people have moved in, the majority of indigenous working class have moved out. The predominantly Jewish businessmen are now replaced with Turkish businessmen. We can all recall change in the past, whether it is on a personal basis, during our own lifetimes, or through recent documented history.

We all have memories, not all good, not all clear in our minds. This snippet of my life reflects good memories of growing up in an area I love; there are memories that I would rather not recall though. Being able to reflect on our lives is an important way of learning – our faith is one source of help with learning the right way to healthy fulfilment in life. Everything that happens in our lives has a positive and a negative viewpoint. Through God we can help ensure the balance is on the positive side, and through our involvement with St Mary's and St. John's, we can be part of the community and help one another to achieve and sustain happiness.

Over the last 500 years the people may have changed, the buildings may have changed or house different types of

businesses, but St. Mary's Church carries on, adapting to suit the needs of those of us that realise how important this is to our lives and of those around us. The Church continues to be central to the community and instantly recognised by everyone, as much today as it was back in the early 16th century – if only we could get more to attend and take part!

Royden Stock.

The following article links with Jim Forster's article in our September issue.

Eds

Reflections on Funerals From the Foothills of Priesthood

In his book 'Western Attitudes to Death', Philippe Ariés explores the way in which European attitudes to death have changed from the middle ages until the 20th Century. In doing so he observes that the further removed from death and dying we have become, the more we feel that we have tamed death with its accompanying physical process and pain. In fact he asserts that since death moved into institutions, such as the hospital, we have therefore become less familiar with death and dying within our homes and local communities. This has not had the desired 'taming' effect, rather it has made death and with it the dying person and their experience, wild, dangerous, polluting and frightening. Or as Mary Douglas might put it, death 'is matter out of place'.

If this is true, and I think for many of us it is, it is not surprising that people also feel isolated and lonely in their grief. Partly because to some extent grief is a uniquely individual experience by virtue of its rupturing of a particular relationship, as well as in a shared relationship, and partly because people keep their distance. Perhaps they have no experience of death or they may fear saying or doing the wrong thing. The latter might seem annoying or cowardly, but there may also be something reverential about it, perhaps an awareness that this is holy ground which needs to be approached appropriately.

Whilst Ariés' thesis is not without its difficulties, I do think it offers a helpful context

in which to understand the apparent lack of communal and societal knowledge about death, dying and the bereavement process.

Jonathan tells a story from his curacy which illustrates this well. A week after taking the funeral of a woman in the parish, he went to call on her widower. During their conversation the man expressed real dismay at still experiencing the emotions of grief a week on. As though it wasn't enough to be immersed in the loss of his wife, this man had the added distress of thinking that there was something wrong with him. Thankfully Jonathan was able to support and reassure him in this all too normal, although by its nature rather frightening, experience.

Whilst we clearly don't have the monopoly in this area, it is an important part of the pastoral work we as clergy undertake in supporting those who are walking through the shadow lands of death.

As a relatively new priest, it has been important to reflect on my understanding of the nature of pastoral ministry to those who are recently bereaved and those who are approaching death. As I write this, I am very aware that as a community we are ourselves in a period of mourning and adjustment at the loss of what feels like too many of our number this year.

In the context of a parish, we have the privilege of being invited into people's lives in the very early days of their bereavement as they are trying to get to grips with planning and arranging a funeral. Often we will not have known the deceased or their family and it strikes me that there is an important meeting of vulnerability as I as priest arrive at the home as stranger and guest, with little knowledge of the circumstances or emotional response I will encounter.

It seems that inherent in the role of the priest is that of mediating the dangerous and polluting aspects of life with or on behalf of the community, and for me, at least, this seems particularly acute and risky when I'm working with people with whom I have no prior relationship.

Staying with that image of Holy Ground and its source in Exodus, I find it helpful to hold on to the following when doing the initial visit:

1. To recognise that whether the bereaved had a faith or not, this place of brokenness and vulnerability is a 'thin place' or holy place where God is present in the pain and loss.
2. To go unafraid to face and hold the pain and reality that the bereaved are living with.
3. To listen attentively to the following: the events that culminated in the death of the departed, to what the person meant to the bereaved (with all the joys and difficulties), to listen to their understanding of God in the context of their bereavement.

This pastoral visit provides the necessary information to facilitate the funeral. The funeral is the place which allows death to be what it is; an ending as well as a physical and emotional loss. It seeks to be a safe space where people can feel the 'unsafe' emotions that come with grieving. In order to do this grieving the funeral also needs to be a place of truth telling, where there is celebration for the life that has been lived but also acknowledgment of the hard and difficult things about the person or their life.

A Christian funeral does this within the hospitality of God's all embracing love and therefore it needs to articulate in action, word and symbol something of the way that God is present for the departed as well for the bereaved and their community in a way that is meaningful to them and which is authentic to the priest.

In doing so the funeral becomes a place where the terror of death and the pain of loss is tamed and held in the strong and tender love of God, as embodied by the priest, and it is given its place within society as both the priest and those beloved of the dead give voice to the joys, sorrows and hopes present in this rite which bridges the past and present and future life of all those concerned.

The element of danger or fear mentioned above is more apparent when dealing with people with whom there is no prior relationship, because the vulnerability of both parties is closer to the surface and there is insufficient opportunity or trust to establish a common theological understanding of the situation. This evokes an acute awareness of one's reliance on the grace and power of the Holy Spirit to transform the mutual brokenness into

something life affirming that will allow the bereaved to be both present to and transcend the power of death.

Whilst one should never be complacent in the pastoral care of the bereaved, I have found it a particular privilege to take funerals for people I already know. This is helpful in the lead up to the funeral and seems to make it easier to provide ongoing support and mutual growth.

As a Christian and in my capacity as a priest, it is my belief that the sting of death is absorbed into the God of resurrection love and power. But for this love to be realized, it must be demonstrated by the whole people of God in the way we live and love one another, particularly when are in pain.

Lucyann Ashdown

Musician's Corner **C.H.H Parry (1848 – 1918)**



We may not recognise this name instantly, but we certainly recognise his best hymn tunes, 'Jerusalem', 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind' and the great ceremonial anthem 'I was glad'.

Born into a wealthy middle class family in Bournemouth, and the youngest of six children (his mother died 12 days after his birth), he

attended Eton School where he excelled in music and sport. While at Eton he sat the Oxford Bachelor of Music examination, the youngest ever student to do so.

At Oxford, rather than study music, he studied law and modern history, leading him to work as an insurance underwriter for Lloyds for a number of years. He was to prove as unsuccessful in insurance as he was to prove successful as a composer, and after a series of lessons with noted contemporary musicians, he was taken on as a music editor by George Grove (Dictionary of Music and Musicians). Grove then appointed him to the staff of the newly formed Royal College of Music, and upon the death of Sir John Stainer in 1901, he was appointed Professor of Music at Oxford University.

Parry received a number of commissions in these golden years to write mainly oratorio, a form which did not sit well with him. The eminent music critic of the time, George Bernard Shaw, had harsh words to say about his oratorio 'Job' saying "It was the most utter failure ever achieved by a respectable musician. There is not one bar in it which comes within fifty thousand miles of the tamest line in the poem".

Upon his death from Spanish 'flu in the autumn of 1918, it was said at the time that it was to be lamented that his heavy academic and administrative workload prevented him from composing more. Parry, having all his life revered the music of the great German composers Bach and Brahms, was utterly dismayed at the outbreak of WW 1. He bitterly lamented the annihilation of a generation of talented students forced to abandon studies to take up arms. He is buried in St Paul's Cathedral.

Nigel Williams

Christmas Carols Choir

Rehearsals begin on 11 November in the NCR at 8pm. If you are interested in joining; see Nigel by the organ after the 11am service or phone/text him on 07826378321

Saints – what are they?



Cardinal Newman

1 November is All Saints' Day. I suppose it should really be called "all the other saints' day" since many saints have a named day, but that would be rather a mouthful. But what is a saint? How do you become one? Do you have to be dead?

Saints are important figures in the history and development of the Church. In this, the Church is no different from any other calling, profession, or discipline. We all need our heroes, our trailblazers, our visionaries, people who inspire us and whose memory and achievement we venerate. It is a natural human instinct. Some of the attributes, like special anniversary days, or the association of the person with a particular place, may be more specific to the veneration of saints than to secular heroes, but not radically so. How many of us go to visit particular places, for example stately homes, because of their association with a particular historical figures?

Like so much in the early development of the church, the fledgling Christian communities were accustomed to the idea of special veneration for important figures as part of their Jewish heritage. By the time of Christ, the Jews venerated the memory of patriarchs, prophets or martyrs and built sanctuaries over the places where their bones lay. At least 50 such places have been identified.

The earliest Christian saints were martyrs. However, confessors and teachers were soon added to the canon. Of the saints of the universal church, one of the earliest accounts

of the establishment of a cult was that surrounding the martyrdom of Polycarp, (a disciple of the Apostle John) who died in c156 AD. His bones were collected and buried in a safe place, at which the faithful then met to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom. Gradually, the custom developed of placing the remains of the martyr under the altar of a church as the most appropriate place. In the Middle Ages, competition for who could have the most prestigious relics became intense. A church which could establish itself as a pilgrimage centre could tap into an enormous source of income. We can still see the results of this trade, for example at Canterbury Cathedral, or the church of Santiago in Compostella.

Universal saints, however, needed an organised and hierarchical church. The vast majority of saints in the early centuries of Christianity were local. They may have been martyrs, like St Alban. They may have been inspired teachers and leaders, like St Cuthbert. We are perhaps used to the idea that the Welsh and the Irish have a vast array of saints of whom no-one else has heard. However, the same was true of England in the years before the Normans. Anglo-Saxon England, from the time of its conversion by the twin approaches of the Romans from the south and the Celts from the North and West, produced a huge number of local saints. The Normans did not think much of some of these saints, and demanded documentary proof of their suitability for the title. It is from these times that much of our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon saints comes, together with church dedications. A trawl through the *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, which majors on English saints, will reveal many obscure and now unknown saints. And looking at some of the descriptions of their lives and achievements, one sometimes thinks the Normans may have had a point. Certainly the process of canonization through which modern saints have to go would have ruled most of them out. But they were, in their time, important witnesses to the faith.

It was fairly early on in the history of the church that questions began to be asked as to who could decide who was to be accounted a saint. The early criteria allowed simple popular acclaim to decide, provided the person in

question had either suffered death in persecution or been of such outstanding holiness that his or her destiny was not in doubt. The local bishop would make the final decision, and a place and date of veneration were determined. The last was usually the date of earthly death and heavenly birth. From the 4th century onwards, lists of 'approved' martyrs were kept which enabled martyrs of one church to be venerated by another and eventually through Christendom. From quite early on, miracles were regarded as one of the proofs of sanctity, and personal relics began to be retained, which were felt to have divine healing powers. Churches rivalled each other in their attempts to build up large supplies of relics, and to establish themselves as places of healing. (We are still used to this idea in the sanctuary of Lourdes, although there are there no relics of the claimed healing force, who is the Virgin Mary.) The authenticity of many of these relics was, to say the least, dubious. Another sign, on which Bede in his 8th century history of the church in England often lays stress, was bodily incorruptibility.

It was around 1200 that the authorisation of new cults became reserved to the Papacy. There was little that could be done about the proliferation of existing cults, but for the future, matters were put on a much more systematic footing – even on a legal basis. Papal commissions were appointed to investigate the life and miracles of candidates for canonization. Only if the life was seen to have been worthy was the evidence from miracles then examined. These remain the basis of the canonization process to this day. Attempts to create local saints did not die out immediately, of course, but gradually the formal procedures established themselves.

To this day, formal accolade of a 'saint' is a matter reserved in the Western churches to the Roman Catholic Church. The beatification of Cardinal Newman, which the Pope announced on his recent visit to Britain, is the first step on such a process. (The Orthodox churches still allow much more local autonomy.) The Church of England does not create saints. That does not mean it does not believe in them. All Church of England churches are dedicated to saints or to attributes of Christ. In many cases, of course, this is because they are pre-Reformation foundations and therefore

Catholic in their origin. But in many other cases, this is just a custom and practice which has held good over the years. Even Church of Scotland and some other presbyterian churches may have a patron saint, often one particularly associated with Scotland (Andrew, or Columba, for example). However, the attitude in all the reformed churches has always been somewhat ambivalent. Abuses of the veneration of saints were one of the worst corruptions of the late mediaeval church. The reformers in many cases systematically removed images and shrines from their churches, and tried to suppress any interest in the saints as sources of succour and comfort, even those who were attested to by the Bible. Statues were destroyed, and wall paintings plastered over.

It is still often the case that Anglican churches contain no statues of saints. On the other hand, many saints have been restored to the calendar and have their traditional feast days celebrated. Even the Book of Common Prayer retained a calendar of saints, mostly the Biblical ones and the very early martyrs and teachers. More modern calendars now include commemorations of other religious leaders who are not, officially, saints: the Wesley brothers, for example.

It is important to understand that the tradition of the church is not that saints should be worshipped. God alone is worshipped. The saints are venerated, as examples of the Christian life. They are invoked, as people whose prayers are particularly effective, as sources of help and comfort and healing. A sort of heavenly prayer circle, if you like.

I said at the beginning that one of the questions we might ask was whether you had to be dead to be a saint. The formal answer to that now is 'Yes'. No-one will be canonized in their lifetime. But in the New Testament, the term 'the saints' is regularly used to describe the church itself, both living and dead. 'Saint' simply meant those who were sanctified by their belief in Christ.

What, then, is the point of All Saints' Day? What is the point of saints so obscure that you cannot remember their names and who have to be lumped together in an amorphous mass? It will not always be the case that the saints will be forgotten. In its origins, All Saints' Day was a feastday for saints whose names were

perfectly well known, but for whom no day in the calendar could be found. It was established in this form as early as the beginning of the fifth century in Syria, when it was celebrated on Easter Friday. In the Orthodox tradition, All Saints' is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost. In the Western Church, the day was originally May 13, thus still keeping the link with the Easter season. It was only in 835 that it was transferred to 1 November. Presumably this was a time of the year less crowded with large festivals. Nowadays, it has become again a popular festival, although many people will not understand the origins of the term 'Hallowe'en' ('All Saints' Eve'). Nor are most of the 'traditions' associated with it Christian in origin.

The day after, 2 November, is All Souls' Day. This was established in the late 10th century by Odo, Abbot of Cluny, the large and very influential monastic foundation in Burgundy. Unlike All Saints', which is a celebration of thanksgiving, All Souls' was traditionally a time to pray that the dead would be allowed to share in the victory of the risen Christ. These days the distinction is probably more that on All Saints', we remember those whom we did not know, and on All Souls' we remember our own dead.

Judith Simpson

Baptisms
31 October 2010



Luke David Wilmott
Georgia Catherine Sarah Wilmott

**We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

Notes from PCC Meeting held on Monday 4th October

Two main discussion points were the report on the Stewardship Campaign and a financial report from the Treasurer.

Trudi presented her report which pointed out the good and the negative sides of the Campaign. We had reached our target, which was excellent but there were problems getting people to volunteer to be visitors and hosts, which put more work on a few people, and meant that returns for the supper invite and pledges were slow in coming in. The supper went well and we were able to appreciate the refurbished Assembly Rooms. The report will be used as a basis for the next Campaign so that we learn from our errors.

Our Financial position is not too bad – stewardship returns are down, which is to be expected and the new pledges will begin to come in soon. Rentals from Defoe Road and the New Rooms were better than expected but as usual water, lighting and heating were not less than budgeted. We had got money from the Diocese to cover our insurance which was a bonus. Our own economies were beginning to pay – so we need to keep up the good work. All in all we should be on budget at the end of the year.

Alan Anderson gave a brief report on the Old Church Project, which is doing quite well. We have had money in from a couple of Trusts, we have got John Field with us for a short time organising the events in the Old Church and so money from these is coming in. The steering committee is still applying for funding but the main concern is the faculty from the DCA which we will need to get more funding and to actually get on with the changes we want to make. Plans are on display at the back of church.

We accepted two names for Governors for St. Marys School, Alan Anderson and Malcolm Birk. We also approved Sarah Cottingham's training to become a pastoral assistant.

We briefly discussed the memorial garden project and Andrew Jackson gave us an up to date report.

Our next meeting is in early December.

Jean Guest
Secretary PCC

Time and Talents



We have recently had a successful Stewardship Campaign and at a recent PCC meeting to discuss the outcome we talked about the ongoing commitment of Stewardship. This means not only promising to give a regular amount of money

each week but also to think about what else we can do to maintain our church to enable it to grow spiritually. At St. Mary's we have several working parties which look at certain aspects of our church life and seek to improve it. There is Church Growth which organises the retreats, the week of prayer, house groups; the new Pastoral WPS is beginning to look at how best to care and nurture us; the social committee who organise lunches and provide refreshments at other times; the World Wide Church who keep us up to date with what is happening overseas, chooses the bi-monthly charities, and continues our connection with Tete. There is also the Children and Youth WP who organise the Sunday School and have input with the new 9.30a.m. all ages service, and then there is the Magazine group who publish our monthly Prospect. Another WP is the Fabric who check on the maintenance of our buildings and try and do some of the minor jobs to help save money. The gardening group, which meet every other Saturday during the summer months, badly need more volunteers, and there are other jobs like polishing the silver, keeping the linen clean and checking on candle and communion needs. All these Working Parties could do with more people so that a wider group of the congregation can be involved.

If you feel you would like to become more involved at St Mary's speak to me, or one of the clergy, and we can put you in touch with the right person. The more people involved means a wider circle of thoughts which will bring new ideas to the fore.

Jean Guest
Secretary PCC

Recipe Ploughman's Pickle

If you make this tasty pickle round about now it will be ready in time for Christmas! It will be delicious with bubble and squeak, cold meat, turkey sandwiches..... Or, with a bit of tinsel around the top it would make a lovely present.

The recipe is adapted from "Easy Jams, Chutneys and Preserves" by Val and John Harrison. More of their recipes can be found on www.allotment.org.uk

285 g (10 oz) carrots
285 g (10 oz) turnips
285 g (10 oz) cooking or desert apples
2 medium onions
15 small gherkins (I used a small cucumber)
150g (5 oz) dates
6 cloves garlic
250 g (9 oz) dark brown sugar
500 ml (17 fl oz) malt vinegar
4 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
2 teaspoons mustard seeds
2 teaspoons ground allspice
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon salt
4 crushed cloves

Dice the fruit and vegetables into small cubes (approx ¼ inches), crush or finely chop garlic. Place all ingredients in a large pan and simmer until root vegetables are soft and the mixture has thickened, about ½ - 2 hours. Pot into clean sterilized jars and seal.

If you can bear it, leave for 4 weeks to mature.

You can vary the ingredients by substituting the gherkins with courgettes or more apple, adding sultanas, or small sprigs of cauliflower.

Jane Pryce



A Tribute to W S Gilbert

Earlier in the year, I explained that my Dad was a great enthusiast for the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, and I'm pretty keen too. Some bits are dated and overdone, but in a lot of them, the words are very clever and the music is lovely.

One of my Dad's roles was Sir Joseph Porter, in "HMS Pinafore", a politician, who is First Lord of the Admiralty, though he has never been to sea! The character was believed to be based on W H Smith – yes, that W H Smith. Sir Joseph sings a song about his life story, and how that has enabled him to become "Ruler of the Queen's Nav-ee". Gilbert wrote very little about the church, for some reason, but here's what he might have done if he had felt like it ...

When I Was a Lad

When I was a lad, I joined the list
As a server and a boat-boy at the Eucharist
I swung the incense with a smile so bland
And I copied out the rota with a big round hand

Chorus: *And he copied out the rota with a big round hand*

I copied that rota so carefully
That now I am a Bishop in the C of E

Chorus: *He copied that rota so carefully
That now he is a Bishop in the C of E.*

As server young, I stuck to the rule
So they made me a teacher in the Sunday School,
I taught the Gospels and explained the psalms
And advised the little children to stay clear of harms

Chorus: *And advised the little children to stay clear of harms*

I advised those children so skilfully
That now I am a Bishop in the C of E

Chorus: *He advised those children so skilfully
That now he is a Bishop in the C of E.*

From Sunday School, as Fate took a hand
I went to the College as an ordinand.
I practised sermons and I learnt the Greek

And I never showed the tutors any hint of cheek

Chorus: *And he never showed the tutors any hint of cheek*

I treated those tutors so respectfully
That now I am a Bishop in the C of E

Chorus: *He treated those tutors so respectfully
That now he is a Bishop in the C of E.*

From College days to a curacy
As a chaplain at an ancient university
I preached in Chapel and I dined in Hall
But I never published anything of note at all

I published so little, they rewarded me
By making me a Bishop in the C of E

Chorus: *He published so little, they rewarded he - By making him a Bishop in the C of E.*

So laymen all, whoever you may be
If you want to rise to the top of the tree
And your soul isn't fettered to an office stool
Be careful to be guided by this golden rule

Chorus: *Be careful to be guided by this golden rule*

Keep clear of the sweat of parish ministry
And you all may be bishops in the C of E

Chorus: *Keep clear of the sweat of parish ministry*

And you all may be bishops in the C of E.

Andrew Hudson



Popes Spring Eternal



Pope Joan

“I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” Matthew 16:16-18. And so establishes that (and this is a brilliant sentence) the ‘biblical, dogmatic, theological and juridical foundation of the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff is in the Church of Christ the charisma of the munus petrinum in which is based apostolic authority of the Bishop of Rome as Vicar of Christ and Successor of the Prince of the Apostles’. I feel justified in calling that a brilliant sentence because I didn’t write it, probably one of the popes did, and in doing so underlined their own ability to write it. But it isn’t news to find the popes to be brilliant, and New Prospect is a newspaper after all, so here’s a rundown of some of the less brilliant aspects of pontifical history.

Sixtus III (432-40)

The norms of sexual practice were a greyer area in the early church than they are today, even some of the greatest early popes succeeded their fathers into office; Sixtus III, however, hit a new low in 440, when he was tried for the seduction of a nun. His defence was to quote John 8:1-13, the woman caught in adultery; the gospel suggests the woman’s guilt. Like the gospel no one in 440 sought to cast the first stone.

Pope Joan

Stories of a female pope are so frequent in the 9th to 11th centuries that it would be churlish to suggest that all of them are false. Martin of

Troppau, a Dominican chronicler, tells that John Anglicus (Joan) succeeded Leo IV in 855. She reigned for over two years and was only discovered when she gave birth prematurely while riding from St Peter’s to the Lateran Palace. Even today Popes avoid the street where it is said to have happened.

Formosus (891-96)

Formosus caused a bit of trouble when he was put on trial for perjury, not least because at the time he was dead. It was his successor Stephen VI who put him on trial, and, unsurprisingly, found him guilty; but he did not count on his performing miracles after his death, which instigated riots in the streets of Rome, eventually leading to the imprisonment and strangulation of Stephen himself. Formosus was later tried again by John XI, but didn’t get off then either.

Innocent II (1130-43) and Anacletus (1130-38)

This pope and anti-pope (which is which is up to you) were elected at the same time by the College of Cardinals and bickered throughout their troubled reigns. Innocent, said Anacletus, was in fact Jewish, to which Innocent responded that Anacletus committed incest with his sister, kept a prostitute as a mistress and had a terrible habit of raping nuns.

Sixtus IV (1471-84)

Although responsible for the Sistine Chapel (which is widely regarded as a good thing) Sixtus is also responsible for the Spanish Inquisition (widely regarded as not). As such he has the blood of thousands on his hands, which, as Bishop Creighton delicately put it: ‘rather lowered the moral tone of Europe’.

Alexander VI (1492-1503)

The great Borgia pope supposedly committed his first murder aged twelve and it was a habit which stuck. It was said he made a pact with the devil to secure the papacy, and if stories of his misdemeanours are only an ounce true it was a pact he honoured in spades. His twin passions for sex and violence filled the corridors of the Vatican as the sees of Italy were filled by his countless illegitimate children.

Stephen Bovey

October Caption Competition



Here's the picture to remind you. Our adjudicator had a difficult task, but eventually chose no. 1 as the overall winner. Thank you all for taking part.

Oars! I knew I left something at home

Until that moment, Felicity had never completely understood the old saying about paddles and creeks.

"Messing about in boats", thought Jessica, "is much more fun than sunbathing with a paper bag on your head".

Why do I have to sit at this end, while they eat all the biscuits?

Molly didn't mind about being sent to Coventry, she just wished the scenery was better.

The cruise ship wasn't quite as big as she had expected.

I wish mother would stop banging on about the superior quality of English apples. Last year it was her red currants

Where did you find this Freda? You know that it should be in the boat or we shall sink

Julia had brought her song book of jolly sea shanties along, but the others just weren't interested

Is this all it takes to cross the Tiber?

"All this earnest talk about poetry" thought Emily "but when will they ever learn not to speak with their mouths full?"

As their lifeboat drifted helplessly, Dora wished she'd had the presence of mind to get in the one with that nice young officer

They little realised how perilously close they were to the weir

Celia tried to keep her thoughts on higher things but was distracted by the other two constantly chattering and giggling about boys

"It's just *not fair*" thought Sylvia. "Miss Jackman was *my* friend until that Diana muscled in and spoiled everything!"

Daphne's sense of direction leading the Transatlantic Rowing Cup was appalling!

"Turn left when you get to the Thames Estuary" were the instructions, but somehow the banks of the river at Dagenham seemed more appealing.

The pleasure of Thelma's day was overshadowed by the niggling thought that she'd forgotten to switch the iron off before she came out

November Caption Competition



Your caption goes here. You have until November 20th to get your entries in.

Our calling is to share the loving hospitality of God, seeing Christ in the face of the stranger

Ministry Team for St Mary's & St John's

Rector: The Revd Jonathan Clark, The Rectory, Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 9ES (020 7254 6072 rectorofstokey@btinternet.com)

Vicar: The Revd Martyn Hawkes, St John's Vicarage, 2a Gloucester Drive, London N4 2LW (020 8809 6111 mj_hawkes@yahoo.co.uk)

Curate: The Revd Lucyann Ashdown (0207 7254 6072 lucyann.ashdown@googlemail.com)

Honorary Assistant Priest: The Revd Graeme Watson (020 7249 8701 gchwatson@blueyonder.co.uk)

Pastoral Assistant: Melissa Martin (020 7254 6072)

Readers: Alan Murray, Jonathan Gebbie

Parish Information for St Mary's

Parish Administrator: Mark Perrett (020 7254 6072 stmarystokenewington@btinternet.com)

Church Wardens: Andrew Jackson and Sandra Roth

Organist and Director of Music: Nigel Williams

PCC Secretary: Jean Guest (020 8802 4921).

PCC Treasurer, Michael Johnson

Recorder of Stewardship: Rosaline Nwagboso

Sunday School: Lucy Barnes

Website: Graham Robson robsonq21@yahoo.co.uk

Parish Information for St John's

Church Wardens: Joyce George & Irene Fergus

Parish Office: 020 8809 6111

Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 8.00 am Matins 9.00 am (Old Church) Family Eucharist (St Mary's) 9.30 am

Sung Eucharist (St Mary's) 11.00 am Parish Eucharist (St John's) 11 am

Evening worship 6.30 pm (Old Church)

Weekdays (All at St Mary's except Thursdays)

	Morning Prayer	Mass	Evening Prayer
Monday	8:30 am,		5 pm
Tuesday	8:30 am	8:45 am	5 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am	7.30 pm	5 pm
Thursday	8:30 am		5 pm
Friday	8:30 am		5 pm

The Editorial Team (*"Nemo primus inter pares"*)

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Brownies. Fridays 6.30 pm. Enquire at Church Office

Booking enquiries for the Community Centre: see Parish Administrator

Arrangements for baptisms, weddings etc: ring the Parish Administrator for an appointment.

St Mary's has a Church School: St Mary's School, Lordship Rd, London, N16. 020 8800 2645