

*Fr Hoyal Writes*

## **I Have Chosen YOU**

A late Easter this year means a late Lent, and I for one am grateful. Some years there is little time, following Christmas, to decompress and recoup before Ash Wednesday makes its inevitable demands.

Hopefully, after a lengthy Epiphany-tide we are now poised to give Lent our best endeavours as we seek to freshen up spiritually and renew our commitment as disciples.

Our overall theme for Lent this year is “I have chosen YOU.”

This is something of a double-edged pronouncement. Alongside the privilege and encouragement of God’s call to be his people, we have to set the challenge of embracing the responsibilities he is asking of us as his chosen.

Things are always changing, even when there is overall stability. I would judge, though, that the pace of change in the Church of England has increased considerably in recent years.

Not all may warm to the radical changes at parish and deanery level that Bristol diocese is adopting, but it can’t be doubted that they are being introduced with the worthy intention of stemming decline and encouraging new growth.

Much as a parish resents not having a priest to itself, the fact that the diocese is currently expecting to drop its number of stipendiary clergy from 127 to 94 in the next four years speaks for itself.

It is no surprise, in these circumstances, that parishes are being clustered in partnerships so that ordained and lay ministers can be shared between parishes, along with other resources. In practice this is

what we already have with the links between All Saints and All Hallows and, to some extent, Christ Church City and Holy Nativity Knowle.

On the plus side, there are many more people coming forward for licensed lay ministry (LLM) as Readers, and the diocese is strongly encouraging Ordained Local Ministry (OLM). This involves identifying candidates within a parish or partnership who are locally acceptable to train for service as non-stipendiary clergy for that particular parish or partnership.

Bearing in mind how rapidly our own situation is changing – having already lost an invaluable assistant priest we are currently staffing *four* parishes with All Saints-based clergy – the PCC recently invited Sam Rushton, the diocese’s Advisor for Licensed Ministry (lay and ordained), to talk to us about the OLM scheme.

We now have to consider if the OLM scheme might help us identify and foster candidates from our own congregation who could be trained for ordination to serve as (non-stipendiary) assistant clergy in an All Saints partnership. Hopefully, a large enough partnership would still be eligible for one full-time stipendiary priest with overall charge.

It is against this backdrop that this year’s Tuesday evening Lent Course is entitled “Ministry Tomorrow?” As will be seen elsewhere, we have a fine line-up of guest speakers coming to stimulate our thinking about ministry, lay and ordained, in the Church’s changing situation. Do make use of this valuable opportunity.

For us at All Saints, with a strong sacramental tradition of priestly ministry, there is the particular need to see that spiritual leadership and care consonant with the best of what we have inherited are not compromised despite changes at diocesan and national level.

All this means we have much thinking – and praying – to do. *We* have been chosen for *our* time and circumstances. It is now very much the hour to investigate what this means in terms of discharging our responsibility to be an authentic and lively congregation living and commending the Catholic faith in today's situation.

Individually we shall also need to reflect: *I* have been chosen – for what?



**FOR FULL DETAILS OF OUR LENT PROGRAMME,  
PLEASE SEE THE LENT LEAFLET ENCLOSED WITH  
THIS MAGAZINE.**

**ASH WEDNESDAY 9 March 2011**  
**(First Day of LENT)**  
**Mass 7.30 am & 9.30 am**  
**SOLEMN MASS 7.30 pm**  
*Ashing available at all services*

**From the Bishop: THE FORGIVENESS BUSINESS**

The season of Lent is almost upon us again and many of us will take up the challenge of 'giving something up'. That's good, but I hope that many of you will **take up** the Biblefresh Challenge to read through the Gospel of Matthew systematically during the Lenten period. Any of these things,

however small, will build self-discipline into our lives and self-discipline is an important key in opening the door to holiness in our lives.

In this Lenten message, however, I want to focus on another historic perspective on Lent which is equally difficult for us. In the early Church the public confession of 'serious' sin (as if there were sins that weren't serious), would lead into the Lenten fast and would be a period of self-reflection and penitence.

Forgiveness is hard. For some of us, believing we are forgiven is difficult. For others, forgiving others is nigh on impossible. For many, forgiving ourselves is a real challenge. Over the years I have become aware of another direction of forgiveness that smoulders away in many, some non-believers, others not, and it's this – forgiving God.

I have come across this phenomenon a fair bit and the more I have lifted the veil on the subject, the more people have wanted to talk about it. As a Christian mother said to me recently, "I'm mad with God; I'm really angry. We did all we could to raise our children as Christians, we prayed for them, we talked with them, we took them to our church and today none of them want to know. What's God doing?"

It's understandable in one way that when we face things that have gone wrong in our lives, when we are disappointed, we blame God. Sometimes the psalmists get very close to this. I think God understands this. Certainly, this side of Heaven, we

are just left with our questions. As Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 13, "Now we see but a poor reflection, then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."

Maybe this Lent we could reflect on where we are in this forgiveness business. We might ask ourselves if there's someone we need to talk to or something we need to do.

One thing is clear to me: that God's forgiveness, however, it manifests itself, when we experience it and when we offer it, releases energy into our world.

May God bless you with His Grace and Truth this Lent.

*Mike*

March 2011

### **BRISTOL CATHOLIC SOCIETIES**

The Catholic Societies Diary for 2011 was published late in January - albeit a little late. The Diary gives details of services, events and meetings in the Bristol area of interest to Anglo-Catholics. Please take one from the table in the Atrium, and please do your best to support the services, etc, shown therein.

Further details may be had from the contacts shown, or from me.

*Chris Verity*

**ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD  
TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

**Friday 25 March**



10.30 am Mass at All Saints

1.05 pm Mass at Christ Church City

**7.30 pm JOINT FESTIVAL MASS  
at Holy Nativity Knowle**

Holy Nativity have specially invited All Saints and All Hallows to join them on this day. All Saints Choir is kindly singing (Monteverdi). **Lifts**

**offered from All Saints** – porch notice or ring Office 9741355

**Guest Preacher The Very Revd Dr David Hoyle Dean of  
Bristol**

**Refreshments afterwards.**

*This is a splendid opportunity to show our solidarity with Holy Nativity, also an ABC parish, who have been without their own priest for 15 months already. Do join us as we join them.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**ALL SAINTS ARTS: COMING MUSIC AT ALL SAINTS**

***Saturday 5 March at 4.00 pm***

**CONCERT MATINEE Dorian String Quartet**

One of Bristol's oldest established and distinguished ensembles makes a return visit to perform Schubert's *A minor String Quartet* preceded by Purcell's *Chacony in G minor*.

*Admission free with retiring collection and tea and cake after the performance.*

***Saturday 2 April at 7.30 pm***

**CHORAL CONCERT Bristol's Cabot Choir**

Conducted by Ben England and accompanied by organist Claire Alsop, the choir's programme will include Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and Elijah's *Hymn of Praise*  
*Tickets from Providence Music, 1 St George's Road, Bristol, BS1 5UL. Alternatively email [tickets@bristolcobotchoir.org](mailto:tickets@bristolcobotchoir.org) or call 0117 968 6822.*

***Sunday 10 April at 6 pm***  
***COME AND SING on Passion Sunday***

An opportunity to sing Fauré's *Requiem* and Mendelssohn's *Hear my Prayer* with All Saints Choir. The event follows the success of last year's Passion Sunday *Come and Sing*. Full details will be available later.

\* \* \* \* \*

**WALSINGHAM 2011**

Our parish pilgrimage this year to this lovely Shrine village is from Monday 3 to Friday 7 October, and we are once again sharing a coach with St Gregory's Horfield.



The beauty and holiness of Walsingham, and the wonderful spiritual fellowship on always meets there, make the pilgrimage a very special experience. Do ask Garfield Griffiths or Fr Hoyal if you would

like to know more.

It is already time to book – please contact Garfield, either at church or at 0117 9441035 or [Garfield.Griffiths@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Garfield.Griffiths@uwe.ac.uk) .

• \* \* \* \* \*

## **Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland**

### **Lent Lectures 2011**

#### ***“The Big Society and Christian Engagement”***

- March 16th     **The “Big Society” and the New Austerity**  
Anna Coote of the New Economics Foundation  
*Cotham Parish Church*
- March 23rd     **Affordable Housing: To Build or not to build?**  
Mike Day, Knighstone Housing Association  
The Revd Nick Williams on the 21st Century  
Almhouse  
*The Friends’ Meeting House, Hampton Road,*
- March 30th     **The Big Society and the Gospel of Small Things**  
The Revd Jon Doble,  
The Churches’ Council for Industry and Social Responsibility.  
*Clifton Cathedral, Pembroke Road,*
- April 13th     **The Big Society and Volunteering**  
With panel from the Volunteer Bureau, the National  
Trust and Victim Support.

**All 7.00pm for 7.30pm     Admission Free To All Lectures**

### **MISQUOTATIONS BY THE DOZEN**

The expressions below are widely heard, and harmless enough.  
The point is, though, that they can’t be claimed as Quotations.  
See how you do!  
The first to present them in all their dazzling purity wins a jar of  
my wife’s  
Lime Marmalade. Let’s make Lady Day the deadline.

And did those feet in ancient times  
Bearing gifts we travel so far  
Britannia rules the waves  
Far from the maddening crowd  
For the sake of auld lang syne  
God moves in mysterious ways  
Hearts of oak are our ships, jolly tars are our men  
Money is the root of all evil  
Moreton in the Marsh  
Play it again, Sam  
This is for the first time of asking  
Till death do us part

*Ken Smith*

**ALL SAINTS PARISH RETREAT 18-20 FEBRUARY  
2011**

Well, we got there and we got our numbers! After worry and one or two (or more) sleepless nights worrying as to whether we would get enough people to come on Retreat finally 21 of us met up at Abbey House, Glastonbury after work on Friday 18 February. It was a joy to welcome three new retreatants to our usual crowd – Andrew, Katy and Raji. Perhaps they will join us again next year.

We were very fortunate to have Fr Thomas Seville, CR as our Retreat Conductor and he took over everything, so Fr Richard and I could be like everyone else and relax and do nothing! Fr Thomas based his addresses on the book of Tobit, which for those who may not be sure where that is, it is from the Apocrypha. We had just four addresses over the weekend,

which was just right. I can remember days when we had 7 addresses, some going on for nearly an hour each!

We went into Silence after Supper on the Friday and remained silent until after Lunch on Sunday. We had music during Supper on Friday – some Baroque bassoon pieces – then a Mozart Violin concerto during Sunday Lunch. The highlight at mealtimes for me was Saturday Supper. Fr Thomas read the whole Book of Tobit while we ate Supper – it was very well read and afforded loud applause at the end.

The programme of the Retreat was built round the saying of the Daily Offices and Mass; Morning and Evening Prayer and also Midday Prayers, and Compline at the end of the Day. On Saturday evening Holy Hour in silence before the Blessed Sacrament led into Compline.

I have been going to Abbey House on Parish Retreats for over 25 years and have always loved it there, but each year it gets better! The Warden and staff are so welcoming; the rooms are comfortable, many of them with views down the Abbey ruins; the food is excellent and plentiful and the house is warm with plenty of room to relax. The gardens are beautiful and both there and in the Abbey grounds the lawns were carpeted with snowdrops and crocuses.

Our thanks go to Fr Thomas for his scholarly, but deeply spiritual (and at times funny) addresses. Between us we were able to collect £100 donation for him to take back to the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield. Also our thanks must go to the Warden, Liz Pearson and her helpers who made us all so welcome.

Next year's Retreat is 4-6 February – Go on, think about joining us! It is a wonderful and refreshing experience.

*Liz Badman (Parish Reader)*

## Sermon Preached by Fr Hoyal at Solemn Mass 6 February 2011

*Is 58.1-9 1 Cor 2.1-12 Matt 5.13-20*

*Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5.16*

'If you've got it, flaunt it.' So goes the popular saying. And some people have got it. What's more they know that they have, and they're terrible show-offs.

But I don't think this is quite what Our Lord has in mind when he encourages us to let our light shine. For one thing, he's talking, not about wealth or looks or position, but about moral and spiritual qualities – things that show in good works, in behaviour that is generous and caring and self-effacing.

For another, he's not suggesting we should be boastful at all. Boastfulness and arrogance are things he criticizes sharply in a good number of his sayings and parables. In the immediately preceding passage of Matthew's gospel we have Jesus saying, 'Blessed are the meek, blessed are the pure in heart.'

To get his meaning we have to understand what this light of ours is. If we are, to use his words, the light of the world, it's because he is *the Light* of the world.

The baptism service makes this very clear, doesn't it, when an individual candle lit from the great Easter candle is handed to the newly baptized person. 'God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness,' says the priest. '(He) has given us a place with the saints in light. You have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life.' And then we all add, 'Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.'

The light Jesus is talking about is the light we see in him, the light of life and holiness, that light of his we see at its brightest in the greatest good work of all time, his death and resurrection.

We can only pass on what we've got ourselves. And in the case of the Christ light, we only have it because it's been graciously given to us.

And if we have it, it's not to direct others to ourselves, but to God. It is when people see true goodness at work for the benefit of others that they come to understand that God is being glorified, not man.

Few people are converted merely by words. That's why in today's epistle Paul disclaims any reliance upon oratory. His preaching method is to point people nakedly and directly to Jesus and the Cross.

Even so, I'm sure it was principally Paul's personal example along with that of his fellow Christian workers that brought about so many conversions in the course of his great missionary travels. As Pope John XXIII once said, it would scarcely be necessary to expound doctrine if our lives were radiant enough. If we behaved like true Christians, there would be no pagans.

For people see the light when, so to speak, we are *doing* the light. It's closely related to the point Isaiah makes so powerfully in our first lesson when he berates religious fasting done for essentially self-centred reasons. No, no, no, he protests. The kind of fast I want to see is you breaking the bonds of injustice, letting the oppressed go free, sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and not shunning your poor relations. Then, says the prophet, then your light shall break

forth, with righteousness going before you and the glory of the Lord as your rearguard.

So it is our *doing* right that reveals the glory of the Lord. It is by our fruits that we are known and judged. It is by our *doing* the light that God's light in us will speak to others. For it is what we *do* that says everything.

Perhaps he exaggerates slightly, but the great Albert Schweitzer puts it very well when he says somewhere, 'Example is not the main thing that influences others – it is the only thing.'

In this connection, I read recently of an American teacher, a devout Christian, who was employed in a rather nationalistic Japanese college on the understanding that during school hours he wouldn't utter a word on the subject of Christianity. The engagement was faithfully kept. The man lived before his students the Christian life, but he never spoke of it to them. Not a word was said to influence the young men committed to his care. But so beautiful was this man's character, and so blameless his personal example, that forty of his students, unknown to him, met at a local grove and signed a secret covenant to abandon what they now described as their idolatry. In due course twenty-five of them entered the Kyoto Christian Training School, and some of them went on to be evangelists for the gospel which their spiritually luminous teacher had unconsciously commended to them.

Certainly, there is a lesson to be learned from that teacher - a gospel lesson.