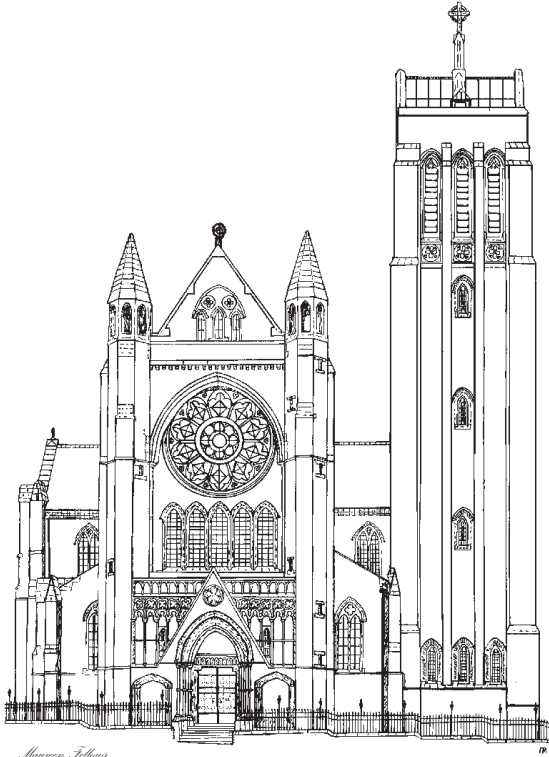




The Church of
St Alban the Martyr
Birmingham 12



ST ALBAN AND ST PATRICK PARISH MAGAZINE



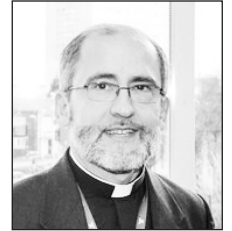
July
2015
70p

“...St Alban’s people will not wonder at St Alban’s defects and shortcomings, when they know how long it had to struggle to maintain its life ... at what great hazard we have maintained such helps to reverence, and such ways of honouring God as we now enjoy. And no sane person will wonder that those who guide the work at St Alban’s feel the duty of preserving a consistent and unaltered course. May the Mission never suffer loss or be wrecked by any change in this respect!”

James S. Pollock (1890). *Vaughton’s Hole: Twenty-five years in it*. Chapter I.

ON the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the start of the Mission in Highgate by the Pollock brothers, we have held a memorable High Mass in church in the morning of Saturday June 20th. We were blessed with the presence of Bishop Geoffrey Rowell — main celebrant — six concelebrating priests and a deacon. Bishop Geoffrey’s sermon — reproduced in this issue of the magazine — was truly edifying, instructive and inspiring. Concelebrating with me were Fr Jim Pendorf, Fr Percil Cadogan, Fr Steward Powell, Fr Malcolm Jones, and Fr Roger Sheppard. The deacon was Fr Anthony Murley. In the congregation we had representatives from the Academy (the Principal — Mr Gould — and a student read the first two readings), from the Diocese and from local organisations, besides Mrs Yvonne Mosquito (Deputy

PCC) and many friends and members of our Sunday congregation. After the religious service the celebrations continued with a buffet lunch at the Academy. I was later approached by Miss Maria Hambridge who presented me with a collection of poems by her late mother Mrs Patricia Hambridge entitled *The Further Riches of a Brummie Wench*, now available in the church hall for anyone who may want to read it. Among her poems is one that I have reproduced here (with permission) together with a letter by Patricia written in 2009.



Fr Nicholas

Saint Alban’s Church

Oh how I love Saint Alban’s Church, I have its place deep in my heart
I have always thought that Saint Alban’s Church helped to give me a good start
I never went to Sunday School, but I spent hours in that church
You see they had a children’s corner, and I would sit there on me perch
There was lots of books and I loved them, I handled them with care
Oh how I loved Saint Alban’s, I was ever so glad it was there
We went through a lot together, it stood all through the bombings somehow
Its bell — it just kept ringing, I can hear that bell right now
I can remember dear Father Clark striding down Conybere Street
In his long flowing black garment, taking food for the poor people to eat
Sometimes there was a procession from the church, it was very colourful to see

Us kids would follow it all over, but we always got back for our tea
 If ever there was a wedding, all us kids used to be there
 We would dash with the guests on the photos, we didn't know them but we daint care
 Now Saint Albans's bell on a Sunday would wake us really early it would
 Everybody would be cussing, I think they would have stopped it if they could
 But to me that bell sounded great, to me it was the sound of hope
 I was five years old when I was baptised there, and faith? Well it helped me cope
 I can see it then surrounded by back to back houses, the steeple standing tall and serene
 But somehow now, it seems that something's missing, I think you know what I mean
 The community that lived in the back to backs breath into the church on the hill
 The community has gone, scattered here and there, but their ghosts remain there still
 Down the hill from the church is a play area for the children, but to me it tells a story
 You see on that playing area was the back to backs, they couldn't take away its glory
 So Saint Albans Church keep ringing your bell
 Although the folks have long since gone
 Some are still living, and they remember, and the memory goes on and on.

‘Conybere Street’

Written by Patricia Hambidge in 2009 (aged 72)
She went to be with the Lord JUNE 2nd 2013 (aged 76)

I grew up in Conybere Street, Balsall Heath, and so many memories fill my mind, but the memories I have of Conybere Street and the little shops there, I recall with affection.

There was a grocers shop at the bottom of the street — it was called Georges, and every Friday afternoon straight from school I went into Georges to fetch Mom's bacon and eggs, special margarine, sugar and tea. One Friday afternoon I walked into the shop to find Mr Bright (the man assistant) and Miss Burton (the lady) waiting for me with a lovely wicker basket to help me carry Mom's shopping — so kind of them.

Opposite Georges was the Triangle Picture House — what a treat! Every Saturday us kids would wait in the queue very excited to get in and see our favourite film stars : Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Laurel and Hardy, etc. Mrs Maney was the lady we paid our money to to get in with

our ticket. Mrs Maney knew my Dad and she let me in for an 'A' Certificate (which you had to have an adult with you) but I had to sit in the seat she picked for me so she knew where I was.

Carrying on up Conybere Street you would come to William Edward Street, where on the corner the doctors (Doctor McGregor and Doctor Wand) were. Crossing over the road on the other corner was Mrs Jacob's clothes and bed linen shop. She was open on Sundays because she was a Jewish lady. Mom used to have the sheets 'on the knock!'

Carrying on up the street the next shop was Mrs Lockley's Sweet Shop — what heaven it was! — and with my pocket money in my hand I would look in the window at all the jars of sweets and little dishes of mints, gob stoppers, throat drops etc. A wonderful array of goodies! I could never decide what to have.

Going up the street a bit further, you came to Dymoke Street and on the corner was Mrs Smith's little shop where I used to go and get the biscuits and some cheese. Mrs Smith was a big lady and was always cutting bits off the cheese and eating it while she was serving you. It used to make me smile — Dear Mrs Smith!

Crossing over Dymoke Street and carrying on up Conybere Street you came to our entry where our back to back house was — No 3/70. What experiences I had living there (good memories!) Over the road opposite our entry was Mrs Morton's Shop, and when I was eight years old our Dad gave me a watch, and I ran over to show it to Mrs Morton. 'Very Nice My Dear' she said 'But you have got it on upside down!' I took it off and she put it right for me.

She had two grown up children — she had Marge who was in the Land Army and Anthony was the name of her son (he was the chef in Crossroads!) Us kids used to take the mick because he used to walk so stiff — we used to say 'He's got his corsets on!' (by the way I still have got the watch!) and I am seventy two!

There was another shop just up from Mortons — it was a house made into a shop and run by Mrs West. Every week I

used to go and fetch my Sunny Stories little book, I think it cost 4 pence in old money.

Well, just one more shop, it was on the corner of Conybere Street and Angelina Street but I can't remember what it was called, we never used it much.

Just one more memory of Conybere Street and that is of Saint Albans Church.

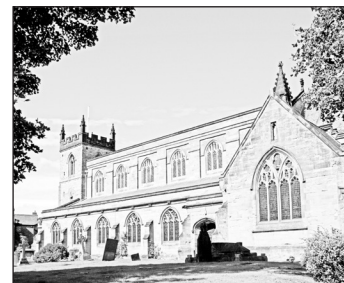
Father Clark, the priest, was a lovely man and when the war was on he used to come round to the back to back houses and bring tea and sugar — a True Christian.

I will finish now with one more special memory of Saint Albans Church: I used to spend hours in there — in the children's corner with all the children's books. Now, when there was a wedding, all us kids used to watch the photographer taking the photos, and when he asked for friends and relatives to get on, all us kids used to run and stand with all the group. I've often thought 'I bet when the married couples looked at the photos, they wondered who were all the kids!'

Happy Special Days Living in Conybere Street!

Patricia was a wonderful servant of Jesus — a good and faithful servant who never wavered in her faith — God bless her.

The Church of Saint Mary, Moseley Graveyard Challenge

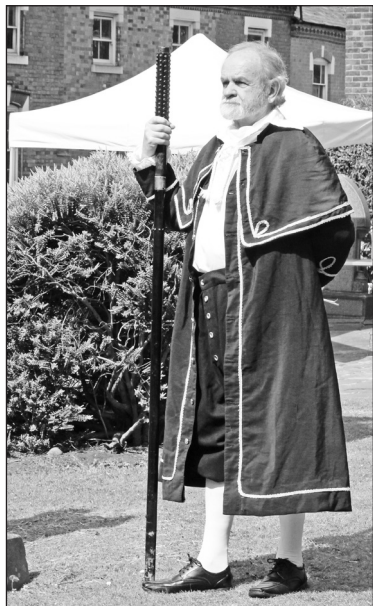


On Saturday June 27th the Saint Mary's Churchyard Heritage Committee held an Open Day for the residents of Moseley Parish and members of the congregation, to celebrate the successful Heritage Lottery Grant which they had been awarded to brighten and restore the large graveyard which surrounds the church. Many years ago the vicar had many of the gravestones levelled to ease maintenance of the area, and it is now intended to further enhance

this by restoring and preserving the paths and levelling were necessary to make the area a place of relaxation in the heart of the village.



The meeting was addressed by the Bishop of Birmingham, followed by a representative of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the whole proceedings being carefully watched over by the beadle to ensure the crowd were kept in order.



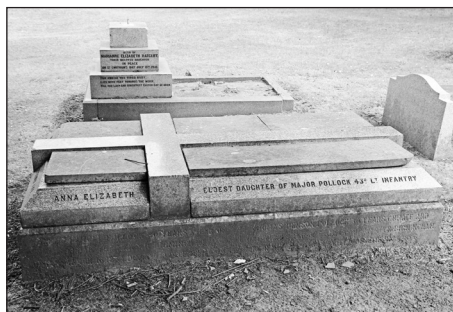
We at Saint Alban's Church have an important interest in Saint Mary's Churchyard, for it is the resting place of

the two great men who set up the Mission here in Highgate 150 years ago to serve the great number of people moving into the area who came to find work and to live in the back-to-back houses which were being rapidly built across one of the disused clay pits known as Vaughton's Hole.

As Saint Alban's has never had a churchyard, the Pollock brothers were buried in the very old churchyard at Saint Mary's.

Some years ago the Friends of Saint Alban and Saint Patrick paid for the restoration of the Pollock grave, and at the same time the Ratcliff family grave immediately adjacent, and it was interesting to see how both had weathered since then. The inscription to the brothers is low on the side and therefore subject to being splashed with mud and covered over. It might be possible to modify the surroundings slightly to avoid this and it is certainly worthwhile enquiring about this as part of the restoration of the churchyard.

Unfortunately, although advertised on our Mass sheet, only two members of Saint Alban's were present at the launch ceremony, but we have now made contact with those concerned with the project, and will certainly take careful note of developments as the work proceeds.



The Pollock grave and, immediately behind, that of the Ratcliffe family.

Thought for the month

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centred;
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Be successful anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;
It never was between you and them anyway.

(Apparently found handwritten on the wall of Mother Teresa's room)

Notice



Saturday July 18th Outing To The Severn Valley

A day out on the Severn Valley Railway for all the congregation, simply to spend time together and get to know each other 'out of church'. A beautiful train trip and opportunities for young and old alike, whatever the weather, with a good place for a picnic, a museum, and of course the delights of Bridgnorth.

There will be no 9.00 a.m. Mass on this day.

Speaking Lives

A Sermon Preached by Bishop Geoffrey Rowell at the Sung Eucharist for the Patronal Festival of Saint Alban's, Birmingham and in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the beginning of the Saint Alban's Mission by the Pollock brothers, Saturday June 20th 2015.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Matthew 28: 19 - 20)

WE gather today in thanksgiving not first and foremost for a church building, magnificent as this is, for this came later, but in thanksgiving for the Christian ministry of two devoted priests, Fr James Pollock and Fr Tom Pollock, here in Birmingham. Their whole lives were lived out in obedience to the command of the Risen Christ given to his disciples that they are to Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The word ‘baptise’ means literally ‘to drench, or to drown’, and so the Risen Lord commands those whom he sends out to plunge those to whom they proclaim the Gospel into the love and life of God, the communion of love which is the Holy Trinity.

The Pollock brothers were caught up into that movement of the Holy Spirit, which is the catholic revival in the Church of England. John Keble, who with John Henry Newman and Edward Pusey, is one of the Oxford Movement Fathers, was one of whom it was said that ‘no-one caught so many to heaven without mentioning it’. His life touched, inspired and transformed the lives of others. So it is appropriate that on the memorial commemorating John Keble in the parish church of Fairford in Gloucestershire, where he was born and

brought up, there are inscribed two lines from one of his own poems:

So glorious let thy pastors shine

That by their speaking lives the world may learn.

What was said by and of Keble might surely be said of the Pollock brothers. Their lives were speaking lives; what they created here in one of Birmingham’s slums was a touching place, where lives were touched by pastoral care, campaigns for good housing, proper sanitation, the education of children, but above all where people were touched by the transforming grace and love of God. As Archbishop Michael Ramsey said in the text he took for his enthronement sermon as Archbishop — There goeth with me a band of men whose hearts God hath touched.

The ministry and mission of the Pollock brothers was part of a wider concern in the 1860s. The mantras of mission of the church today are often forgetful of the inheritance of a vocation and calling to mission which has deep roots. This year sees the centenary of the death of Fr Richard Benson, the founder of the Cowley Fathers, the Society of St John the Evangelist, a company of mission priests, rooted in a life of prayer. Benson wrote that ‘above all things it is necessary for those who would carry out the work

of missions to abide in Christ, apart from whom we do nothing, and that if we abide in Him, the life which we have must show itself in works of love to all mankind.’ Benson knew that baptism was indeed a plunging into the life of God, a life that was sustained by being fed with the bread of life, the Life of Christ himself in the Holy Eucharist, where in the simplest signs of bread and wine God gives his Life, comes down, as Julian of Norwich liked to say, ‘to the lowest part of our need’. What inspired Benson inspired others of the Catholic revival — Fr Lowder in the East end, those who took part in the London Mission of 1869, and many others who responded to the challenge of crowded Victorian cities with much poverty and spiritual need. The Pollock brothers are part of this same movement, characterised by some as Catholic Evangelicalism.

James and Tom Pollock were Manxmen, sons of a hero of the Peninsular War. They were part of a large family, James being born in 1834 and his younger brother Thomas two years later. They went to Trinity College, Dublin. James was ordained in 1858, serving first in Cheshire and then in Hammersmith; his younger brother, Tom, served at Leek in Staffordshire and then in Stamford Hill in London. Tom had originally intended to become a doctor, and his medical interests were put to good use here in Birmingham, poor people saying of him ‘young Tom Pollock, ’im as is ’alf a doctor.’ Tom was also gifted in poetry, and his metrical litanies found their way into the English Hymnal.

In 1860 James Pollock came to Birmingham as Assistant Curate at St Paul’s, Ludgate Hill, but soon found himself called to a new work. In August

1865 Bishop Philpott of Worcester (Birmingham than being in Worcester diocese) licensed him to this new mission district of St Alban the Martyr known as Vaughton’s Hole. His brother Tom joined him a month later, intending to stay for a fortnight but remained for twenty-five years. (Philpott was a wealthy bishop, who came to Worcester from being Master of St Catherine’s, Cambridge, but disliked public life, hated meetings — he never attended convocation, and is thought only to have gone once to a private meeting of the bishops — lived simply and gave generously to needy causes in the diocese). The little Mission Church soon proved too small, and the Pollocks found themselves having to turn people away. A new church was built and opened in 1871, which was described as having ‘free kneelings for 480 worshippers’ — perhaps this was in Pearson’s mind when he said of the churches he built — St Alban’s was completed ten years after in 1881 — that the question to ask on entering a church was not ‘is this admirable? — is it beautiful? — but does it send you to your knees?’

The Pollock brothers laboured indefatigably. In his account of the mission work, Vaughton’s Hole, Fr James quotes Samuel Wesley — ‘The love of JESUS would not let them rest’. Although committed to Catholic worship and ceremonial, ‘the great vital question for each soul’, was, he said, ‘not where, or in what direction, or in what garments the Priests stands but where he stands before GOD’. Baptism as the beginning of God’s own redeeming life and work in each baptised Christian was the foundation of their mission. The brothers lived simply, giving generously from the private money they had inherited. He noted the trades

Calendar for July 2015

Date	Feast	Page	Time	Intention (or at choice of Celebrant)
1 st Wednesday	Feria	No Mass		
2 nd Thursday	Feria (Requiem)	-	12.30 p.m.	The Faithful Departed
3 rd Friday	S Thomas Ap	No Mass		
4 th Saturday	S Elizabeth of Portugal	1900/1576	9.00 a.m.	Peace and Justice
5th Sunday	The Fourteenth Sunday of the Year	Sung Mass	10.00 a.m.	The Parish of Highgate
6 th Monday	S Mary Goretti V Mr	No Mass		
7 th Tuesday	Feria	No Mass		
8 th Wednesday	Feria	No Mass		
9 th Thursday	Feria	413/606	12.30 p.m.	For Roger and Magdalene getting married on Saturday in London
10 th Friday	Feria	No Mass		
11 th Saturday	S Benedict Ab	1898/1583	9.00 a.m.	
12th Sunday	The Fifteenth Sunday of the Year	Sung Mass	10.00 a.m.	The Parish of Highgate
13 th Monday	S Henry	No Mass		
14 th Tuesday	S Camillus of Lellis Pr	No Mass		
15 th Wednesday	S Bonaventure B Dr	No Mass		
16 th Thursday	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	1858/1592	12.30 p.m.	The Gift of Prayer
17 th Friday	Feria	No Mass		
18 th Saturday	Our Lady on Saturday (<i>Outing to Severn Valley</i>)	No Mass		
19th Sunday	Sixteenth Sunday of the Year	Sung Mass	10.00 a.m.	The Parish of Highgate
20 th Monday	Feria	No Mass		
21 st Tuesday	S Lawrence of Brindisi Pr Dr	No Mass		
22 nd Wednesday	S Mary Magdalene	No Mass		
23 rd Thursday	S Bridget R	1894/1600	12.30 p.m.	Our Ministry in Highgate
24 th Friday	Feria	No Mass		
25 th Saturday	S James Ap	1602	9.00 a.m.	
26th Sunday	The Seventeenth Sunday of the Year	Sung Mass	10.00 a.m.	The Parish of Highgate
27 th Monday	Feria	No Mass		
28 th Tuesday	Feria	No Mass		
29 th Wednesday	S Martha	No Mass		
30 th Thursday	S Peter Chrysologus B Dr	1878i/1611	12.30 p.m.	
31 st Friday	S Ignatius of Loyola Pr	No Mass		

listed in the families of those baptised — baker, barman, basket-maker, bedstead polisher, carriage-lamp spinner, stoker, sweep — to mentioned but a few. They published *The Gospeller*, a new style parish magazine. Sundays came to be filled with not only services, but special events for children, bible classes for young men, for women, for girls. As the district grew from 4,500 population in 1865 to 13,444 in 1891, so the work also expanded and grew. The establishment and support of schools was important; they went so far as to say they would sooner lose their church than their schools. To provide excellent education was a vital part of the mission of the church. Fr Tom wrote a poem about them:

*Our Schools — we love them; though all else be
weak,
They are our strength, and for themselves can
speak.
We want to make them stronger, and to give
Help to the earnest ones whose work will live.
In those whom for both worlds they teach and
train,*

*And educate in conscience and in brain.
We do not think the R's are only three,
We think Religion first of four to be.
These little ones are given to our care;
Betray our solemn trust we cannot dare;
We're bound to them and GOD to do our best,
And as we bring them blessing we are blest.*

There were big train excursions to the country, and processions with bands and banners. It is good that St Alban's Academy today still continues this witness to the educational concern of the Pollocks.

When an epidemic of smallpox came to Birmingham St Alban's district was hit hard. Fr Tom, with his medical concern, would have nothing to do with simply

saying it was a visitation of Providence. 'I have not patience with this ignorant slander of the Almighty. Men lay to the charge of GOD what is done by their own greed and dullness. If I breathe bad air or live in dirt willingly, I am a suicide. If I force others to do this, or do not do my best to help them, I am a murderer.'

In the early days there were riots against ritual, as there had been in the East end of London. 'Women screamed, men imprecated, shouted "hurrah", catcalled, groaned, and omitted the most discordant yells'. Lest there be an attack on the Altar the choristers formed up as a body in front of it. But these ceased and the mission work increased and grew. "Both the brothers were intensely lovable and sympathetic — 'sparkling' is a word used of them. 'Father Pollock,' it was said, 'fairly bubbled over with merriment at times'. The work was undoubtedly costly but never at the expense of joy. It was, as the Christian faith must always be, incarnational religion. As Fr Tom put it in a Christmas poem.

*O Word made Flesh, in human nature dwelling,
We see GOD's glory, mirrored in Thy Face;
We hear Thy Voice, of love and mercy telling,
We come to learn Thy truth and win Thy grace.*

*We follow Thee, O Teacher meek and lowly,
Thy Life can make our daily life Divine;
We trust Thee, slain, the Just for the unholy,
To bring us to our FATHER and to Thine.*

The costliness is perhaps reflected in the dedication to St Alban, the first martyr of Britain — a reminder that all Christian life is in one way or another a martyrdom. As Fr Benson put it:

One of the great signs of an apostle is patience. There are two kinds of martyrdom — blood and patience... Do

not think that your work is failing because your patience is sorely tried. Rather take this as a token that you are accepted... Before God can grant us any petition, even the conversion of a heathen country, He must have His Name hallowed in us by our prayer.

So the life of St Alban's for which we give thanks to God today was grounded in the faith and love of two brothers who gave themselves to the Gospel — a reminder that only that sacrifice and that commitment will create by God's grace the speaking lives which alone will touch the lives of others, in our own very different situation. As Dr Pusey said, in a sermon

preached at the opening of St Saviour's, the church he built in inner-city Leeds, the great mystery to which we witness and which is at the heart of our lives is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory'.

So Fr Tom Pollock wrote:
*Faith ventured on in works by faith begun,
The means were ready as each work was done,
Each step of progress opened to the view,
And gave the spirit for some effort new.
While all the time the great machine was moving,
And, more than this, enlarging and improving.
Men wonder how St Alban's kept alive,
And spite of all, could even grow and thrive.
We do not dare to ask the why or how,
In thankfulness we marvel, and we bow.*

Children's Page

Every month on this page we will publish some work by the children of our Sunday Club. This month we have some poetry on the subject of "The Gospel."



The Gospel

God's Word
'Oliness of God
Special ability
Pentecost and holy doings
Ecstatic surroundings
Love and hope

by Samuel

The Gospel

Yo! The gospel is a parable told by Jesus,
That will spread around the world, yeah.
He is always trying his best to please us,
And he is always trying to care.
The Gospel is a word that will help us,
It's like a book containing a helpful moral.

by Simon

The Gospel!

The word of !Jesus!
Jesus the son of God!
Elated are the people with him!
Surprised are the people who see him!
Unexpected what he did!
So great he wasss!

by Mordoquay

The Gospel

The Lord began the Gospel.
And it will never end.
Jesus Christ the Saviour.
Made and began things.

By Alicia

The Stones Remember

An article by the Revd Nadim Nassar — the Church of England's only Syrian priest — from The Tablet magazine of May 30th 2015, page 14. Reproduced with permission of the Publisher. Website address: <http://www.thetablet.co.uk>.

UNESCO describes the ancient city of Palmyra as “An oasis in the Syrian desert... the monumental ruins of a great city that was one of the most important cultural centres of the ancient world”. They go on to list its unique and wonderful buildings, calling them “an outstanding illustration of architecture and urban layout at the peak of Rome’s expansion in and engagement with the East”.

Palmyra speaks to us from the mists of history; its ruins still boast temples and archways, colonnades, an aqueduct and all you would have found in a leading city from the classical world. Today, however, it finds itself making history again. Its fall to the so-called Islamic State (IS) jihadists has highlighted the question that so many have asked, especially through social media: why is the world so alarmed about the possible destruction of some old buildings, when thousands of lives are lost every day in the Middle East while the world does nothing?

The stones of Palmyra by themselves are worthless; their importance lies in the story they tell about people. This is true of every archaeological site and every antiquity. The stones tell us that many religions and cultures once lived side by side in this city, a literal historical and cultural oasis in central Syria, and that this was a great centre for trade between Europe and Asia. There are churches, synagogues and temples close together. Walking through the streets, surrounded by hundreds of columns, you find yourself in the presence of great

history — here was a city rebuilt by King Solomon (II Chronicles 8: 4), the capital of a magnificent trading empire ruled by the young Queen Zenobia, and a place visited by the Emperor Hadrian, who renamed it Palmyra Hadriana.

If Palmyra lost, then never again will we be able to take this particular walk through our own history — because this city offers us nothing less than part of the story of the world, and every time we lose a historical place we are losing part of our identity as human beings. Why would IS bother to attack and destroy somewhere like Palmyra — or the ancient cities of Iraq, such as Nimrud and Hatra, or the museums of Mosul?

Young Muslims are being brainwashed by the extremist religious and political leaders of IS to believe that every religious and cultural artefact that is not Islamic belong to al-Jahiliyah — “the age of ignorance” — and that Islam came to eradicate every trace of this age. By erasing those traces, they want to erase the story itself and the memories of the people. If we imagine that Palmyra has been erased from history, then its story will fade into a distorted, romanticised fantasy. As we lose our ancient treasures, we lose parts of our history and our own identity.

When we protect our ancient places, we protect the story of who we are. History is a massive tapestry; when a thread breaks, the image is marred and the tapestry can start to unravel. A city like Palmyra should be a uniting factor

for the people of Syria, not because of the stones, but because of the meaning of this kingdom, the resilience of Zenobia, the greatness of the architecture, the achievements of the Palmyran people. This is all part of the story of the people of Syria — and of the whole world.

Artists and historians are finding a link between the funerary portraits of the women of Palmyra and Byzantine iconography. My friend Nizar Sabour, one of the most significant artists in Syria, found his visit to Palmyra so inspiring that he started Icons of Palmyra, a project linking the funerary art of the city with the birth of Christian iconography, and even modern iconography. If the stones are scattered, this sort of inspiration will be lost forever.

As Sabour told me: “Palmyra itself cannot be repeated. If we lose it, we lose a unique story of a local kingdom that said ‘No’ to the world power of its time, the Roman Empire, and developed its own culture that reflected its special place between East and West.”

Today, more than ever, we need to learn from Palmyra that there is a harmony to be found in the great diversity of faiths and cultures that once existed there — which is, of course, exactly what the IS terrorists want to destroy. They want to impose an artificial monoculture upon Syria and Iraq in place of the astounding diversity and richness that have always been a symbol of the Middle East. We must never overlook the power of the story. Our faith as Christians is based on the story of our Lord Jesus Christ. The stories of Palmyra, of Giza, Jerusalem, Damascus, Athens and Rome should be preserved for humanity for ever; to preserve these stories, we need to do all that is possible to preserve the places.

Our young need to be educated to respect our history, and to be able to interpret the great places of the world and the human stories behind them. Only by respecting our memories can we truly progress as a species that seeks peace and prosperity for all countries, cultures, faiths and lives.

150th Anniversary Celebration

On Saturday June 20th, the Feast of Saint Alban, the 150th anniversary of the starting of the Mission in the district of Highgate was marked by a concelebrated High Mass with The Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell, the former Bishop of Gibraltar, as Chief Celebrant, together with a number of other priests who have had very strong connections to Saint Alban’s for several years.

Amongst those taking part were Canon Jim Pendorf, Priest-in-Charge of Saint Mary’s, Chapel St Mary, Fr Stuart Powell, Priest-in-Charge of Saint Stephen’s,

Wolverhampton, Fr Percil Cadogan, Priest-in-Charge, Saint Benedict’s, Small Heath, Fr Malcolm Jones, Vicar of Saint Richard’s Church, Heathfield, and Fr Roger Sheppard, Priest-in-Charge, Emmanuel, Wylde Green.

The Mass setting was the Haydn Little Organ Mass, and a number of extra people had been invited to join the choir for the occasion, and John Jenkin, the organist of the famous church of Great Witley, carried the whole service under the direction of our own Director of Music, Graeme.

The service itself, whilst perhaps not that

to which we are generally accustomed, was very impressive and a fitting celebration for the day.



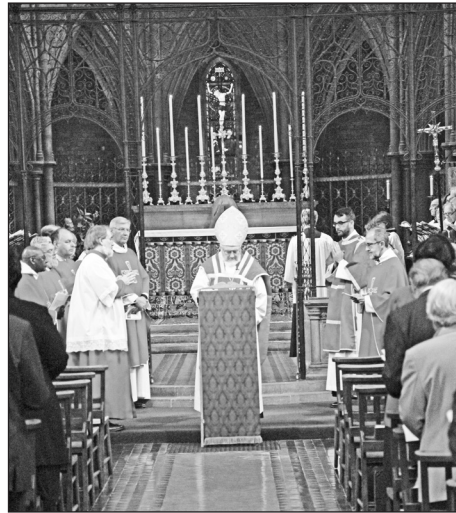
Saint Alban's Hymn was sung during the entrance procession



The banner of Saint Alban proudly carried in procession



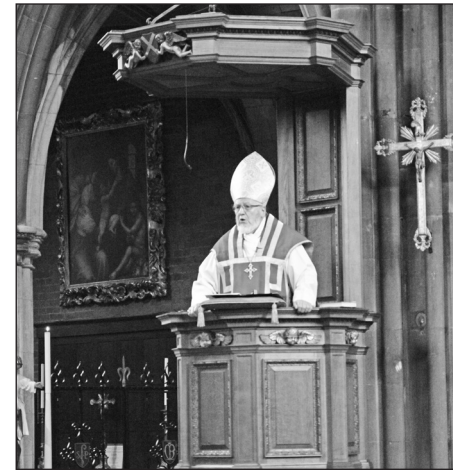
The Bishop Reverences the High Altar



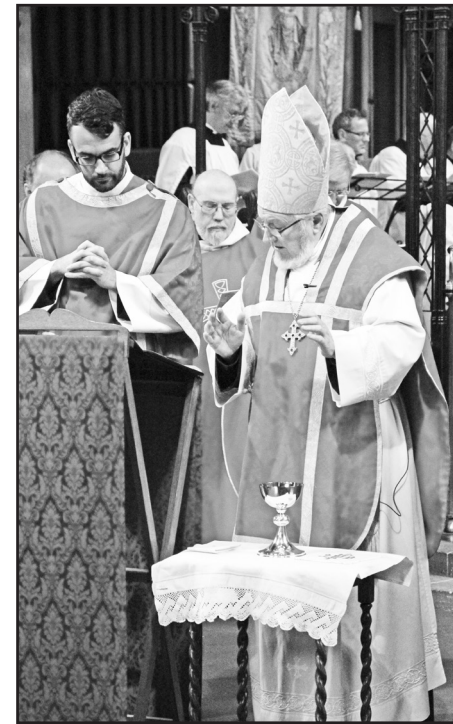
Penitential Rite



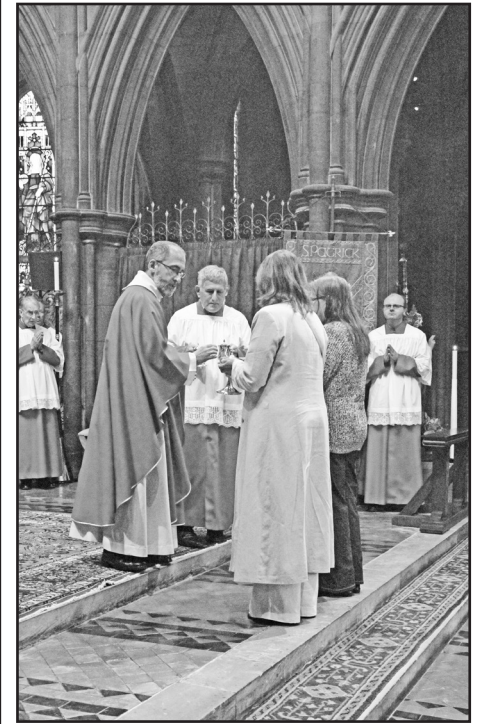
Some of the choir



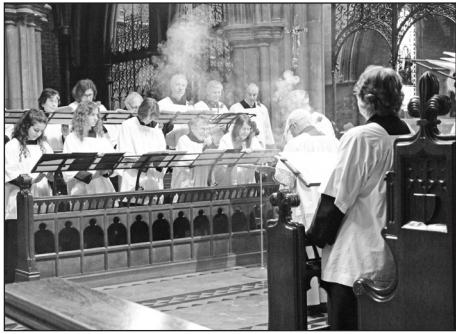
The Bishop preached the sermon, which was listened to attentively and, with the permission of the Bishop, it has been reproduced in this issue of the magazine on page 6.



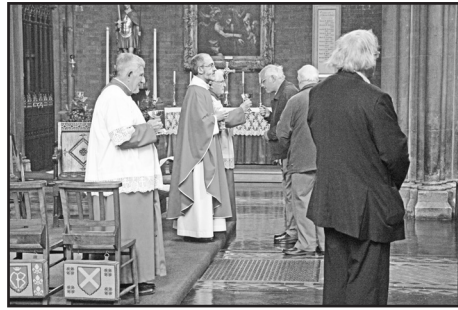
The Bishop consecrated the new chalice which replaces one which was stolen earlier in the year



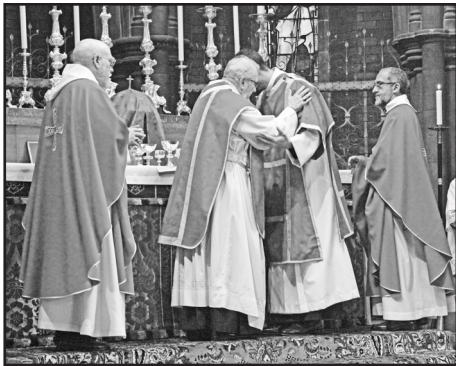
The Offertory



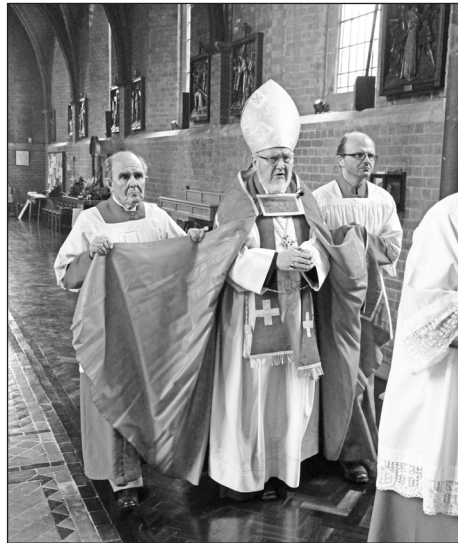
The Censing



Communion



The passing of the Peace



The Recession



*The Exposition of the Sacrament to the people
"Behold the Lamb of God"*



Voluntary: Fugue — S.S. Wesley