

THE PARISH OF SAINT PAUL

DEPTFORD



'anglo-catholic, inclusive, committed to prayer & justice.'

<http://www.achurchnearyou.com/deptford-st-paul>

The Rector & Parish Priest: Fr Paul Butler

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Welcome to S. Paul's today in church or on Zoom.
Please follow the directions of the Churchwardens & Sidespeople.

Please turn off mobile phones.

No form of visual or sound recording, or any form of photography is permitted during or after the services, without express permission. Thank you for your co-operation.

WCs (& baby changing facilities) are downstairs in the Crypt.

COVID-19: It is not necessary to wear a facemask, but respect

those who do. Please use the hand sanitiser. **Do not attend if you have Covid, symptoms, or a cold.**

'Love one another as I have loved you', says the Lord.



Churchwardens: Ms Lavern Ford & Mr Andrew Taylor
Organist: Mr William Parkinson & S Paul's Singers

CANDLEMASS

The Feast of the
Presentation of the Lord
28th JANUARY 2024

THE PARISH MASS
CHORAL
10.30am

Celebrant & Preacher: The Rector

Mass Setting: Mass in G Minor

(1921) by **Ralph Vaughan Williams**,
(1872 – 1958) It is the first Mass written in a distinctly English manner since the 16th century. RVW dedicated the piece to Gustav Holst and the Whitsuntide Singers at Thaxted in north Essex, but it was first performed by the City of Birmingham Choir on 6 December 1922. Though the first performance was in a concert venue Vaughan Williams intended the Mass to be used in a liturgical setting. R.R Terry directed its first liturgical performance at Westminster Cathedral.

Please join in with the Bold Type.

Hymns in NEH, (small, Green Book)

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Choir sings the **Introit** Psalm 48: 8–9; 118: 25b

Music: William McKie (1901–83) Organist of Westminster Abbey 1941–63

We wait for thy loving kindness, O God :
in the midst of thy temple. Alleluia!

O God, according to thy name, so is thy praise unto the world's end :
thy right hand is full of righteousness. Alleluia!

We wait for thy loving kindness, O God :
in the midst of thy temple.

O Lord, send us now prosperity. Amen.

CANDLEMASS PROCESSION

The celebrant wears Purple Cope for the Procession.

The people's candles are lighted before the beginning of Mass.

The Greeting

* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The celebrant greets the people

Dear friends, forty days ago we celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we recall the day on which he was presented in the Temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people. As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age Simeon and Anna recognized him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. In this eucharist, we celebrate both the joy of his coming and his searching judgement, looking back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming days of his passion.

The celebrant blesses the candles, saying:

Lord God, the springing source of everlasting light,
pour into the hearts of your faithful people
the brilliance of your eternal splendour,
that we, who by these kindling flames
light up this temple to your glory,
may have the darkness of our souls dispelled,
and so be counted worthy to stand before you
in that eternal city where you live and reign,
* Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The celebrant sprinkles the candles with Holy Water and censes them.

*He then takes the candle prepared for him,
and the procession begins with the acclamation:*

Let us go forth in peace to meet the Lord.

*During the Procession the **Canticle of Simeon**
(Nunc Dimittis, S. Luke 2: 29-32) is sung, (NEH 506)*

Response:

**A light to lighten the gentiles,
and the glory of thy people Israel.**

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen : thy salvation; **R./**

Which thou hast prepared : before the face of all people;
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel. **R./**

S. Luke 2.29-32

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.**

The celebrant changes into white vestments.

Entrance Antiphon

The Lord will come with mighty power,
and give light to the eyes of all who serve him.

Let us go forth in peace,

in the name of Christ. Amen.

The Processional Hymn: 157

Hail to the Lord who comes - (Tune: Old 120th)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The Introduction to the Mass

The celebrant welcomes the people and introduces the Mass.

Prayers of Penitence

Sisters and brothers,
to prepare ourselves to celebrate
the sacred mysteries,
let us call to mind and confess our sins.

The Confiteor

**I confess to almighty God,
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done,
and in what I have failed to do;**

(And, striking their breast, they say:)

**through my fault,
through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;**

(Then they continue:)

**therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
all the angels and saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord, our God. Amen.**

The celebrant pronounces the Absolution

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
* pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Choir sings The Kyrie Eleison

Kýrie, eléison. Kýrie, eléison. Kýrie, eléison.

Christe, eléison. Christe, eléison. Christe, eléison.

Kýrie, eléison. Kýrie, eléison. Kýrie, eléison.



Choir sings **Gloria in Excelsis**

/ et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. / Laudamus te, benedicimus te, / adoramus te, glorificamus te, / grâcias ágimus tibi / propter magnam glóriam tuam, / Dómine Deus, Rex cælestis, / Deus Pater omnipotens. / Dómine Fili unigénite, / Iesu Christe, / Dómine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, / qui tollis peccáta mundi, / miserére nobis; / qui tollis peccáta mundi, / súscipe deprecationem nostram. / Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, / miserére nobis. / Quóniam tu solus Sanctus, / tu solus Dóminus, / tu solus Altíssimus, / Iesu Christe, /cum Sancto Spíritu: / ✠ in glória Dei Patris. / Amen.

*Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you,
we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
✠ in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

The Collect

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

¶ **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Sit for the readings.

First Reading from the Old Testament

A reading from the book of Malachi (3: 1-5)

Thus says the Lord God: ¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight - indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. ⁵ Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms: 24

R. / The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.

Domini est terra

¹ THE earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is :
the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein.

² For he hath founded it upon the seas :
and prepared it upon the floods. **R. /**

³ Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord :
or who shall rise up in his holy place?

⁴ Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart :
and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity,
nor sworn to deceive his neighbour. **R. /**

⁵ He shall receive the blessing from the Lord:
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

⁶ This is the generation of them that seek him :
even of them that seek thy face, O Jacob. **R. /**

⁷ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors :
and the King of glory shall come in.

⁸ Who is the King of glory :
it is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle. **R. /**

⁹ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors :
and the King of glory shall come in.

¹⁰ Who is the King of glory :

even the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. **R. /**

Second Reading from the New Testament

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews (2: 14-18)

¹⁴ Since the children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.

¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation and Reading

♪ **Alleluia!** This child is the light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel. **Alleluia** ♪

A ✠ reading from the ✠ Holy Gospel according to ✠ **Luke**
(2: 22-40) **Glory to you O, Lord.**

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'),

²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹ 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' ³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Homily

Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
(Genuflect) was incarnate from the Holy Spirit
and the Virgin Mary and was made human. (Rise)
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
✠ and the life of the age to come. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Celebrant

Let us pray to the Father through Christ, who is our Light and Life,
saying, Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy**

Intercessor 1

Father, your Christ is acclaimed as the glory of Israel:
Look in mercy on your Church, sharing his light. Lord have mercy

Intercessor 2

Father, your Christ, who was rich, for our sakes became poor:
Look in mercy on the needy, suffering with him. *By name we remember
(Fr Paul reads the names ...) Lord, have mercy.*

Intercessor 3

Father, your Christ shared an earthly community at Nazareth:
Look in mercy on our Parish community in Deptford:
Lord, have mercy...

Intercessor 4

Father, your Christ is the one in whom faithful servants find their peace:
Look in mercy on the departed, who see your salvation.
We pray for the recently departed, especially...

(Fr Paul reads the names ...)

and all whose anniversaries fall at this time especially...

(Fr Paul reads the names ...)

✠ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.
and let light perpetual shine upon them.
May they rest in peace **and rise in glory**

Intercessor 5

Father, your Christ is revealed as the one destined to be rejected:
look in mercy on us who now turn towards his passion.
Lord, have mercy.

*The celebrant invites us to offer our personal intentions,
and then leads us in asking for the Prayers of our Lady & the Saints.*

We rejoice in our friendship with the BVM & greet her as we pray:
Hail Mary ...

S. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Pray for us.

S. Paul the Apostle, our Patron,

Ss. Francis & Clare of Assisi,

Ss. Anna & Simeon,

S. Thomas Aquinas, S. John Bosco, S. Brigid of Kildare,

S. Blaise, S. Anskar, All you angels and saints.

Merciful God **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

¶ THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Altar is prepared

The Offertory Hymn: 185

Sing of the blessed mother - (Tune: Abbots Leigh)

Orate Fratres

Pray my sisters and brothers, that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

May the offerings made with exultation by your Church
be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray,
for you willed that your Only Begotten Son
be offered to you for the life of the world
as the Lamb without blemish.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Celebrant sings the Preface:

It is indeed right and good,
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ, who is one with you from all eternity.
For on this day he appeared in the Temple
in substance of our flesh
to come near to us in judgement.
He searches the hearts of all your people
and brings to light the image of your splendour.
Your servant Simeon acclaimed him as the light to lighten the nations
while Anna spoke of him to all who looked for your redemption.
Destined for the falling and rising of many,
he was lifted high upon the cross
and a sword of sorrow pierced his mother's heart
when by his sacrifice he made our peace with you.
And now we rejoice and glorify your name
that we, too, have seen your salvation
and join with angels and archangels
in their unending hymn of praise:

& the choir sings the Sanctus & Benedictus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dóminus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt caeli et terra glória tua. Hosánna in excélsis.

✠ Benedíctus qui venit in nómine Dómini. Hosánna in excélsis.

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.*

✠ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The celebrant recalls the Last Supper, and this acclamation is said:

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.

*The Prayer continues and leads into the doxology,
to which all respond boldly:*

AMEN.

¶ THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

The celebrant adds,

*Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all distress
as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

**For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles:

Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.

Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom
where you live for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*We share the peace with those immediately around us.
a sign that expresses peace, communion, and love.*

Agnus Dei is sung by the choir.
during which the celebrant takes the host and breaks it over the paten,
placing a small piece in the chalice.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

Giving of Communion

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.

S. John 8: 12

Please follow the directions of the sidespeople.

The Body of Christ.

The communicant replies **Amen.** and then receives.

* At home, make an Act of Spiritual Communion *

As you imagine yourself receiving the Bread of Heaven, be still
and rest in the love of God. Thank Him for entering beneath the roof of your soul.

O Sacred Feast! Wherein Christ is received,
his Passion is remembered, our souls are filled with grace
and the pledge of eternal glory is received.

O Sacrum Convivium, 13th century (attributed to S. Thomas Aquinas)

Choir sings the **Communion Motet**,
Videte miraculum, by Thomas Tallis, (1575)

Videte miraculum matris Domini:
concepit virgo virilis ignara consortii,
stans onerata nobili onere Maria;
et matrem se laetam cognoscit,
quae se nescit uxorem.
Haec speciosum forma prae filiis hominum
castis concepit visceribus,
et benedicta in aeternum
Deum nobis protulit et hominem.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritu Sancto.

Behold the miracle of the mother of the Lord:
a virgin has conceived though she knows not a man,
Mary, who stands laden with her noble burden;
knowing not that she is a wife,
she rejoices to be a mother.

She has conceived in her chaste womb
one who is beautiful beyond the sons of men,
and blessed for ever,
she has brought forth God and man for us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

The Communion Hymn: 310

We hail thy presence glorious - (Offertorium)

After receiving Holy Communion read & pray quietly in thanksgiving.

THE JESUS PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, Υἱέ τοῦ Θεοῦ,
have mercy on me, a sinner. ἐλέησόν με τὸν ἁμαρτωλόν

KEE-REE-AY EE-SOO KHREE-STAY, YAY TOO THAY-OO,
EH-LAY-EE-SOHN MEH TOHN AH-MAR-TAH-LOHN. AMEEN

THE TRISAGION (Thrice Holy)

Holy God,	Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός	(Agios o Theos)
Holy and Mighty,	Ἅγιος ἰσχυρός	(Agios ischyros)
Holy and Immortal,	Ἅγιος ἀθάνατος	(Agios athanatos)
Have mercy on us. (x3)	ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς	(elaison imas)

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Stand

Postcommunion Prayer

God, the source of all holiness
and giver of all good things:
may we who have shared at this table
as strangers and pilgrims here on earth
be welcomed with all your saints
to the heavenly feast on the day of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING OF SAINT BLAISE



S. Blaise of Sebaste (d. 316 AD), was a physician and bishop of Sebaste in historical Armenia (modern Sivas, Turkey). He is venerated as a saint in the Catholic, Anglican, Eastern, & Oriental Orthodox churches and is the patron saint of wool combers and for people suffering with throat disease. In the Latin Church, his feast falls on 3 February; in the Eastern Churches, on 11 February. According to the Acta Sanctorum, he was martyred by being beaten, attacked with iron combs, and beheaded.

Today we celebrate the feast of Saint Blaise, (3rd February) who was bishop of Sebaste in Armenia in the fourth century. Before being martyred, he is said to have healed a boy who was choking. Since the eighth century, Saint Blaise has been venerated as the patron of those who suffer from diseases of the throat. We pray in a special way today for protection from afflictions of the throat and from other illnesses. The blessing of Saint Blaise is a sign of our faith in God's protection and love for us and for the sick. Let us pray for those who seek the prayers of Saint Blaise today, that they may be protected from afflictions of the throat and other forms of illness, we pray to the Lord.

R./ Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of Throat Blessing

With crossed candles touched to the throat of each person, celebrant says:

Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr,
may God deliver you from every disease of the throat
and from every other illness:

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Each person responds: **Amen.**



NOTICES & ANY BANNES OF MARRIAGE.

The Solemn Blessing

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us bow our heads and pray for God's blessing.

May the Father, who has loved the eternal Son
from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon you his children. **Amen.**

May Christ, who by his incarnation
gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,
✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal



The Recessional Hymn: 44
Faithful vigil ended (Tune: Pastor Pastorum)

At the Crib

The Angelus

The Angel of the Lord brought glad tidings to Mary;
And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

**Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee,
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it unto me according to thy Word. Hail Mary...

And the Word was made flesh.

And dwelt among us. Hail Mary...

Pray for us O holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross ✠ and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

✠✠✠✠✠

Organ Voluntary

✠✠✠✠✠

*Epiphanytide will be liturgically concluded
after Evening Prayer tonight at 6pm.*

*The church will then be stripped of the Christmass Decorations
& the Crib taken down.*

✠✠✠✠✠

∞ PLEASE MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE CRYPT FOR
REFRESHMENTS & TAKE THIS SHEET AWAY WITH YOU. ∞

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'Ite missa est', from, Graduale simplex, Vatican, 1975, p. 152.
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CANDLEMASS

Egeria, a Spanish nun and educated woman of private means joined a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 383 CE. It is from her diary - *Itinerarium Egeriae* - that we know many things about the Jerusalem Church of the time, and in particular how it celebrated Holy Week and other liturgical festivals.

JERUSALEM'S CANDLEMASS IN THE 300's

Egeria based herself in Jerusalem, and travelled around the Holy Land for about three years. Writing of Candlemass (then observed on 14th February, 40 days from Epiphany - 6th January - rather than 40 days from 25th December), and apparently before the ceremony of candles had become part of the feast, Egeria says:

'On that day, there is a procession into the Anastasis [i.e. the original Church of the Holy Sepulchre], and all assemble there for the liturgy; everything is performed in the prescribed manner with the greatest solemnity, just as on Easter Sunday. All the priests give sermons, and the bishop, too; all preach on the Gospel text describing how on the fortieth day Joseph and Mary took the Lord to the Temple, and how Simeon and Anna the prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, saw him, and what words they spoke on seeing the Lord, and of the offerings which his parents brought. After all these ceremonies, the Eucharist is then celebrated, and the dismissal given.'

We know for certain that by the middle of the 400's the festival was being observed with lighted candles, the custom from which the name 'Candlemass' evolved. We also know that in 542 it was transferred to 2nd February so as to be 40 days from the Nativity of the Lord, 25th December (even though Armenian Orthodox and a few others stayed with the old date).

THE POPULARITY OF CANDLEMASS IN ENGLAND

If we fast-forward to Anglo-Saxon times in England, we see that by then Candlemass had become one of the pivotal celebrations of the year, in the same category as Easter, Whitsunday and All Saints' Day. The joy of blessing and carrying lit candles in procession, celebrating Christ, 'a light to enlighten the nations' is reflected in this passage from Ælfric (c. 955– c.1010), Abbot of Eynsham:

'Be it known also to everyone that it is appointed in the custom of the church that on this day we should carry our lights to church, and let them be blessed there: and that we should go afterwards with that light among the houses of God, and sing the hymn which is appointed for that. Though some people cannot sing, they can nevertheless bear the light in their hands; for on this day was the true Light, Christ, borne to the temple, who redeemed us from darkness and will bring us to that eternal light, who lives and rules for ever without end.'

In medieval England Candlemass developed further into a festival shared between village, church and home. In fact, nowhere was the Feast celebrated with more gusto and devotion. After the coldest part of winter the light and warmth of candles lifted the spirits of parishioners, and spoke to them of Jesus the light of the world.

At Candlemass people brought to their parish church, for blessing, all the candles they would use at home throughout the coming year, together with those carried in the procession, and the year's supply of candles for use in the church.

The people took their own blessed candles home. They would light them and place them in windows during storms, as they prayed to be kept safe from danger. They would also light and hold them as they stood around the bed of a loved one who was dying, especially while the last Sacraments were being administered.

Powerful indeed were the links between the mid-winter celebration of the village, the liturgy of the parish church, and the spiritual life of the family.

INCARNATIONAL ENGLISH SPIRITUALITY

In his study of English church life in the later middle ages Middle Ages and the Reformation, *'The Stripping of the Altars'* (pp. 15-16), Eamon Duffy describes colourful Candlemas processions organized by lay guilds and devotional fraternities, involving the entire Christian community in mid-winter honouring the Light of the World. Duffy's point is that processing around the village church with lighted candles, singing Psalm 48 and the Nunc Dimittis, all the faithful would participate in and incarnate

'the Christmas paradoxes of the strength of the eternal God displayed in the fragility of the new-born child, of the appearance of the divine light in the darkness of human sin, of renewal and rebirth in the dead time of the year, and of the new life of Heaven manifested to Simeon's, and the world's, old age ... The imaginative power of all this for the laity is readily understood, for the texts of the ceremony are eloquent evocations of the universal symbolism of light, life, and renewal, themes which were carefully expounded in Candlemas sermons.'

(It is a sad fact that at the 'Reformation', candles for Candlemas, ashes for Ash Wednesday, and palms for Palm Sunday were abolished by law, to be eventually restored to the Church of England along with other 'sacramentals' only as a result of the Catholic Revival in the 19th century.)

CANDLEMASS TODAY

Forty days after the birth of Jesus, today's Mass is often regarded as rounding off the Christmass / Epiphany cycle of the Church's year. I notice that here in England more people are rediscovering Candlemass, even many who have drifted from the church's life. Especially this year with all of its gloom, it is not uncommon to find people who have kept their Christmas decorations going until now.

In Australia, in the parish where I learned the Faith in my teens, and then later in my own parishes, at the start of Mass we had the blessing of candles, (including the boxes of candles to be used in the church over the next twelve months) and the procession.

Later, when everyone had received Holy Communion, we would again experience the connection between Christmas, Candlemas, Calvary ('the three C's' as we taught the children!) and Jesus the Light of the world, by singing slowly and quietly to him in the Blessed Sacrament on the Altar,

'O come, all ye faithful . . .
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.'

All that's as it should be, because while the readings and prayers for Candlemas take us back to the birth of Jesus, they also beckon us forward to his suffering and death.

Fr David Chislett, SSC, d. 17 December 2023

Vicar of All Saints, Benhilton, 2018-23. Diocese of Southwark.

*Of your charity pray for Fr David's repose, for his family,
and for Fr Luke and the parishioners of All Saints, Benhilton.
May he rest in peace.*

THE KALENDAR

28th JANUARY – 3rd FEBRUARY 2024, DEL* week 4

DEL = Daily Eucharistic Lectionary

MASS & Other Service Times in church

SUN, 28th, Morning Prayer 9am, Evening Prayer 6pm

MON, 29th, Ordinary Time begins today

No Public Liturgies

TUES, 30th, Feria,

Mass at 6.00pm

WEDS, 31st, S. John Bosco,

Mass at 6.00pm

THURS, 1st FEB., S. Brigid,

Mass at 6.00pm

FRI, 2nd, Feria,

Mass at 10.00am

SAT, 3rd, S. Blaise, S. Anskar,

Mass at 10.00am

DAILY OFFICE in church

Morning Prayer: Tues, Weds, Thurs at 9am

Evening Prayer: Tues, Weds, Thurs at 5.30pm; Fri/Sat at 6pm.

SUNDAY, 4th FEBRUARY 2024

2nd SUNDAY before LENT

9.00am Morning Prayer

10.30am PARISH MASS SUNG

Celebrant & Preacher: The Rector

6.00pm Evening Prayer

THE NOTICES

HOLY CONFIRMATION

Sacrament of Holy Confirmation with +Rob Wickham,

Honorary Assistant Bishop & CEO of the Church Urban Fund

at Parish Mass on Sunday 11th FEBRUARY 2024

► **Get together for all candidates**

Wednesday 7th February following the 6pm Mass ◀

ASH WEDNESDAY – 14th February 2024

marks the beginning of Lent.

7.30pm: SOLEMN SUNG MASS WITH IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Please bring in your **† PALM CROSSES †** from previous years and place them in the basket at the back of church so that they can be burned to make the ash for the Mass.

Ω S. PAUL'S OMEGA STUDY GROUP Ω

**'The Ecclesiastical History of the English Church',
by the Venerable Bede**

Meets next on Zoom Thursday, 1st Feb. '24 - 8.15pm – 10pm

Further info & login details on Parish website & Rector's Weekly Email. All welcome

Church Cleaning & Preparation for Sunday Every Saturday from 11am until 12.30pm.

Please come to help with church cleaning & other tasks. Thank you.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

'The Lord loves a cheerful giver.' The Church, based upon biblical teaching, asks every Christian to give a Tithe, 10% of their time, talents & money to God's work. In particular, that the faithful might give 5% of their Income to church where they attend. **Eg. If you earn:**

£5000 a year or, £96 a week = Give £5 a week to S. Paul's.

£10000 a year or, £192 a week = £10 a week...

£20000 a year or, £385 a week = £20 a week...

£25000 a year or, £480 a week = £25 a week...

£30000 a year or £577 a week = £30 a week...

Over the year our costs run to almost £1,000 a week. We receive no external subsidies, and all monies have to be raised from the parishioners, through lettings, or voluntary donations. **Thank you** for all financial contributions which help to pay for: - the: Utility bills of the church, (gas, electricity, water) - Costs of maintaining the worship, (e.g. candles, wine, wafers, incense) - Maintenance, cleaning, & repair of our Grade I Listed church, (substantial costs) - Office costs (e.g. postage, printing, paper) - Monthly Diocesan Parish Share to the Diocese, (80p out of every £1 we give to the Diocese goes towards clergy stipends).

We ask everyone, who can, to please give via Direct Debit, Standing Order, or, via the Weekly Envelope Scheme.

GIVING VIA DIRECT DEBIT: Please see the **PARISH GIVING SCHEME** information leaflet and **Direct Debit Form**, on the Parish Website
ONLINE GIVING: Our **Give A Little** page is available on our Website, via the **Donate** button, or here: <https://bit.ly/spd-giving>

✳ FURTHER INFORMATION & UPDATES ✳

On the **Parish Website - Church Noticeboard** (churchyard forecourt)
& **Subscribe to the Rector's Weekly Email** by emailing:

stpaulsdeptford@btinternet.com

sent every Friday via MailChimp (GDPR compliant)