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# El Corazón

From the Anglican Chaplaincy of St George, Malaga  
Volume 6, No. 4, April 2026

**Hello again and welcome once again to the April edition of El Corazon.**

As the weather hopefully starts to improve, we have a bumper edition of El Corazon for you.

Inside this edition:

- [Fr Louis](#) discusses important events both at the global level and closer to home
- An opportunity to introduce and welcome the Reverend Liz McLean
- An update on the financial projects currently underway at St George's Church
- [Michael](#) starts a new chapter with an introduction to the remarkable life of Brigadier General Geoffrey Herbert Bruno ("Billy") Beyts DSO, MBE, MC
- [Colin](#) discusses the poet Christina Rossetti 1830-1894.
- We also have included Fr Hilary's sermon at Salinas exploring St Catherine of Siena
- As ever, there are full details of all the [upcoming services and events](#)

You can scan the QR code on the right to stay absolutely up to date with news, events, and services.

We both also want to thank everyone who attended St Georges on Sunday as we renewed our marriage vows for our silver wedding anniversary. It was truly special and we felt very loved.

*Mike and Jo Eaton*

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**ALL ARE WELCOME**

St. George's is part of the Diocese in Europe within the Church of England.  
**Fr. Louis Darrant, Chaplain**

There's always a lot going on at St George's!

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# A Word in Season

Fr. Louis Darrant



## Archbishop Sarah heads to Rome

I'm thinking today about the meeting between Archbishop Sarah and Pope Leo in the Vatican. It's a striking image and a historic one at the same time because it provokes thought on so many levels: the first female Archbishop of Canterbury, the progress made in relations with the Catholic Church, what it means to be an Anglican in a country shaped by Catholic culture, what is shared and what is distinctive as Anglicans and Catholics, and so I go on.

Just recently I had to gently correct a guide who was giving a tour of the English Cemetery which included the church. The person concerned was explaining to the local schoolchildren that Anglicans didn't have Holy Week (Semana Santa). I could hardly carry on with my tasks in the church overhearing this when recent months have been preparing for the very same!

On another occasion I was reflecting on a comment someone made that St George's was becoming too catholic. This suggests that the Anglican Church stands alone with a completely separate identity and set of beliefs and practices. Its more accurate to describe Anglicanism in terms of being both catholic and reformed. A former Archbishop of Canterbury Michael Ramsay was clear that "Anglicanism is not a system or a Confession but a method, a use, a direction" so that "its greatest credentials are its incompleteness, with tension and travail in its soul. It is clumsy and untidy; it baffles neatness and logic. For it is sent not to commend itself as 'the best type of Christianity', but by its very brokenness to point to the universal Church wherein all have died."

I'm glad at the very least people are talking about this at St George's. Much of the time in churches people can feel very strongly about the provision of toilets, so it's rewarding to be thinking about stuff beyond answering the call of nature.

## Where are we going?

I'm working on the Chaplaincy's Mission Action Plan which takes seriously the results of the consultation exercise involving over sixty people last October. It's been an exercise in attempting to describe the character and priorities of our church community at this: say too much and risk being too prescriptive; say too little and you risk not standing for much at all. One word which keeps cropping up time and again is community. Who is not for community? It sounds so attractive and obvious but dig a little deeper and the foundations of that community are revealed.

Sometimes people tell me they come for just the social aspect of the church's life and I respect that. I think we should be broad and generous in our welcome and not be stipulating why people might be coming to church, but I daresay the character of the church would not be what we experience if it were not for the constant celebration and rhythm of the Eucharist. What binds us is not believing exactly the same things, but our shared practices over time.

Archbishop Rowan Williams speaks of such things when he wrote, “If ‘church’ is what happens when people encounter the Risen Christ and commit themselves to sustaining and deepening that encounter in their encounter with each other, there is plenty of theological room for diversity of rhythm and style, so long as we have ways of identifying the same living Christ at the heart of every express of Christ life in common.”

## **Change and constancy**

With the Council’s decision to sell the Chaplaincy Apartment for the purpose of investment (which I hasten to add I believe is an imaginative and sensible stewardship of our resources) I find myself flat hunting in Malaga and beyond.

People ask me what I think about the decision and my response is clear. We have a responsibility to ensure we are doing everything within our capability to ensure the long term sustainability of the Chaplaincy. This isn’t because of a nostalgic sense for the church, but because we embody a community of hope. I find it an extraordinary time to be part of this Chaplaincy. People ask me how I carry the responsibility and I give a two-fold answer: I say my prayers and I try my best to build a team of fellow workers. Jesus never called anyone to go it alone. What strikes me most about St George’s is the variety of people – both the settled community and those who visit. You have to be open to people. Very often God reveals himself through the many.

## **Introducing the Reverend Liz McLean**



I am the Rural Dean of Whalley in Lancashire, which encompasses the Ribble Valley & Hodder Valley and includes around 32 churches within the deanery. I have been the Vicar of St Peter’s in the village of Salesbury, Lancashire since 2021 following my curacy training in Preston, Lancashire. My parish is very much a community church with lots of Life Event ministries: baptisms, weddings and, owing to its extensive graveyard with views over Pendle Hill, funerals. We work closely with the church school and the committed choir enable us to offer a variety of traditional and contemporary worship.

I feel very blessed to be ministering here as my parish and deanery are nestled in areas of outstanding natural beauty, rich in farming life and fascinating history. I am born and raised in Lancashire and except for some years in Birmingham as a student, I’ve spent my time in the hills and valleys of Northwest England.

A beautiful place when the sun shines, but damp and cold when it’s cloudy, which happens a lot! So drawn by the warmth of the Spanish sun, my husband, George, and I have made a second home near the town of Salinas in Malaga province. Soon after moving in, we were delighted to find an Anglican Congregation who have welcomed us in over the past 12 months. We love spending time in southern Spain, appreciating its unique culture and lifestyle, which is of course enhanced by the wonderful climate. I hope to meet you all soon as I take up my role as PTO.

# **An update on the financial projects currently underway at St George's Church**

## **The church restoration project**

2026 is witness to a flurry of activity at St George's Church and in the surrounding Cemetery area. If you visit regularly, you will be aware of the exciting plans that the Cemetery Foundation has for a new garden, currently under development, on the left side of the church as you look at it.

We hope that you will also have heard about the plans to restore the church to its former glory, and in many ways, to make it a better and more useful space than it ever was. This is our St George's Restoration project, which we've talked about at length since last year, and for which we are in the process of fundraising.

The fundraising campaign for the church's restoration will draw on two sources: public funding and private contributions.

An application for public funding is currently in progress, with a decision expected in May. If successful, this funding could cover more than half of the total project cost of €250,000. The remaining balance will be raised through private donations and a series of church-led fundraising activities. As a community, we are setting ourselves a goal of 18 months to raise the required funds and bring this important project to completion.

Some may reasonably ask why the church community is undertaking the restoration of a building that is owned by the Cemetery Foundation: The answer lies in the shared value and purpose of the church. While the building is under the ownership of the Cemetery Foundation, it remains at the heart of our worship, our gatherings, and our community life. It is a place of deep spiritual, historical, and cultural significance for all who live here.

It is also worth noting that the original Statutes clearly state that the building is to be used as a church for as long as the church community wishes it to be so, and that responsibility for its upkeep rests with that same community.

This restoration project is therefore not simply about ownership, but about stewardship — caring for a cherished space that serves present and future generations. By working together with the Cemetery Foundation, we are ensuring that the church remains a welcoming and well-maintained place for all.

## **The day to day running of the church**

Independently of the restoration project, the Chaplaincy Council of St George's has a duty to keep the church going, year in year out.

In the five and a half years since Father Louis' arrival, which coincided with the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, St George's has worked hard under his guidance to rebuild and renew its life as a parish community.

Today, it is once again a thriving hub, holding services every Sunday as well as hosting regular musical and cultural events, with ambitions to grow even more in the years to come.

Its financial position has also improved. However, while it is no longer precarious, further progress is needed if St George's is to realise its full potential — including the important goal of providing its chaplain with a proper full-time stipend and giving more consistently to charitable causes.

To that end, the Chaplaincy Council has taken the important decision of selling the chaplaincy flat, situated close to the bullring on Paseo Reding. With property prices in Malaga at an all-time high, this is considered a timely and prudent moment to proceed with the sale.

The money realized from this sale will be invested in order to create an interest-bearing Endowment Fund, the income from which will help the church better meet its ongoing financial responsibilities. Under the guidance of an Endowment Oversight Committee, chosen from the existing Chaplaincy Council, the aim of the Endowment is two-fold.

It will enable the church to carry out its ministry more effectively and, over time, to grow in strength and resilience, so that St George's is better equipped to withstand the uncertainties of an economically turbulent world. Your generous donations and regular giving will, of course, continue to be both warmly welcomed and greatly needed as we move forward together.

The plan, drawn up by the Treasurer and the advisory team, is for the new income stream to allow for a housing allowance, enabling the current chaplain, Father Louis (but all future chaplains too) to live in rented accommodation of their choice, be it in central Malaga or further out. This is seen by all concerned as a very attractive proposition for the current incumbent and future prospective chaplains too.

Taken together, these two projects will not only secure the future of St George's Church, but will open a new chapter in its life — enabling it to flourish as a vibrant beacon of hope, hospitality, and community for all across the Costa del Sol.

If you'd like to know more about either of these initiatives, please visit our website [www.stgeorgesmalaga.com](http://www.stgeorgesmalaga.com) (where there is detailed information about the Restoration project) or get in touch with Fr. Louis, Caroline Warren (Warden), David Tweed (Director of Fundraising), or Tristram Congreve (Hon. Treasurer).

# SO NOW YOU KNOW



*HISTORICAL JOTTINGS usually relating to St. George's Church, Malaga.*

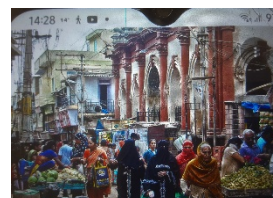
*The 42<sup>nd</sup> in a series prepared for your interest and enjoyment by Michael Edwards*



If you step out and leave St. George's by the main large door under the Portico and look to your right towards the Cemetery you will probably see the headstone detailing the final resting place of one of the most brave and highly decorated military men who served the British Nation throughout a large part of the twentieth century. That man is the late Brigadier General **Geoffrey Herbert Bruno ("Billy") Beyts, DSO, MBE, MC**, who died aged 92 on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2000. His place of death is recorded in the Cemetery Burial Records as Benajaraf, near Torre del Mar.

A few of the older members of the Church Congregation today will have had the pleasure of knowing him, as he was, during his retirement years quite active in the life of the Church and also the Costa del Sol Branch of the British Legion. So, I invite you to join with me in taking a look at his long and very varied Military and Colonial career .

" Billy " Beyts was born a long way from the UK and Spain. He was born in the City of Bhuj , in the State of Gujarat , Western India on the 17th of January 1908. He was the son of a Military man, Captain Roger Fleetwood Sconce Beyts and his wife Constance Mary (Nee Bruno). Bhuj is a desert city with a rich and cultural heritage and not surprisingly is a tourist attraction . In more recent times it has been famous for the life and work of Vijay Karnik of the Indian Air Force, the former Wing Commander known for his leadership during the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971. Bhuj also has the popular attraction, the 18th Century Aina Palace situated near the Harmirsar Lake.



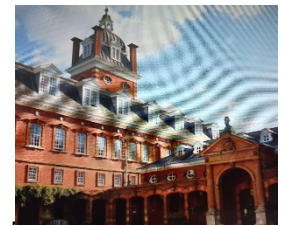
A scene in a very busy and colourful street in Bhuj, India, Beyts' City of birth.



Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire

Beyts' early days and education were not surprisingly spent in England . His prep. school and boarding, probably starting at the age of 7, commenced at Bowden House School, Seaford, a boy's school located on the Southeast Coast in East Sussex. From there, probably at the age of 13, he moved to the famous " military " school , Wellington College in Crowthorne, Berkshire. This College, founded in 1859, followed on from the death of the Duke of Wellington, Field Marshal and twice Prime Minister, was by Queen Victoria and robustly by her husband Prince Albert and the Earl of Derby.

It was stated that the College, and I quote was, amongst other things, "A school to educate the sons of Army Officers who had died in service at little or no cost to the boy's families and also the sons of living officers". Today the College is Co. Ed., has 18 Houses and the fees for boarding pupils are £20,750 per term. It still retains a bursary system available to suitable pupils where their parents cannot fund the school's fee . In 1926 at the age of 18, Beyts was successful in attaining entry into the Royal Military College, Sandhurst by way of a King's Cadetship and was commissioned on completion of his officer training in 1928 .



Royal Military College, Sandhurst.



A Royal Northumberland Fusiliers Soldier in service in years past in the British Empire.

At this point in his military career, Beyts "went home" as it were, when his first year of service was served with the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers in India before joining the 3rd Battalion, 6th Rajputana Rifles in 1930. At the tender age of 22 he found himself commanding a company of this Regiment, which interestingly was his father's old Regiment. Beyts was allotted an area of Burmese teak forest the size of Wales located to the west of the Irrawaddy River. At this time in the 1930's Burma was characterised not by a foreign war, but by the Saya San Rebellion (1930 - 1932), a major peasant uprising against British Colonial Rule which was violently suppressed by British forces most of which was fought in the rice paddy fields of the Irrawadda Delta. Beyts and his Company found themselves very much in the centre of this action during which it seems his superior officers gave him a list of 100 rebels to contain. By the time he and his Company emerged from the jungle 9

months later, every man on that list had been either killed or captured. For his conduct during these jungle operations, Beyts was awarded the Military Cross in December 1932 .He also spent some time as part of the garrison of Fort Dufferin in Mandalay, which stood him in good steady when the City was captured in 1945 .



Photo of the 3rd Battalion, 6th Rajputana Rifles in 1930.

The next action that Beyts and his Company were involved, was the Waziristan campaign of 1936 -1939 which comprised a number of operations conducted in Waziristan by the British Army against the fiercely independent tribesmen that inhabited this region which is located in the mountainous tribal area in the northwest of Pakistan, bordering Afghanistan and part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province .



Mirzali Khan (1936-39), the Faqir of Ipi, Tribal Chief and adversary to the British Raj.

The campaign of 1936 to 1939 followed on from many earlier fighting campaigns of 1894 at Wana, in 1919 known as the Third Afghan War and the revolt in Waziristan where fighting by the British Army and the Indian Army included battle stations in the renowned Khyber Pass. The operations in 1936 - 1939 were conducted against followers of a tribal chief and adversary to the British Raj, Mirzali Khan, also known by the British as the "Faqir of Ipi," a religious and political agitator. In late November 1936, in order to reassert the perception of control over the region, the government of India decided to move troops through the Khaisora Valley. The purpose of such expeditions on the Northwest Frontier was to demonstrate to the tribesmen of their resolve, but no offensive action was to be taken unless their troops were fired upon.

In the event the reverse of the desired outcome occurred which highlighted their military weakness and Mirzali Khan's support rose dramatically. By April 1937, four extra brigades had been brought in to reinforce the garrisons of Razmak, Bannu and Wanna. At the height of the campaign, some 60,000 regular and irregular troops were employed by the British in an effort to bring battle to an estimated 4,000 hostile tribesmen! Mirzali Khan remained at large and in the main the tribesmen managed to inflict considerable casualties upon both the British and Indian troops by way of their guerrilla tactics. By December 1937, Mirzali Khan's support began to wane after additional British forces were introduced featuring five batteries of mechanised field artillery, light tanks and six squadrons of aircraft. Throughout 1937, despite the tribesmen's guerrilla actions substantial new road construction works continued to enable motorised vehicles enter what was difficult terrain to permit much improved permanent control by the British and Indian forces over the local tribes.



Photo of the late Brigadier General Geoffrey Herbert Bruno Beyts, DSO, MB, MC, in British Uniform.

Beyts attended the Staff College, Camberley from 1936 to 1937 and then as a staff officer at the War Office in India. At the start of the Second World War in 1939 he trained Independent Companies in Scotland that took part in the Norwegian Campaign. The Norwegian Campaign in 1940 was mainly naval. However, the training Beyts provided in rugged Scottish terrain somewhat similar to Norwegian territory, assisted the Army by way of various actions throughout this period.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of April, the first Allied landings took place in the North of Norway when British troops occupied Harstead in preparation for an attack on Narvik. However, despite reinforcements from both French and Polish Units together with the Norwegian Army, the decision was made to pull out of Central Norway on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April. The surviving Norwegian troops surrendered to the German Army and the Norwegian Campaign was over.

In 1940 Beyts married Ruby Scott - Elliot in Westminster, London with their 48 hour honeymoon spent in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire in a house lent to them by Capt. Mike Henderson. His wife came from a military family. Her father was Lt. Col. Charles Reginald Scott - Elliot ( Indian Army ) and her grandfather, General Scott - Elliot. They had two children, Nicholas and Vanessa. In the following year of 1941, he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1940, Beyts received a new posting in the UK. He was posted to Coleshill House, the location of the underground General Headquarters of what were termed the Auxiliary Unit. Coleshill House was located near Swindon on the Oxfordshire / Wiltshire border in the Vale of the White Horse. A 17<sup>th</sup> century house was used for military sabotage training in the event of a German Invasion of the UK and highly supported by Winston Churchill as part of the war effort. Here he served in the senior capacity of Deputy Commander.



Coleshill House, Swindon.

Between 1940 and 1944 over 3,000 members of the public were secretly recruited into this network. One of the more famous people to command one of these Units was the Film Actor Sir Anthony Quale, CBE, who took part in many films including " Ice Cold in Alex ", " Lawrence of Arabia " and " The Guns of Navarone ". Apart from being a serving Major in the British Army during WW II he became an Area Commander of one of the secret underground Auxiliary Units in Northumberland.



A typical underground bunker or "OB" used by Churchill's "Secret Army " during WWII.

The Auxiliary Units constructed underground secret bunkers, known as "Operational Bases" or "OB's" usually sufficient in size for a single unit of personnel of about 6 to 10 and equipped with basic facilities for living underground. By the end of the Second World War there were 534 of these Operational Bases located throughout the UK .

During his time at Coleshill, Billy Beyts and his wife Ruby lived in a gardener's cottage within the grounds of Coleshill Vicarage, a two up and down place with an outdoor toilet. Ruby also took

charge of the domestic arrangements at Coleshill including the provision of meals for the staff and visitors receiving sabotage training. Beyts served at Coleshill until the 5th of June 1942 before he and his wife moved back to India.



Modern-day photo of the Gardener's Cottage situated within the grounds of Coleshill Vicarage following recent extensions and modernisation.

In my next Jotting I will relate the final part of Billy Beyts' very varied Military and Colonial career , helping Spymaster Colin Mackenzie in India , fighting the Japanese Army in the Burmese Jungle followed by his final postings . All this followed by his life and Colonial work in Kenya , helping the Ugandan Asians in the UK and finally his retirement years in Malaga including his time at St George's, Malaga.

SO NOW YOU KNOW

MICHAEL EDWARDS.

# April NOTABLES

## Christina Rossetti, Poet 1830-1894.



Christina Rossetti, the youngest member of a remarkable artistic Anglo-Italian family, was born in London in 1830. A devout Anglican from an evangelical background. Christina and her sister became greatly influenced by the Tractarians and her sister Maria eventually entered the Anglican sisterhood of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor (ASSP).

Some of Christina's earliest work, written under the pseudonym 'Ellen Alleyne', was published in "The Germ", the organ of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Her poetry reflected her Christian faith and also a pervading sense of melancholy, both strong facets of her character. She also wrote fantasy poems and pieces for children, for example in 1862 her work, *Goblin Market*. But this can also be interpreted as a religious allegory with themes of temptation, sin and redemption clearly apparent.

She gave up the prospect of marriage for religious reasons. She broke her engagement to James Collinson in 1850 when he became a Roman Catholic and in 1866 she turned down a proposal from James Bagot Cayley because he was an agnostic (however they remained close friends until his death and several of her poems were written with him in mind). Not surprisingly the themes of renunciation of earthly love and the habitual Victorian concern with death are also recurring themes, particularly in her later poetry. Her poetry is recognized by critics as having a high degree technical perfection and encompasses a wide range of styles and forms. Two Christmas carols, *In the bleak mid-winter* and *Love came down at Christmas*, remain popular today and are in many hymn books. At one point she was considered as a possible successor to Tennyson as Poet Laureate.

When her father's failing health and eyesight forced him into retirement in 1853, Christina and her mother attempted to support the family by starting their own school, but it was a short-lived venture. Her brother Dante's breakdown in 1872 and death ten years later affected her deeply. She herself suffered from chronic ill-health in later life and became something of a recluse. She developed cancer in 1891 and died three years later. Shortly before her death she published the poem 'None other Lamb', later put to music as a hymn. The last stanza declares her faith in God.

Lord, Thou art life, though I be dead,  
Love's fire Thou art, however cold I be:  
Nor heaven have I, nor place to lay my head,  
Nor Home but Thee.

*(Adapted from "Saints on Earth" a biographical companion to Common Worship – Darch & Burns  
Published by Church House Publishing)*

**Christina Rossetti is commemorated in the CofE Common Worship lectionary on April 27<sup>th</sup>.**

**Major Feasts this month:**            **April 23<sup>rd</sup>    St George, Martyr, Patron of England,**  
   **April 25<sup>th</sup>    St Mark, Evangelist.**



***Colin Somerville***

# A Sermon from Fr Hilary Oakley on 25<sup>th</sup> April at Salinas Church

## Catherine of Siena: “I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me”

As I struggled to find something to say about St Catherine of Siena, whom we are remembering today, an AI-generated picture of Donald Trump, as Jesus, appeared on his Truth Social & on my computer screen. It followed an unprecedented attack by the US President on Pope Leo. And the scales fell from my eyes! And suddenly we were back in the age of St Catherine.

In fact we were in the early 14th century, before Catherine was even born. When a dispute emerged between the Pope, Boniface 8th, and the then King of France, Philip 4th. So, Philip was in the middle of a war against England, which he no longer had the funds to pay for. And what he wanted to do was to use funds from the church to boost his flagging arsenal. ... But the Pope said No, ... and duly excommunicated him.

But that wasn't the end of it. Well, it was for the Pope, because, that night he was beaten up by some of King Philip's allies, as a result of which he died. And he was replaced by a new Pope who then cancelled the excommunication, but, some 8 months later, he also died! And, at that point, a Frenchman, a friend of King Philip's, was elected Pope - Clement 5th - and, to underline the King's power, over the church, Pope Clement was required to reside not in Rome, but in France, in Avignon. He was the first of 7 Popes & 2 antipopes, all of them French, who resided in Avignon

And so enter Catherine of Siena. Catherine was born in 1347, when this was all happening, the 2nd youngest of 25 children. Very pious from an early age, & despite opposition from her family, she joined the Dominican tertiary order at the age of sixteen. It was an order of lay people who wore a religious habit, but lived at home and worked in the world rather than in a cloister. They served the poor, the sick, the imprisoned of Siena with kind charitable works. And even as the black death arrived in Siena, she & her companions remained hard at work, caring for those affected.

Now, as time went on Catherine was drawn into wider controversies that were plaguing Church and State. She's known for writing hundreds of letters to kings, queens, princes, nobility, religious, priests, and even to the Pope himself. But an increasingly dominant focus of her letters to the Pope, was to urge him to leave Avignon in France and return to Rome...to the point that in June 1376, at the age of 29, Catherine went herself to Avignon, to try to convince Pope Gregory 11th, the last Avignon Pope, to return to Rome.... which he did the following year, though to what extent this was due to Catherine's influence remains a topic of academic debate.

So, potentially, she was the person to heal one of the biggest splits that developed within the life of the church. But not entirely. For 2 'antipopes' followed Gregory in Avignon, and another 3 followed them, albeit resident elsewhere. So for the period 1378 to 1417 there were two Popes - one in Rome & one in Avignon, with conflicting leadership within the Church. And it was not until a Council in 1417, that the church came back together again, with the election of Pope Martin 5th, accepted by all.

By which time Catherine had died. She died in fact, on 29 April 1380, aged just 33, following a stroke and exhausted both by her rigorous fasting, but also by her extensive travel to persuade local nobility and clergy to back the Roman Pope. Pope Urban 6th led her funeral and she was buried in the Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome. She was canonised by Pope Pius II in 1461, declared patron saint of Rome by Pius IX in 1866, and of Italy (together with Francis of Assisi) by Pius XII in 1939. And in 1999 Pope John Paul II proclaimed her a patron saint of Europe.

So Yes, some remarkable parallels between Catherine's time & our own. Was I the only one to spot this? Apparently not. During JD Vance's recent visit to Hungary, a report emerged of senior Pentagon officials hinting to the Vatican's nuncio – their ambassador to the US – about a new “Avignon papacy”, a deliberate threat to the Vatican, a reminder of what the King of France did to Pope Boniface, when the 14th church failed to back his war, as Pope Leo has refused to back President Trump's war in Iran.

And it got muddier. The President set out to subdue the state of Iran, and invited a number of evangelical pastors to the White House to give him their blessing, and ask God for the US to be victorious. But for the Catholic church this was entirely wrong, indeed their position was particularly well stated, here in Spain, by Bishop José Ignacio Munilla in Alicante, who said the Catholic Church “unequivocally positions itself against war, proclaiming a message of peace and forgiveness”.

And the Pope went even further. At mass on Palm Sunday, he recalled the words of the prophet Isaiah in condemnation of the corrupt kings of Israel: “Even though you make many prayers”, said Isaiah, “I will not listen: your hands are full of blood” (Isa 1:15). “Jesus is the King of Peace”, said Pope Leo, “who rejects war, whom no one can use to justify war. He does not listen to the prayers of those who wage war, but rejects them.”

And that was a real challenge to Donald Trump, who of course doesn't take challenges lying down, and responded with an extraordinary post on his Truth Social, calling the Pope, “WEAK on Crime & terrible for Foreign Policy”, and suggesting the Holy Father only got his position as Pope as a counterweight to himself. Of course there was outrage, both from those who had voted against Trump, but from many of his supporters too.

So that is where we are. But what do we learn from Catherine of Siena that speaks to our faith, as we look out at the world today. There are three things about St Catherine that I want to draw our attention to.

1. She Cared about Truth. “Proclaim the truth”, said Catherine, “and do not be silent through fear.” “Speak the truth in a million voices. It is silence that kills.” She spoke up and she spoke out, and she didn't allow fear to stop her doing or saying the right thing. OK, there was no fake news in those days and any news there was took weeks to come through. But she responded. She came back. Truth mattered. And she understood too that her faith had political as well as religious consequences.

So she'd have gone head to head with Vice President JD Vance, when he called for the Vatican to “stick to matters of morality” by which, I guess, he meant things like abortion and family stereotypes. But his point was that the Pope should not involve himself in politics, that killings by the state, unprovoked bombing campaigns, soldiers on American city streets, were not moral issues but political ones. And not the church's business. I am more with Archbp Desmond Tutu on

this one: “When people say that the Bible and politics don’t mix”, he said, “I ask them which Bible they are reading!” Truth is truth, in politics or wherever & it always matters.

2. Catherine made peace not war. For her, real peace was a deeply internal spiritual state, focussed on the providence of God. "Remain with Him in thy chamber" she said, "for thou shalt not elsewhere find so great a peace". "Leave everything in God's hands for he will take care of you". It was a peace that started inside you, but it had profound effects outside. If you can park the jealousies, leave behind, and forgive, whatever people have done to you in the past, if you can trust in that greater goodness that we call God, & see that God in those around you, then that is where the world’s peace begins. & the opposite of that peace she called “self-love”, which she described as “a cloud that takes away the light of reason

3. She understood who we are in relation to God. And in my mind that is the biggest things of all - not to get too full of yourself, not to obsess about how you are seen, to try and build your reputation or your legacy. “Look at the first man”, she said, “and you will see the cause which destroyed obedience (to God).... It was pride, which was produced by self-love, and the desire to please his companion.” Instead she said, in her most famous quote, "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire”.

And that reverberated through her writings. What Catherine had was that sense of an imminent God, a God who was here and affected by the actions of human beings. And of course that was easier, more instinctive in a pre-science era. Our world is different: science has taken away much of the mystery. And thank God for that..... But we mustn't lose that sense of presence, the imminence of God, which comes bounding through to us in beauty, in truth, in peace, and in love and respect for one another.

So many wars in our world today, so much human creativity destroyed, so many thousands of lives lost. And all because a few tyrants, ‘corrupt kings’, people with absolute power, want to leave their mark on the world.

No, we have to remember who we are and who God is. And frankly that is our Christian faith. Boil it all down to its absolute core, and what you find is a God who became a man in Jesus Christ, to show us that we are not gods, but through respect for one another and his own giving up of all worldly power on the cross, we can claim his glory as sons & daughters of God.

I quoted Archbishop Desmond Tutu. I want to quote him again: “In the end what matters“, he said, “is not how good we are, but how good God is. Not how much we love Him, but how much He loves us. And God loves us whoever we are, whatever we’ve done or failed to do, whatever we believe or cannot.”

And elsewhere he says this, “When we see others as the enemy, we risk becoming what we hate. When we oppress others, we end up oppressing ourselves. ....All of our humanity is dependent upon recognising the humanity in others.” Amen



**April 2026**

## **WHAT'S ON AT ST GEORGE'S**

St. George's Church presents  
a night of

**Antonio Ortiz**  
*Travel Memories*

**Recuerdos  
de Viaje**

Piano recital  
Bar and intermission

9th May 2026  
19:30 for 20:00 start

St. George's Church  
Avd Pries 1  
English Cemetery

TICKETS  
20€

TICKETS

[www.stgeorgesmalaga.com/events](http://www.stgeorgesmalaga.com/events)

<https://stgeorgesmalaga.com/events/>

### **Gala Dinner**

This year's ambitious Church Restoration Fund effort is centred around a June 4th Gala Dinner for 120 in the gardens of the cemetery. The evening's theme is West End musicals. We have six tables of 10 still available for a donation of €1500 each and a limited number of tickets available for individuals who wish to attend. Please contact David Tweed for further information: +34 680 13 26 34

## **Milk Fund Donations**

Every month St George's contributes 350 Euros for a pallet of milk (360 litres) to be distributed to children and families in need by the Comedor Santa Domingo in Malaga. Please donate in the cow box in the entrance to the church. If you would like to make a one-off or regular donation.

Please contact Rosella Parmiter on +34 638 339 691 if you would like more information.

<https://comedorsantodomingo.org/>

## **Pre AGM Congregational Meeting – Sunday 10th May**

- Learn about the finances of our Chaplaincy
- Discover more about what skills are needed on the Chaplaincy Council
- Learn about the different roles within our Church and how you can contribute

## **Annual Chaplaincy Meeting Sunday 31st May**

“Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labour in vain”. Psalm 127:1

## **Volunteer at St George's – role of Sacristan**

Would you be interested in helping to oversee the preparation of worship at St Georges? Setting up for the Sunday Eucharist and other services (as available); changing the altar frontal; caring for the sacred vessels and linen; preparing the credence table with everything need for the celebration of the Eucharist. Please speak to Caroline Warren or Fr Louis.

## **Birdwatching group at St George's?**

We're exploring the possibility of starting a new birdwatching group. It doesn't matter what level of experience you have – its more about gentle exercise, exploring more of Andalucia in good company and learning something new. Please get in touch with Mother Doreen or Fr Louis if you want to know more.

# St. George's Chaplaincy Worship Centers and Services

## Malaga



**St George's Church,  
Av.de Priés 1, Malaga  
Sundays, 11.30 AM**

## Salinas



**Church of the Sagrado Corazon de Maria,  
Salinas, Archidona  
Saturdays, 11.30 AM  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month**

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8530/>

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8488/>

## GETTING IN TOUCH

**Chaplain:**

**Fr. Louis Darrant, 630 909 131**

**Churchwarden:**

**Caroline Warren, 696 082 714**

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