

ST PAUL'S KNIGHTSBRIDGE

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from The Reverend Alan Gyle, Vicar



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Fr Richard Coles

This Sunday morning it is announced that Fr Richard Coles, Senior Curate of St Paul's Knightsbridge, has been appointed as the Parish Priest of St Mary the Virgin, Finedon in the Diocese of Peterborough. This is wonderful news for the church and for Fr Richard - though you will be forgiven for feeling not a little sad (as I do!) at the prospect of his departure. As a hugely talented and now very experienced priest, it is only right that Richard should progress to being in charge of his own church community, and his new parish in Northamptonshire is richly blessed by his appointment. His new role is a half-time one will enable him to balance his commitments as priest and broadcaster – and it has the added advantage that it is closer to his family.

The past three-and-a-bit years have been a very happy time for us at St Paul's, not least for me as vicar. Richard has been a huge asset and personally I could not have had a better, more loyal or more congenial colleague to work with. In his ministry and in his preaching he has cared for us all with real devotion, and has raised our horizons, enlarged our vision and made us see things anew – often with the help of quick wit and lively good humour. All of this, of course, alongside the significant contribution he has made as a broadcaster.

His last Sunday at St Paul's will be Sunday 16th January 2011. A date for his licensing in Finedon has yet to be set by the Bishop of Peterborough, but it is likely to be in February/March; in the meantime, Richard will be travelling to Norway to work on a programme for the BBC. On the 16th January there will be drinks after mass and a chance for us to say farewell. I know many of you will want to make a thank offering for Fr Richard's ministry among us so that some token of our gratitude can be presented to him, and special envelopes are available from John Tweddle and Caroline Docker your Churchwardens; (you may also simply write to them, c/o the Parish Office and mark your enveloped "Fr Richard presentation").

For now, of course, there is Christmas to think of – and Richard's preaching to look forward to. This comes with our best wishes for the coming season.

The Reverend Alan Gyle