

# ST CYPRIAN'S NEWSLETTER

## October 2016

### Services in October

#### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October – Harvest Thanksgiving

**10.30am Mass** Celebrant: Father Julian Browning

Mass setting: Drake in F

Motet: Bullock *Give us the wings of faith*

#### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October – 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

**10.30am Mass** Celebrant: Father John Barrie

Mass setting: Palestrina *Missa brevis*

Motet: Byrd *Ave verum*

#### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October – 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Trinity

**10.30am Mass** Celebrant: Father Gerald

Beauchamp

Mass setting: Leighton *Missa brevis*

Motet: Purcell *Hear my prayer*

#### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October – Last Sunday after Trinity

**10.30am Mass** Celebrant: Father Michael Fuller

Mass setting: Dove *Missa brevis*

Motet: Howells *Behold O God our defender*

#### Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October – All Saints

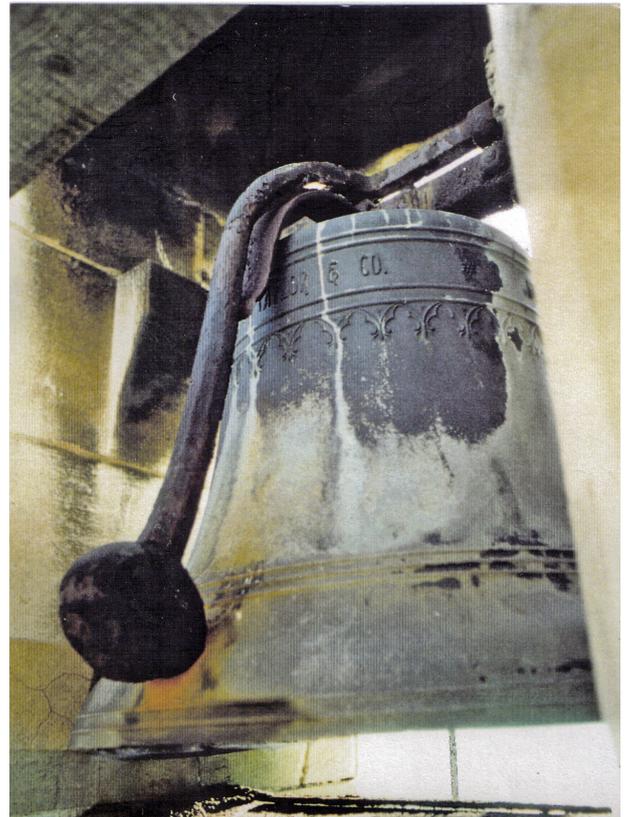
**10.30am Mass** Celebrant: Father Michael Fuller

Mass setting: Victoria *Missa o quam gloriosum*

Motet: Victoria *Gaudent in caelis*

**Weekday Mass** – Thursday, 1.10pm,

**Morning Prayer** – Monday – Friday, 8am



When St Cyprian's was planned, there was neither space nor money for a tower, and so Comper made provision for a single bell in a turret attached to the north-east corner of the Chancel. The bell was cast in 1903 by John Taylor & Co. of Loughborough. It weighs 5 cwt., 1 qr., 25 lbs, is of diameter 30.5" and its note is 1087 Hz (sharp of C). (Photo: David Peet)

## Father Michael writes

This Month we celebrate one of the most beloved Saints in the Christian calendar and one who is most often quoted - St Francis of Assisi. His life and mission are well documented as is his founding of the order of Franciscans, who are committed to the aims of St Francis, of caring for the poor and having due regard for all God's creation. There is much we can learn from Francis and in learning, seek to emulate.

Our caring of God's creation shows an almost cavalier attitude towards our environment and also towards each other. St Francis was at pains to point out that if our lives did not reflect our words, then our words are meaningless. His prayer that we should be instruments of God's peace is probably one of the most familiar prayers ever written.

May God give us grace to say this prayer with humility and a great sense of commitment:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.*

*Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.*

*O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.*

Your priest and friend,

Fr Michael Fuller

## Volunteers

Recently we have experienced green shoots in the growth of the numbers worshipping with us. This is wonderful and we praise God for it and for the formation and commencement of our Sunday School. It does bring with it a challenge and that is the need for additional volunteers to perform certain tasks. Do you think you might help?

We need additional help in preparing and clearing refreshments after Mass; Sunday School leaders and we could do with more sidespeople, extra readers and more servers. So my friends, there is the challenge, how will you respond?

Another thing that would help is more regular attendance from our established congregation; nothing encourages people more than seeing others in attendance.

Finally, how about inviting someone to come to church with you? It does not matter if they say no, you won't lose a friend and in fact you might help save a soul

## News

### **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October - Visit to the Guildhall Gallery**

A visit to the Guildhall Art Gallery led by David Peet to look at paintings in its collection on the theme of Victorian painters' attitude to love. Meet at the gallery (inside if wet).

The tour will last 90 minutes – 2 hours after which it is planned to visit a local restaurant for lunch.

### **St Cyprian's Day**

Thank you to everyone who was involved in the events to celebrate the Feast of Tithe. High Mass on 15 September was the best attended for many years. The choir sang wonderfully, the Archdeacon preached confidently and the hospitality was inspiring. Many thanks to Mary Ashwin and Sarah Daniels who saved the day when it came to the food.

The following day, Francis Holland School put on Purcell's opera Dido and Aeneas. This was a glorious occasion in which the staff and students excelled themselves. The box office raised £520 for church funds.

On the Saturday there was an excellent turn out for the quiz night. Many thanks to Chris Self from All Saints Margaret Street and Mary Ashwin for the catering. This event also raised several hundred pounds towards the funds.

Next year St Cyprian's Day will be a Friday. How about an opera dinner on the Saturday to celebrate the feast? Any thoughts, please contact Fr Gerald.

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It's always good to get feedback from visitors to St Cyprian's. Fr Michael received this from Australia following Sunday Mass:

*Greetings Father*

*Firstly my apologies for the delay as email has been intermittent on our travels...*

*Thank you for making us feel so welcome at St Cyprian's... the church is stunning (although one could be forgiven for thinking otherwise from the outside), the service was sublime and reverent, your sermon thought-provoking and parishioners were kind and friendly...*

*Please pass on to people best wishes from David and me and rest assured we will indeed visit again when back in London... also be assured of continuing prayers from me and Peter Bryce, our head server, from across the seas.*

*With blessings*

*Adam Blackmore*

*SACRISTAN, St Peter's Eastern Hill*

*Melbourne, Australia*

## St Cyprian's Day sermon

*Below is the text of the sermon, preached by the Archdeacon of Charing Cross at St Cyprian's*

The internet can be a bad place to do research. I honestly read real live books made out of paper, but the quote with which I begin is off the internet and I am suspicious of it. It is from Cyprian's letter to Donatus, but I can't find it in the full text anywhere. Nevertheless it serves the turn, so with this health warning here we go: "It is a bad world, Donatus, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and good people who have learned the great secret of life. They have found a joy and wisdom which is a thousand times better than any of the pleasures of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people, Donatus, are Christians. . . and I am one of them."

It was his conversion which defined Cyprian of Carthage. He was many things as the scripture readings given for our feast indicate. He was a shepherd of the people, a metropolitan Bishop who ruled the church in his part of North Africa for ten years. A shepherd in the model presented by the prophet Ezekiel. He was a martyr, and in his own conduct in the face of persecution, encouragement of martyrs and in the way he faced his own death, he taught the church much about how we do and don't approach dying – and living – for the faith in the light of passages like that from the letter of St Peter we have just heard. And then he was a controversialist, with views which have remained significant on the nature of the authority of the local Bishop and of the Bishop of Rome; on who may Baptise (about which he was wrong) and on how the lapsed should be received – how many times should I forgive my brother? Indeed should he be forgiven at all if he has lapsed in the face of persecution or temptation?

I expect you are well aware of much of this: it is always an hospital pass to preach at a patronal as the good stories have all been taken by last year's preacher. So let me try and be original, or at least to say something which is important enough to be repeated. The central thing about Cyprian of Carthage was his conversion – and his conversion has much to teach us about how we should approach our lives as Christians of Clarence Gate.

We might begin with beards. In his book on how to treat the lapsed St Cyprian deprecated men who shave 'You will not deface the figure of your beard'. His 4th Century Biographer described how the elegantly coiffured Roman lawyer became the bearded Bishop. This was an outward sign of an inner change. Cyprian was clear that becoming a Christian entailed a break with the priorities of his previous life. He had been wealthy but wealth to the Christian is dangerous – only too likely to be a trap: he wrote "Their property held them in chains...chains which shackled their courage and choked their faith and hampered their judgment and throttled their soul...If they stored up their treasure in heaven, they would not now have an enemy and a thief within their own household...They think of themselves as owners, whereas it is they rather who are owned: enslaved as they are to their own property, they are not the masters of their money but its slaves."

This thoroughgoing bearded conversion was the source of his encouragement and pastoral care of his people. He was renowned as a great shepherd of his flock, teaching, visiting, encouraging, and preparing them for the persecution is to come. Called and sent by the Good Shepherd he attempted to act as described by Ezekiel: seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the

injured, and I will strengthen the weak. Our call to Christ is what enables us to care for others, and to expand our lives in love of neighbour in a way which seems foolish to the world. It is the Yes Minister thing. Yes Minister was predicated on the idea that basically people act in their own self-interest all the time and all the humour and clever plot construction flowed from that. Christianity fundamentally undermines this so-called Public Choice Theory, by enjoining us to act out of love of neighbour. Cyprian, the public official, taught the church to act contrary to the way that states assume we will.

His conversion enabled him to be indifferent to what people thought about him. When he thought it was right to withdraw from his see and remain at large in order to serve the church he did so without hesitation, even in the face of the mutterings of those who said that he was scared to face martyrdom himself. When a year or two later he was placed under a gentle house arrest and almost invited to abscond he refused to do so because he thought it would have been wrong to flee. The converted Christian acts, in the end, not even in the interests of his neighbour, but first of all out of love of God, even at the cost of destruction of his life.

For me in my lukewarm Christianity this is a terrible challenge, for I am not really sure that I would not have run away from that gentle house arrest, and I am sure that I do not serve God with all my heart and mind and soul strength. Cyprian sold all his family property, and I am comfortably wealthy even by the stance of my own rich nation, let alone by the standards of the world. Cyprian famously steered a middle way for those who had fallen from the commitment conversion demands. He strenuously rejected the idea that the lapsed should for ever be excluded from the church; but he demanded penance and restitution. So he is a challenge to me in my comfortable life.

Metaphorically how I going to grow my beard? How am I going to deepen my commitment?

\Cyprian was helpful here as well: “it is grace and grace alone that can help us. If you keep the way of innocence, the way of righteousness, if you walk with a firm and steady step, if, depending on God with your whole strength and with your whole heart, you only be what you have begun to be, liberty and power to do is given you in proportion to the increase of your spiritual grace. For there is not, as is the case with earthly benefits, any measure or stint in the dispensing of the heavenly gift. The Spirit freely flowing forth is restrained by no limits, is checked by no closed barriers within certain bounded spaces; it flows perpetually, it is exuberant in its affluence. Let our heart only be thirsty, and be ready to receive: in the degree in which we bring to it a capacious faith, in that measure we draw from it an overflowing grace.”

To that grace in this most blessed sacrament let us now once again turn.

