

Sydenham Life

November 2025

In and around the parish of St Bartholomew

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Name Days

On the 29th of July, I always have some sort of celebration, and some years even get a present from my partner! Much like our monarchs, a single birthday simply doesn't suffice for me, so I've taken the habit of celebrating my name day too.

The 1st of November is known as All Saint's day (hence the themed crossword later in the magazine.) This is the day in the Church's calendar on which we remember all of the saints (holy people) of God in one big festival, but many saints have their own feast days throughout the year. The tradition of Name Days arose in many Christian countries where the celebration of a birthday was seen as paganism and to be avoided. Instead, people would celebrate on the feast day of the saint after whom they were named. For example, Georges might celebrate on the 23rd of April, or Lucys on the 13th of December.

Now that birthdays are back in fashion, name days are much neglected, but not beyond revival. Perhaps if you don't like celebrating your birthday, you could take some of the attention off yourself by celebrating the saint your name is derived from, perhaps your birthday falls at an awkward time of year and you'd rather celebrate on your name day, or perhaps like me you could go for a both/and approach and have double the festivity.

Name days also carry with them the potential for fun with readily available thematic material from the saint's life. My own name day is the feast of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany (Jesus' friends), which can be celebrated with friends, and with perfumes and soaps and a pedicure if the focus is on Mary (she poured expensive perfume on Jesus' feet to wash them as she welcomed him to her house). If we focus on Martha we might end up cleaning the house though, and I'm not quite gothic enough for a Lazarus-themed celebration.

Perhaps your name is Lawrence or Lauren, and you'd like to have a barbecue on the 10th of August (he was grilled to death for giving money to the poor instead of to the prefect of Rome;) or maybe you're a Catherine who'd like some fireworks or a road trip on the 25th of November (the Romans attempted to wheel her to death for rebuking

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the emperor, and thus we have the Catherine wheel;) or maybe you're a Marina or a Margaret who'd like to eat dragon fruit or have a dragon piñata on the 20th of July (she was swallowed by a dragon but burst her way out using a cross.)

If there has never been a saint of your name, you might like to choose one with a similar sounding name, or even just choose a saint with a fun theme or patronage. If you're stuck for inspiration, come into church and I'll happily tell you about any saints I know!

If you're reading this early enough in the month, there is still time to treat the Sam in your life to a hamburger on the 14th (Samuel Seabury's day:

the first anglican bishop in North America and the only *Hamilton* character commemorated in the CofE's calendar of saints); or to give your friend Hilda a pain aux raisins on the 19th (the Abbess of Whitby who turned snakes into ammonites.)

So join the Name Day revolution with me, and let's introduce a little more festivity into our year!

Mthr Bea



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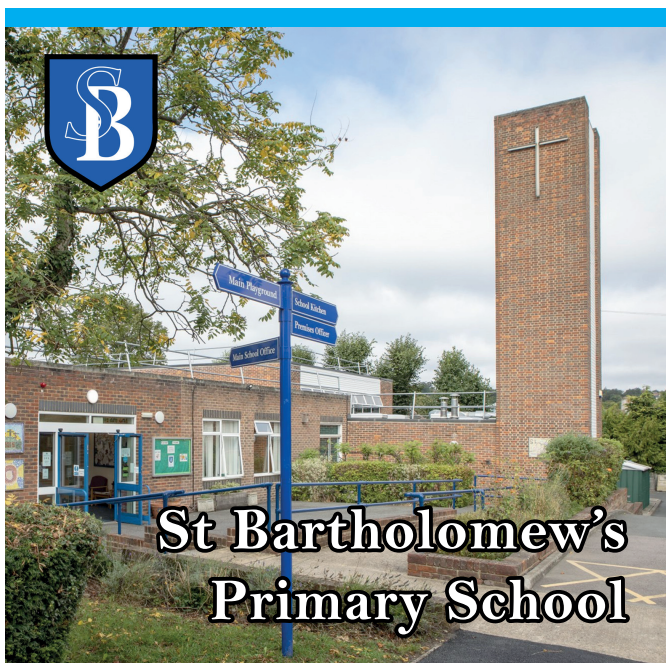
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From the Editor

During the sermon given by the Curate Mother Bea on Sunday 19th October 2025 she stated, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards Justice". It originally formed part of a sermon by abolitionist Unitarian minister Theodore Parker in 1853. It was expressed slightly differently by Dr Martin Luther King who repeated the quote frequently and popularized it. One interpretation placed on it is that the movement towards justice is long and difficult, but it is not a hopeless one and that over time progress will lead to a more just world. During the sermon, the parable of the Unjust Judge taken from Luke 18 verses 1 to 8 was referenced. It tells the story of the widower who goes before the Judge many times before she receives justice, but at least according to the parable she finally receives it.

I have thought about this parable on many occasions. We all

hope that Judges would apply the law fairly, weighing the evidence and coming to a just conclusion. However, it does not appear the US Supreme Court has chosen this path. The Supreme Court sees no problem in making majority decisions which discriminate based on a person's race, language or vocation. It does not matter if they are American citizens or not, and as one Justice flippantly remarked detention would only be for a brief period.

A further example is an attempt to roll back the Voting Rights Act 1965 which is an important Statute that prevents racial discrimination in voting. The conservative Justices appear to be arguing that it is no longer required, as if by magic discrimination by legislators has disappeared.

The above instances may be American, but their ideas are filtering throughout the world. The rhetoric is becoming part of the political discourse in this country with one party advocating the removal of people who have lived in the United Kingdom lawfully for many years.

Geoffrey Cave, Sydenham Life Editor

Tell yourself a better lie by Marissa Peer

Not all talk therapies are created equal. Some will have you spend months and numerous sessions digging up things from the forgotten past which might result in insight. Yet insight alone does not result in change.

Many talk therapies when held up under the scientific microscope hold up as mechanism to alleviate suffering tend not to fair so well. A few such as REBT, CBT, ACT and internal family systems have a proven track record.

With that said the pioneer of rapid therapy Marissa Peer has brought the psychoanalytic approach into the modern era and accessible to the masses.

She states that the majority of problems stem from three core beliefs we hold about ourselves, the narratives we have told ourselves in youth in trauma. Mainly not being enough, being different, and (x) (whatever that variable is) not being available to you.

In this book, she takes readers briefly through some therapeutic sessions with her clients. She allows them to

peer inside her approach and watch over her shoulder as her client distil for themselves why they are acting in a certain way and how that may have been appropriate at the time but is no longer so now.

Her approach is jargon free and down to earth. Nonetheless it resonates with me and clearly for tens of thousands of others. Regardless she remains humble, stating that her approach can be learned and is not her own unique gift. On top of this she provides the reader with some useful scripts that they can immediately put into practice to advance an area of their life which could be bettered.

If you're looking for a book which deals with depth psychology, go elsewhere. If you're interested in a means of obtaining change and perhaps practical insight into why you or someone you know do those things which are detrimental to you then this might be a worthy stop.

Daniel Springer

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Bruce Lee: A megastar and legend

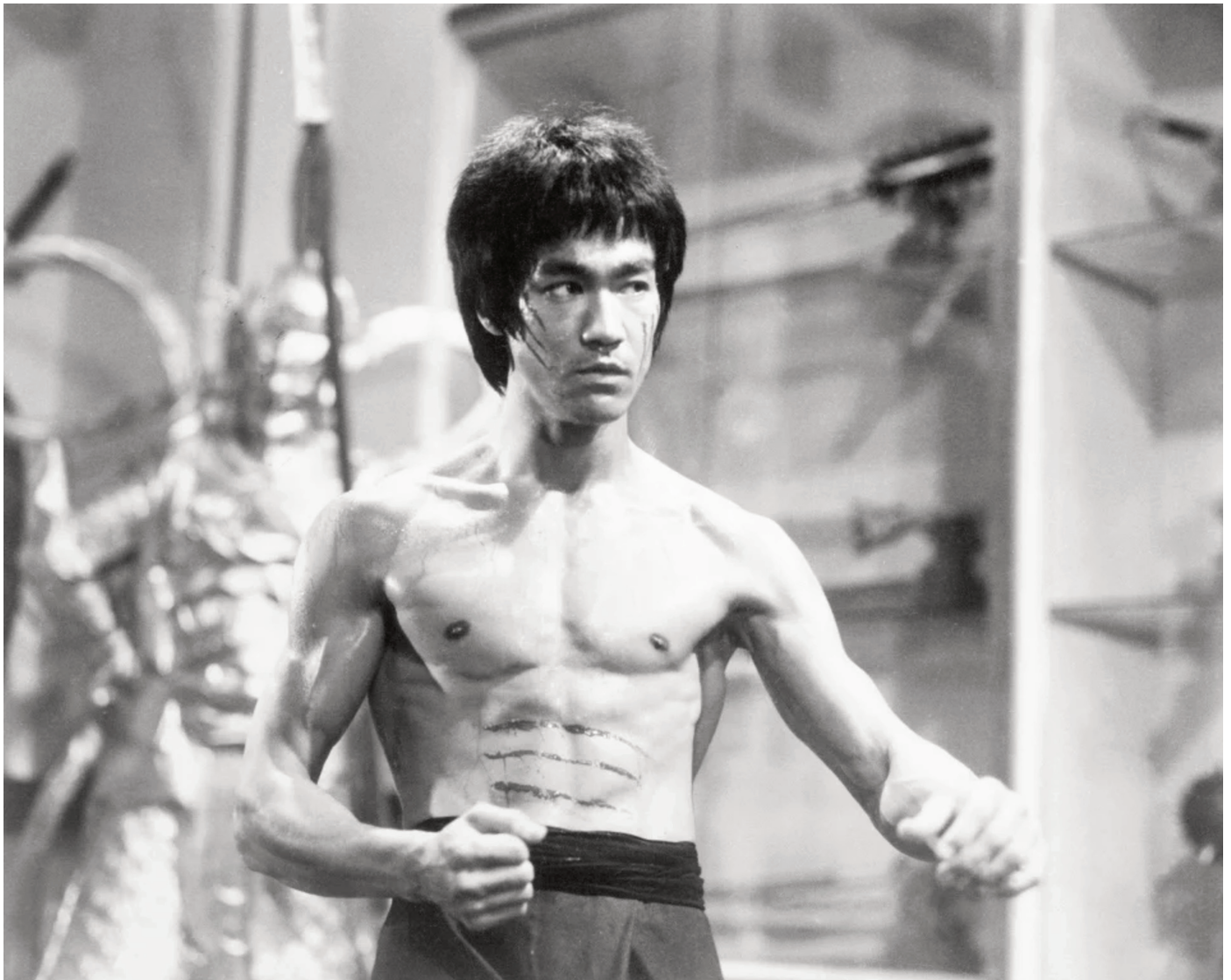
Bruce Lee (1940-1973) was a Chinese American martial artist, philosopher, actor and film maker. The internationally renowned megastar was born on 27th November 1940 in San Francisco, California, United States of America (US). He was best known for bringing attention to martial arts in the Western world and showcased his incredible skills for his roles in films. Famous films include *The Big Boss* (1971), *Fist of Fury* (1972), *Way of the Dragon* (1972) featuring a famous fighting scene with Chuck Norris. Bruce's most iconic role came in the film *Enter the Dragon* (1973) which was a trailblazing groundbreaking success and established his status as a martial arts icon.

Born Lee Jun-Fan, Bruce returned to Hong Kong with his parents when he was three months old and was raised in Hong Kong where he began training in martial arts at a young age. At age 13 he created his own combat method Jeet Kune Do, a hybrid martial art with elements of kung fu, fencing and boxing. This style was formed from his experiences in unarmed fighting, self defence and philosophies which include Confucianist Taoist and Zen Buddhist. Jeet Kune Do emphasizes practicality, efficiency

and directness. He also studied Wing Chun under the renowned master Yip Man.

Bruce Lee's father (Lee Hoi-Chuen 1901-1965) was one of the leading Chinese opera singers and a prominent Hong Kong film actor. Bruce was the fourth of five children. His father had been touring the United States for many years and performing in numerous Chinese communities there. Bruce's mother Grace Ho (1907-1996) came from a wealthy and powerful family in Hong Kong. As such the young Bruce Lee grew up in an affluent and privileged environment. Bruce returned to the US in 1959 to pursue higher education at the University of Washington. He began teaching Jeet Kune Do. He also founded Jun Fan Gung Fu Institute in the US and introduced Chinese Kung Fu philosophy to American television and films.

Bruce's career was cut short by his sudden death on July 20th 1973 at the age of 32. He died in Kowloon Hong Kong at the home of Taiwanese actress Betty Ting Pei. At the time of his death, there were theories and speculations, including possible foul play, allergic reaction, overtraining, underlying health issues and ongoing discussion about his health and lifestyle. His sudden death shocked fans



Bruce Lee in *Enter the Dragon* (1973)

and the martial arts community throughout the world. The official cause of death was determined to be a reaction to a pain medication called Equagesic, which caused cerebral oedema (swelling of the brain). The autopsy concluded that the oedema was the primary factor. Equagesic is a combination drug of aspirin and a muscle relaxant called meprobamate. It is intended for short term pain treatment accompanied by tension or anxiety in patients with musculoskeletal disorders or tension headache.

Beyond the spotlight, he loved his family and enjoyed reading. He married Linda Emery, a fellow student in secret in August 1964 as relations between people of different races were still banned in many US states. They had two children, Brandon Lee (1965-1993), Shannon Lee (b.1969). Brandon Lee found some success acting in action oriented pictures. In 1993 at the age of 28, he died after being accidentally and fatally shot by an improperly prepared prop gun on the set of the 1994 film 'The Crow'. Shannon Lee is an American actress, business women,

singer and martial artist.

Since his death, his influence on martial arts, cinema and popular culture remains profound, especially on modern combat sport including judo, karate, mixed martial arts and boxing. He is remembered not only for his physical prowess but also for his philosophy of self improvement. He wrote about martial arts philosophy. One of his famous quotes read 'I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times'.

In collaboration with the Bruce Lee foundation, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum currently presents an exhibition titled 'A man beyond the ordinary: Bruce Lee'. Over 400 invaluable items of Bruce Lee memorabilia are exhibited with large scale multimedia and interactive programmes. Bruce Lee's death remains a topic of debate, his films remain popular, and his legacy continues through films, books and martial arts schools worldwide.

Jitna Por

All Saints – Mthr Bea

To celebrate All Saints' Day (1st November), each clue contains at least one saint.

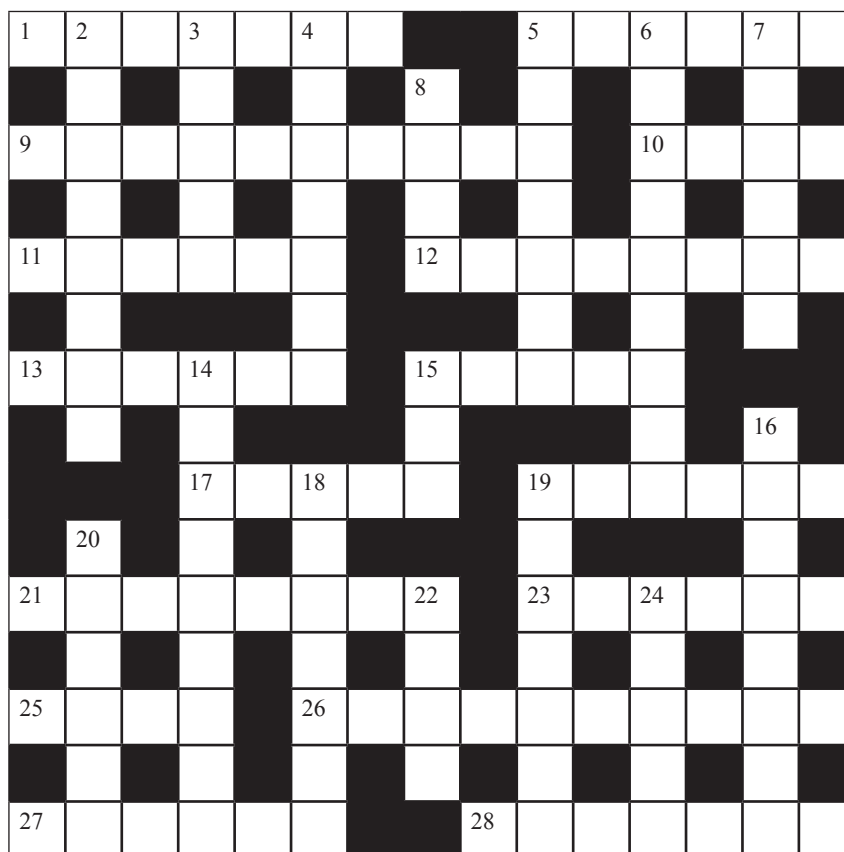
8 of the 30 clues require some knowledge of the saint in question, but nothing you can't get from Google!

Across

1. *Seabury's* dressing in soft, fashionable medium (7)
5. Just a little salami, so *Bartholomew* has the same weight (6)
9. As *Francis* himself did prove, I'm his curiously (10)
10. *James* finally restrains two bishops and fades away (4)
11. *George* and his international activist (6)
12. *Mark* and *Luke's* symbols see (8)
13. *Wenceslaus* heard a draught (6)
15. Spread *Margaret* (5)
17. Flower as *Teresa* has (5)
19. *Agabus* managed to restrain a quotidian holidaymaker (6)
21. The Laodicean Church is kind following *Luke* (8)
23. Catch *Peter*, thank you (6)
25. Wine as *Timothy* bottled (4)
26. *Augustine of Canterbury's* position (10)
27. Habits suitable for any age by *Balthazar, Caspar, or Melchior* (6)
28. Weird AI follows *Francis's* brother retreating between universities (7)

Down

2. *St Joseph* finally pays my rent support (8)
3. *David's* pleased the Lord, Church, or God (5)
4. In Bruges, I met *Ignatius* returning to take inventory (7)



5. Doctor *Neri*, admit Henry for a breather (7)
6. *Olaf's* overture reverses corrupt foremen (9)
7. *Hild's* homes for girls on the radio (6)
8. Mthr Bea is in the middle of *St. Alban's* branch (4)
14. *Cecilia's* note: popular, good, faltering (9)
15. *Mary*, yet lacking blemish (3)
16. Microorganisms of a nameless camel digested *Elizabeth* (8)
18. *Martyrs* lose a year but gain gold suffering these? (7)
19. Fortress destroyed over *Saint Brigid* primarily (7)
20. Suppose *Thomas's* first taking in visitors (6)
22. Service makes *More* sore (4)
24. Canines buff good *Crispin's* heart (5)

The Two and a Half Rule

Every one has found along their path in life a few rules or tricks that have helped save them much frustration. You know what I am talking about, what I mean. Such as the time I was having trouble cutting a pan of brownies, having tried several cutting devices (I even tried a pizza cutter). My mother who was living with us watched patiently, then when my frustration was getting the better of me, she said, "Try using a plastic knife." To appease her, I thought I would give it a try then I could come back to her and dismiss her suggestion. Well, I pulled a plastic knife out of one of my kitchen drawers, and proceeded to cut the brownies. Damn! She was right. They readily cut smooth as can be! So now whenever I make brownies I use a plastic knife to cut them (and silently curse my mother for being right.)

Well I have one find that I rely on heavily. It is called the Two and a Half Rule. The rule simply states that when looking at pursuing a project and trying to determine the time involvement, once one has come up with an estimate, one should now multiply that time by 2.5 – not 2 but 2.5. If you think the project is going to take two hours. It won't, it won't even take twice that or four hours. It will take 2.5 times that or 5 hours. Try it. It is amazing how frequently that rule prevails. Something always seems to glitch, and then, low and behold you are investing more time in it than you originally determined.

Let me share with you my latest example.

For my birthday my husband surprised me and bought tickets for us to see, yet again, one of my most favourite musical plays, *Tina* (the Tina Turner musical). I had seen it here three times before and debated with myself about seeing it a fourth time as it was closing in London mid-September. I convinced myself I was being frivolous and hence decided to forego the experience. He on the other hand thought I should have the experience yet again, so he bought us tickets for the last week of its showing. Turned out that week coincided with the tube strike but that did not stop us. We took the train into London, and walked to the theatre. At the theatre I again debated with myself, should I spend the money and buy another program. After all, how many programs does one need? The Scottish in

me came out and I decided not to spend the money even though it was an updated program with the current cast. My big mistake!

After leaving the theatre, on the train on our way home I realized I had made a big mistake – I wanted that program. After all, it was the final week of production.

So we made plans to return to the theatre prior to the final performance and purchase the program.

We had gone to the theatre on a Tuesday night, and with the tube strike on decided we should forego the needless commuter hassle. With that thought we decided to go after the tube strike was over on the Saturday. Although it was the last day of the play's run it had both a matinee and evening show. I determined if we went during the matinee we could accomplish our mission in one and a half hours – If we caught the 2pm train we would arrive in London by 2:30, get to the theatre and back by 3pm, and catch the 3pm train home so as to arrive by 3:30. TaDah!

We saw on TfL that the Overground would be closed on the weekend from New Cross Gate to Crystal Palace due to rail works. We thought, no worries, we will just take the Southern train. Needless to say, it totally escaped us that the train and the Overground use the same tracks. Saturday, we drove to the station and parked the car to catch the 2pm train. On our way to the station entrance we ran into some friends that informed us that no trains were running. Plan B! We drove to Sydenham Hill and caught the train to Victoria. From there we got onto the tube to Oxford Circus, changed tubes to Charing Cross and made our way through the barrage of police and Unite the Kingdom protestors to the Aldwych Theatre to get there just in time for the intermission. There we made our way through the crowd of attendees, and I made my acquisition. Then we retraced our steps – once again walking through the protestors and police to Charing Cross Station to Oxford Circus to Victoria to catch the train back to Sydenham Hill. We arrived there at 5:45pm – a mere 3 and $\frac{3}{4}$ hours later or as the Rule would have it 2.5 times the length of time I had predicted for our venture. To save you from doing the math here it is: $1.5 \text{ hours} \times 2.5 = 3.75 \text{ hours}$.

by Geri Falconer-Ferneau



October crossword solution

N	E	X	U	S		H	E	A	R	T	A	C	H	E
	V		N		F		N		E		L		A	
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E	V	A	N	G	E	L	I	S	T		R	O	L	L
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B	R	I	E	F	C	A	S	E			R	O	O	M
														Y

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Sunday 2nd November

17:00

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