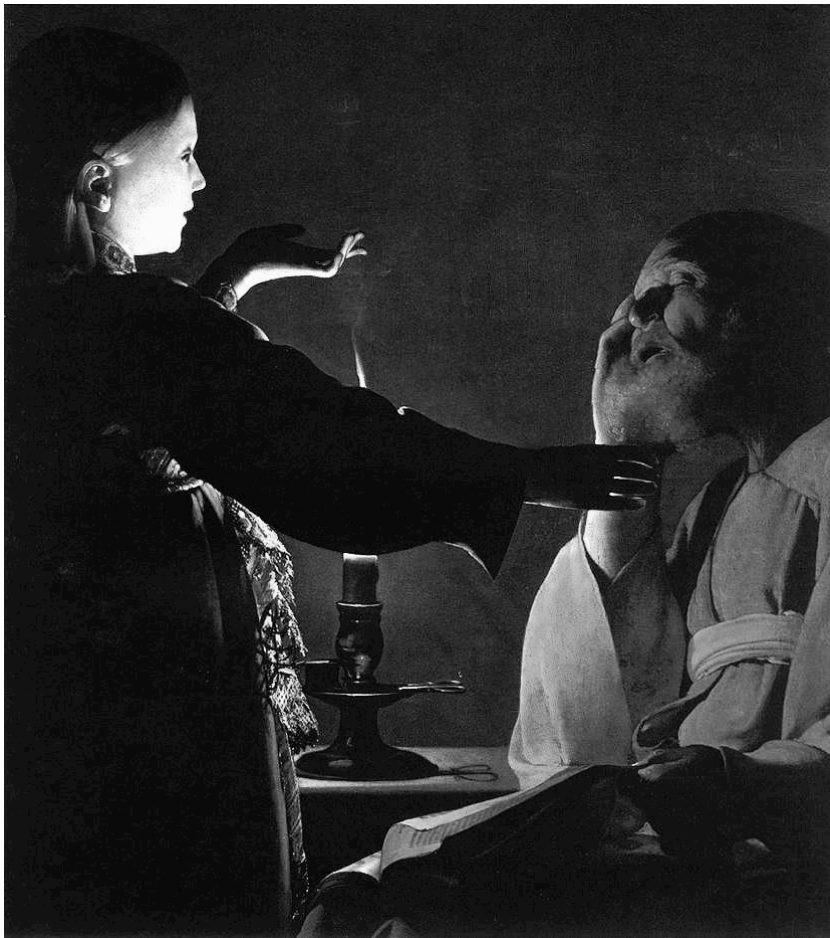




St Paul's Church,
The Diocese of London

Knightsbridge



**The Solemn Eucharist
of the fourth Sunday of Advent
19th December 2010 at 11 a.m.**

Welcome to St Paul's Knightsbridge, part of the Diocese of London and a church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. If you are visiting us from another church, please make yourself known to the sidesmen or to one of the clergy after the service. Members of all Christian churches are welcome to share with us in this Eucharist – and those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament are invited to approach the altar at the time of Communion, to receive a blessing.



aid users should switch their devices to 'T'.

There is a loop system in the lower parts of the church for the benefit of the hearing-impaired. Hearing

giftaid it

this parish, throughout the Diocese of London and further afield. Please use the special envelopes at the end of each pew to maximise your giving through the 'Giftaid' scheme.

During the service a collection will be taken for the work of the church in



are switched off (or to silent) and are reminded that the taking of photographs or the making of audio or video recordings during services is prohibited.

Members of the congregation are asked to ensure that mobile phones

*Cover image
The dream of Joseph
Georges de La Tour (1593-1652)*

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Introductory Rite

The Choir, Servers and Sacred Ministers enter from the West doors and process to cense the High Altar. All stand:



The Choir sings:

Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.

All repeat:

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: thy holy cities are a wilderness; Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation: our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee.

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know me and believe me: I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me is no Saviour: and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people; my salvation shall not tarry: I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions: fear not, for I will save thee: for I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy redeemer.

**Drop down ye heavens from above,
and let the skies pour down righteousness.**

THE GREETING

When all are in their places the Celebrant says:

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

Amen.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and with thy spirit.

THE PRAYERS OF PENITENCE AND KYRIE ELEISON

The Deacon says:

When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light those things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

All kneel and, in silence, call to mind sins and failings.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against thee
and against our neighbour,
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are heartily sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us, forgive us all that is past,
and grant that we may serve thee in newness of life
to the glory of thy name.
Amen.**

The Choir sings:

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

*Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

Chant of the Mass ordinary for Sundays in Advent (XVII)

The Celebrant says:

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.

All stand.

THE COLLECT

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our redeemer,
who didst prepare the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of thy Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him
when he shall come again to be our judge;
who liveth and reigneth with thee
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

All sit.

The Liturgy of the Word

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 7: 10-16

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings:

THE PSALMODY

Psalm 80: 1-7

Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep :
shew thyself also, thou that sittest upon the cherubims.

Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses :
stir up thy strength, and come, and help us.

Turn us again, O God :
shew the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

O Lord God of hosts :
how long wilt thou be angry with thy people that prayeth?

Thou feedest them with the bread of tears :
and givest them plenteousness of tears to drink.

Thou hast made us a very strife unto our neighbours :
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Turn us again, thou God of hosts :
shew the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt :

thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

THE SECOND READING

Romans 1: 1-7

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All stand.

THE GRADUAL HYMN (181)

The Lord whom earth and sea and sky
Adore and praise and magnify,
Who o'er their threefold fabric reigns,
The Virgin's spotless womb contains.

And he whose will is ever done
By moon and sea, by stars and sun,
Is borne upon a maiden's breast,
Whom God's forseeing grace possessed.

O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee
Eternal praise and glory be,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

Words: Latin tr. J. M. Neale (1818-66)
Music: 'Puer Nobis Nascitur' adapted by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

All remain standing.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Cantor sings:



Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight:
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

THE GOSPEL READING

Matthew 1: 18-end

The Deacon says:

The Lord be with you

And with thy spirit.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to thee, O Christ.

THE SERMON

Fr Alan Gyle
Vicar

Silence is kept.

THE CREED

All stand with the Celebrant, who says: Let us make affirmation of our faith.

**I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,**

the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of light,
very God of very God, begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the dead:
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified,
who spake by the prophets.
And I believe One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

All remain standing.

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

All kneel. Either of the following responses may be used:

Lord in thy mercy or Lord, hear us
hear our prayer **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the departed, these words may be used:

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

At the end, a brief period of silence is kept for personal prayer. All say:

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of thy Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

THE NOTICES

All stand.

THE PEACE

The Celebrant says:

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and with thy spirit.

The Deacon says:

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace with those standing close by.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

THE OFFERTORY

The gifts of the people are carried to the altar and presented. A collection is taken to support our work, ministry and charitable giving. Please use the Gift Aid

envelopes provided, remembering to fill in all the details. The altar is prepared and the gifts of bread and wine, the altar, and the sanctuary party are censed.

THE COLLECTION HYMN (16)

**Wake, O wake! with tidings thrilling
The watchmen all the air are filling,
Arise, Jerusalem, arise!
Midnight strikes! no more delaying,
'The hour has come!' we hear them saying.
Where are ye all, ye virgins wise?
The Bridegroom comes in sight,
Raise high your torches bright!
Alleluya!
The wedding song swells loud and strong:
Go forth and join the festal throng.**

**Sion hears the watchmen shouting,
Her heart leaps up with joy undoubting,
She stands and waits with eager eyes;
See her Friend from heaven descending,
Adorned with truth and grace unending!
Her light burns clear, her star doth rise.
Now come, thou precious Crown,
Lord Jesu, God's own Son!
Hosanna!
Let us prepare to follow there,
Where in thy supper we may share.**

*Words: Philipp Nicolai tr. F. C. Burkitt (1864-1935)
Tune: 'Wachet Auf', Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608) J. S. Bach (1685-1750)*

*When the Thurifer approaches, all stand to be censed.
After being censed, all remain standing for the Eucharistic Prayer.*

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Ave Maris Stella
Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Ave, maris stella,
Dei mater alma,
Atque semper virgo,
Felix coeli porta.
Solve vincula reis:
Profer lumen caecis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.
Vitam praesta puram,
Iter para tuum,
Ut, videntes Iesum,

Semper collaetemur.
Sit laus Deo Patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritus sancto;
Tribus honor unus.

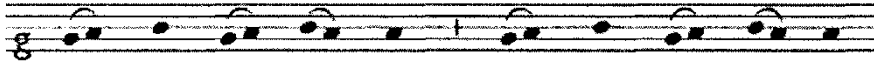
*Hail, star of the sea,
loving Mother of God,
and also always a virgin,
Happy gate of heaven.
Break the chains of sinners,
Bring light to the blind,
Drive away our evils,
Ask for all good.
Keep life pure,
Make the journey safe,
So that, seeing Jesus,
We may always rejoice together.
Let there be praise to God the Father,
Glory to Christ in the highest,
To the Holy Spirit,
One honour to all three.*

Words: Plainsong Vespers hymn to Mary.

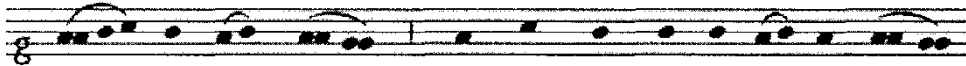
THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Celebrant sings:

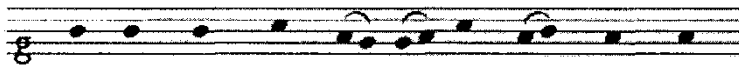
All respond:



The Lord be with you *R.* and with thy spi-rit.



Lift up your hearts. *R.* **We lift them up un-to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks un - to the Lord our God.



R. **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right and our bounden duty,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee,
O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God,
through Jesus Christ, thine only Son, our Lord.

For he is thy living Word;
through him thou hast created all things from the beginning,
and fashioned us in thine own image.
Through him thou didst redeem us from the slavery of sin,
giving him to be born of a woman, to die upon the cross, and to rise again
for us. Through him thou hast made us a people for thine own
possession, exalting him to thy right hand on high,
and sending forth through him thy holy and life-giving Spirit.

And now we give thee thanks
because thou didst send him to redeem us from sin and death
and to make us inheritors of everlasting life;
that when he shall come again in power
and great triumph to judge the world,
we may with joy behold his appearing,
and in confidence may stand before him.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we laud and magnify thy glorious name,
evermore praising thee and saying:

The choir sings:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth,
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua, Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the
Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

German Mass – Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47)

The prayer continues:

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus
Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of thy Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine may be unto us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread;
and when he had given thanks to thee,
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

Likewise after supper he took the cup;
and when he had given thanks to thee, he gave it to them, saying:

Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of his kingdom and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ, thy Son, our Lord.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

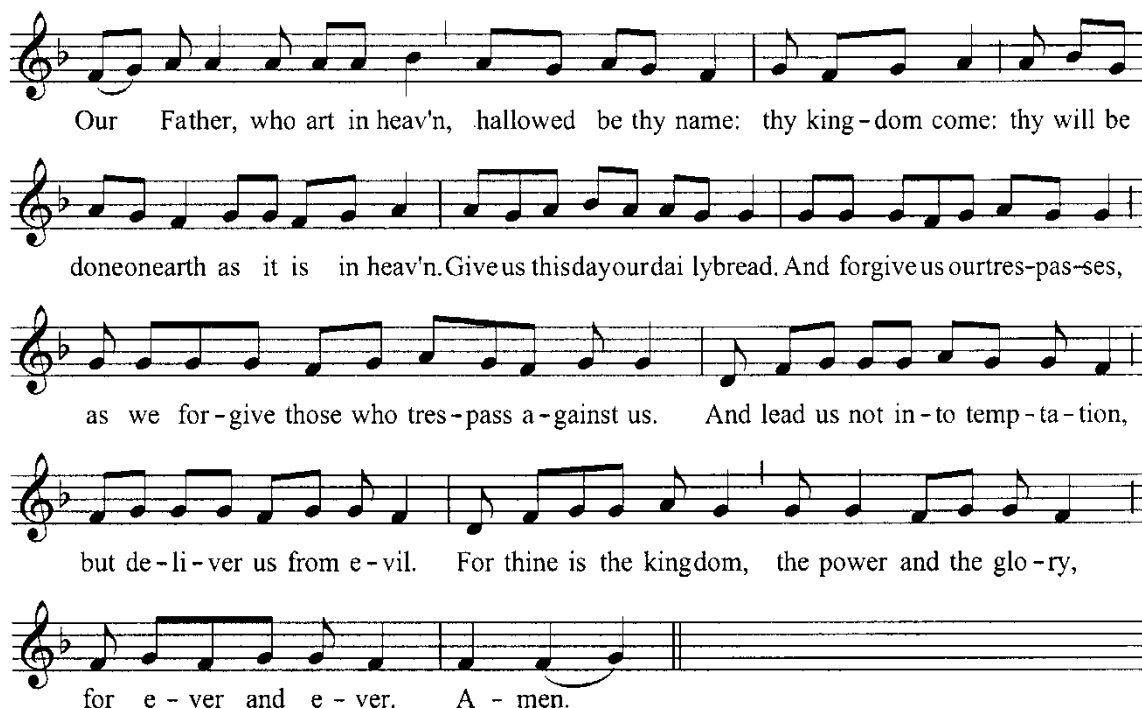
Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of thy divine majesty, renew us by thy Holy Spirit, inspire us with thy love, and unite us in the body of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father almighty, world without end.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All kneel. The Celebrant sings:

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All sing:



Our Father, who art in heav'n, hallowed be thy name: thy king-dom come: thy will be done on earth as it is in heav'n. Give us this day our dai ly bread. And forgive us our tres-pas-ses, as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us. And lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion, but de-li-ver us from e-vil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glo-ry, for e-ver and e-ver. A-men.

THE FRACTION

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

THE GIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

By way of invitation to receive the Sacrament the Celebrant says:

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 that thou shouldst come under my roof,
but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed.**

The Sacred Ministers and Servers receive the Holy Communion, followed by the people, beginning with those seated at the front of the Nave.

All who normally do so in their own Church are invited to receive the Sacrament.

Those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion are invited to approach the altar to receive a blessing, carrying this booklet in their hands as an indication to the Priest.

The choir sings:

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Donna nobis pacem.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

German Mass – Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47)

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Im Advent

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 47)

Lasset uns frohlocken, es nahet der Heiland, den Gott uns verheißen.

Der Name des Herrn sei gelobet in Ewigkeit. Halleluja!

*Let us rejoice! The redeemer is coming, whom the Lord has promised.
The name of the Lord be praised for ever. Halleluja!*

Words: German proverbial

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer.

Let us pray.

All kneel.

Heavenly Father,
who didst choose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised saviour:
fill us thy servants with thy grace,
that in all things we may embrace thy holy will
and with her rejoice in thy salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**Almighty God,
we thank thee for feeding us
with the body and blood of thy Son, Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer thee our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of thy Spirit
to live and work to thy praise and glory. Amen.**

All stand.

THE CONCLUDING HYMN (185)

Sing we of the blessed Mother
Who received the angel's word,
And obedient to his summons
Bore in love the infant Lord;
Sing we of the joys of Mary
At whose breast that child was fed
Who is Son of God eternal
And the everlasting Bread.

Sing we, too, of Mary's sorrows,
Of the sword that pierced her through,
When beneath the cross of Jesus
She his weight and suffering knew,
Looked upon her Son and Saviour
Reigning high on Calvary's tree,
Saw the price of man's redemption
Paid to set the sinner free.

Sing the chiefest joy of Mary
When on earth her work was done,
And the Lord of all creation
Brought her to his heavenly home:
Virgin Mother, Mary blessed,
Raised on high and crowned with grace,
May your Son, the world's redeemer,
Grant us all to see his face.

Words: G. B. Timms (1910-1997)
Tune: 'Abbot's Leigh' by Cyril Taylor (1907-1991)

All remain standing.

THE BLESSING & THE DISMISSAL

The Celebrant says:

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shine upon you,
scatter the darkness before your path,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

The Deacon says:

Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

All remain standing as the Servers and Sacred Ministers depart.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

'Adeste, fideles' from 'Cathedral Windows' Op 106
Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

THE CHOIR OF ST PAUL'S KNIGHTSBRIDGE

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Stephen Farr

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Christian Wilson

NOTES ON THE READINGS

Isaiah 7: 10-16

The book of Isaiah can be divided into two (and possibly three) parts. Chapters 1 to 39 were written before the exile, from about 740 BC to about 700 BC. These were difficult times for the southern kingdom, Judah: a disastrous war was fought with Syria; the Assyrians conquered Israel, the northern kingdom, in 723 BC, and threatened Judah. Isaiah saw the cause of these events as social injustice, which he condemned, and against which he fought valiantly. Chapters 40 to 66 were written during and after the Exile in Babylon. They are filled with a message of trust and confident hope that God will soon end the Exile. Some scholars consider that Chapters 56 to 66 form a third part of the book, written after the return to the Promised Land. These chapters speak of hope and despair; they berate the people for their sin, for worshipping other gods. Like Second Isaiah, this part speaks of the hope that God will soon restore Jerusalem to its former glory and make a new home for all peoples. Assyria, under Tiglath-pileser III, is intent on expanding westwards. The kings of "Aram" (vv. 1, 2, 5, 8, Syria) and of Israel (also called "Ephraim") have formed a coalition to resist the advances of their common enemy. They have tried to convince "Ahaz" (v. 1), king of Judah and of the "house of David" (v. 2) to join the alliance; he has refused. Now they seek to put a puppet king on Judah's throne. God has commanded Isaiah to "meet Ahaz" (v. 3) as he inspects the water supply vital to Jerusalem's defence. Isaiah tells him: "take heed ... do not fear ... these two smoldering stumps of firebrands" (v. 4) who have "plotted evil against you" (v. 5). "If you do not stand firm in faith" (v. 9, trust in God) but rely on human counsel, you will be defeated. God now speaks again to Ahaz: ask any "sign" (v. 11), any confirmation of my promise delivered by Isaiah – any at all in all creation. ("Sheol" was the subterranean abode of the dead.). But it seems that Ahaz has already made up his mind (v. 12) so, through Isaiah, God gives to the "house of David" (v. 13) not a "sign" (v. 11) to convince Ahaz, but one which speaks to future generations. God will keep the promise he made to David (through Nathan): "Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me" (2 Samuel 7:16). "The young woman" (v. 14, most likely Ahaz's wife) is pregnant; David's line will continue; she will name her son "Immanuel" (meaning God with us). (This son was Hezekiah.) In a devastated land (paying heavy tribute to Assyria), where only basic food is available ("curds and honey", v. 15), he will develop moral discrimination – unlike recent kings, who were deemed wicked, ungodly people. By this time, Assyria will have conquered both Syria and Israel (v. 16).

Romans 1: 1-7

Romans is the first epistle in the New Testament, although not the first to be written. Paul wrote it to the church at Rome, which included both Jews and Gentiles. His primary theme is the basics of the good news of Christ, salvation for all people. The book was probably written in 57 AD, when Paul was near the end of his third missionary journey around the Eastern Mediterranean. It is unusual in that it was written to a church that Paul had not visited.

Paul introduces himself to his readers:

- as "servant" (literally slave) of Christ, one under more than the usual obligation Christians have to Jesus;
- as an "apostle", one sent with a special mission of divine origin; and
- as "set apart" to spread God's good news.

(Paul does not reserve the title apostle for the Twelve.) This news of eternal life with God was "promised beforehand" (v. 2): it has been part of God's plan since before creation. God made known his promise "through his prophets" (principally

Isaiah and Jeremiah) in books held to have authority. (When Paul wrote, both Testaments were yet to be defined.) The “gospel” (good news, v. 3) is about one very close to God, “his Son”, here identified in two ways:

- physically (“flesh”): of David’s line, so meeting the Old Testament prerequisites for messiahship; and
- spiritually (“spirit ...”, v. 4): definitively stated by God to be the “Christ” (Messiah) in resurrecting him.

It is through Christ that Paul (“we”, v. 5) has received “grace” (God’s freely given gift of love) and “apostleship” (authority to teach and proclaim the good news) – with the objective of bringing people (especially non-Jews) to faith in God and thus making it possible for them to place themselves under God’s authority (“obedience of faith”). Paul sees the Christians at “Rome” (v. 7) as “called to be saints”: literally called holy ones, belonging to God and consecrated to his service. (The same Greek words are found in the Septuagint, the Greek translation Paul would have used, to describe the Israelite community. We, he suggests, are in continuity with them. In v. 1, he sees himself as in being in continuity with Moses, Joshua and Abraham - all called servants of God in the Old Testament.) Finally, he wishes the Roman community both God’s “grace” (v. 7) and his “peace”, the Jewish notion of a right relationship with God - partnership in reconciliation of all to him, eternal well-being, and wholeness of life.

Matthew 1: 18-end

This gospel is the first in the New Testament, but it was probably the second to be written. Scholars recognize that it borrows material from Mark, and from a sayings source containing sayings of Jesus and known as Q (for *Quelle*, German for source). The author shows an understanding of Jewish culture and religion not found in the other gospels. It was probably written about 60 to 70 AD, possibly for a largely Jewish audience.

Matthew has told us of Jesus’ descent from David. He is the anointed (“Messiah”) king God has promised. Joseph’s and Mary’s families (“engaged”) have signed a marriage contract but Joseph has not yet taken her (v. 20) into his house. If Mosaic law on sexual relations was fully observed then, Joseph could have brought charges against her, and she could have been stoned to death (“public disgrace”, v. 19) for adultery (then including pre-marital sex). Joseph, while observant of the Law (“righteous”), is compassionate: he “planned to dismiss [divorce] her quietly”. God had intervened in the birth of some he has chosen - Isaac, Jacob and Samuel – but never before has he replaced the whole male role. Even so, the messenger from God points out Joseph’s role: Jesus is legally descended from David through him. In Aramaic and Hebrew, “Jesus” (v. 21) and “he will save” sound similar. Matthew is keen to show that Jesus fulfills God’s promise made through Isaiah (v. 22). In v. 23, the Greek word translated “virgin”, *parthenos*, is rendered as *unmarried daughter* in Acts 21:9. Perhaps *maiden* is a better translation; it has the same range of meanings as *parthenos*. Through Jesus ““God is with us”” (v. 23) but Joseph names him Jesus, not Immanuel.

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

German Mass and Im Advent – Felix Mendelssohn (1809– 47)

Mendelssohn was born to a notable Jewish family which had, like many at that time, converted to Christianity. Felix was a grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, and the father of Paul Mendelssohn, discoverer of aniline dyes, and

co-founder of the German chemical giant AGFA. He is often regarded as the greatest musical child prodigy after Mozart. He began taking piano lessons from his mother when he was six, and at seven was tutored by Marie Bigot in Paris. From 1817 he studied composition with Carl Friedrich Zelter in Berlin. He probably made his first public concert appearance at the age of nine, when he participated in a chamber music concert. He was also a prolific composer as a child, and wrote most of his string symphonies before the age of fifteen, along with a few concertos, a great deal of piano music, and several operas. At seventeen, he composed his well-known overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and at twenty, he began a successful conducting career, both in England and in the rest of Europe. Mendelssohn made an early study of the music of J.S. Bach, Handel, and Mozart and immersed himself in the music of the 16th-century masters Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso. Church music was a hot topic at the time, and Mendelssohn sided with those who believed it should enable spiritual contemplation, not merely accompany church services - his two large biblical oratorios, *St Paul* in 1836 and *Elijah* in 1846, greatly influenced by Bach, serve as exemplars. Mendelssohn himself was baptised into the Lutheran church aged seven on the 21st March 1816 (J.S. Bach's birthday). He later described himself as an *Anhänger*, an adherent or disciple, of Friedrich Schleiermacher the Protestant theologian, and in his short but glorious career composed a number of works for the Huguenot and Catholic church, and a small number for the Anglican liturgy. He worked on the score for the German Mass while he was *Generalmusikdirektor* for church and sacred music at the Court of the King of Prussia. A late work from 1846 it seems that Mendelssohn was not able to complete it before his untimely death and the German Mass was never securely established within the framework of the Protestant church service.

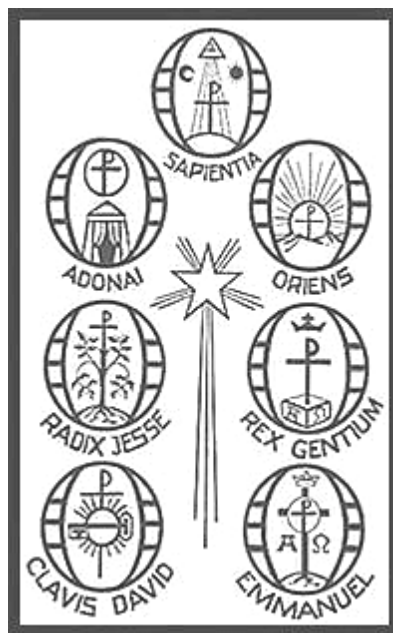
Im Advent is one of the *Sechs Sprüche* (Six Anthems), Op. 79, similar to his Psalm settings in their polyphonic texture and of equal quality. The texts are extracted from the Psalms and the New Testament and set with great care to make them intelligible, despite the frequent counterpoint. Mendelssohn arranged them for eight-voice mixed chorus without accompaniment. For Advent, he chose the text, "Lasset uns frohlocken" (Let us be joyful), and completed the work on October 5th 1846. Imitative entries open the G major piece, which then moves to a solid homophonic section as the choir at last begins to sing the next line of text. The second half of the anthem contains the most interesting polyphony of the six.

***Ave Maris Stella* – Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)**

Grieg was the greatest Scottish composer of the nineteenth century. His family name was originally Greig, and would be today were it not for the Battle of Culloden in 1746, which obliged his great-grandfather to leave the Highlands with some haste, eventually settling in Norway around 1770. Edvard's father was British vice-consul in Bergen, but the Norwegian nationalism, with which he will be forever identified, came from his mother's side, her father a member of Norway's first parliament. It was a musical as well as political household, and Grieg's gifts were noted by the violinist Ole Bull who sent him off to Leipzig where he enrolled at the Conservatoire then run by the great piano virtuoso Ignaz Moschelles. He too was a fine pianist, as the recording he made of his opus 7 piano sonata in 1903 well attests, and his piano concerto in A minor, perhaps the best loved and once the most frequently performed concerto for that instrument, is as evergreen as a *Scandinavian* forest. Grieg, in later life, occasionally regretted the tag 'nationalist' composer. In a letter to a friend he wrote of another of his most popular works, *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, "... I literally can't bear listening to it. It absolutely reeks of cow-pies, exaggerated nationalism, and trollish self-satisfaction". The piece we hear this morning is a setting of a vesper hymn and is typical of Grieg's simple, structured style of two- and four-bar phrasing, something often cited as a weakness in his other works. There is nothing of cow pie or trollishness; just a sincerely expressed hymn of praise and prayer.

'Adeste, fideles' from Op 106 – Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

Karg-Elert was a German composer of considerable fame in the early twentieth century, best known for his choral works, lieder, chamber and orchestral music, works for the piano, and especially his compositions for organ and harmonium. He was born in Oberndorf am Neckar, studied music at the Leipzig Conservatory, where he would become a staff member in 1919. Although his music is heavily influenced by Debussy, Scriabin and Schoenberg his preferred instrument was the *Kunsthharmonium* (Art-Harmonium), which was developed by the French company Mustel in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, into an instrument of considerable power, providing a rich palette of tone-colours artfully contrived from its complex mechanics. Karg-Elert loved it so much he wrote for it a transcription of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. I have heard a recording of the piece and it sounds to me like Larry Adler being wrestled into an early *Liebestod*. Nevertheless, Karg-Elert's works, especially those written for organ, were popular in the United States, France and Britain, where, in May 1930, a festival of his work was performed at St Lawrence Jewry. Unfortunately, one of the performers, Godfrey Sceats, was under par, and Karg-Elert, who was present, groaned loudly throughout his performance. He could only be persuaded to desist by the offer of a drink, which was duly obtained from an establishment round the corner in Gresham Street. It had, alas, an unintended effect on the composer, who decided to treat the audience to an improvisation which, it is said, pushed the limits of both performer and instrument. The late Felix Aprahamian, who was present, recalled *a wild splashing around at the organ... he ended his improvisation with a fixed high inverted pedal point, beneath which a massive juicily harmonised chorale unfolded. No-one who heard Karg-Elert play on that occasion could have been under any illusion that he might ever sustain a recital tour.* Prophetic words indeed; Karg-Elert's single tour of the United States, which followed, was not well-received and he died shortly afterwards.



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