



The Chapels Royal of St Peter ad Vincula and St John the Evangelist HM Tower of London

Dear friends,

‘Where there is no love, put love – and you will find love’. St John of the Cross 1542 – 1591

As we move into the third week of Advent, I hope that you are managing to find a little time to rest and be quiet amidst all the preparations for Christmas. I would encourage you to look beyond your family and friends and see where you might be able to bring a little Christmas cheer to those for whom Christmas will be a challenge. This doesn't just necessarily mean the poor; there may be people who will be alone, and others who have lost loved ones this year. Perhaps we could all look to our neighbours (and that term covers all kinds of neighbours, perhaps especially the ones we find most difficult and hard to get on with), and take the extra step.

We have several ‘gentlemen of the road’ in various places near the Tower. Yesterday I saw a young woman stop, kneel down and chat with one of our regular and long-term gentlemen of the road. Her smile, quiet words and gestures reminded me of the words of St John of the Cross (whom we remember today, in the church's calendar): ‘Where there is no love, put love – and you will find love’. The Collect for the First Sunday in Advent asks us to ‘cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light’.

I encourage you to bring a little light, or love, into the places of darkness.

With my warmest good wishes and prayers for you all, Roger.

Christmas Appeal

Spare Winter Coats: I am hoping to collect 20 coats or jackets for a city-wide initiative to help keep those in need warm during this winter period. Coats and jackets can be any size (including children's); the charity simply requests that the coats should be clean and in good condition. If you think you can help, then please get in touch with me first by email (Roger.Hall@hrp.org.uk) before bringing in a coat.

The London Hygiene Bank

For the past six months, the chapel has been supporting this project, together with nearly all the churches in the centre of London. There is a box by the door of the chapel every Sunday morning, so do please drop in a few items each week if you can. These all add up, and will make a big difference to people who simply can't afford the normal hygiene items we take for granted. The following link gives details of what is needed, as well as how to donate. You could see this as a Christmas gift!
<https://thehygienebank.com>

Bow and Tower Hamlets Food Bank

The chapel will, as it has done every year, give a sizable cheque to the Bow and Tower Hamlets Food Bank, who are best placed to buy what is needed for those who need it most.

Sunday Service Details
17th December 2023
The Third Sunday in Advent

0915 Holy Communion (White Tower)
1100 State Carol Service

Collect for The Third Sunday in Advent

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Poem of the week



Many of you will have heard of the death, on December 7th, of Benjamin Zephaniah, who died of a brain tumour aged only 65. Amongst other things, he was a writer and poet, often intoning his words over a reggae backbeat. Zephaniah was sometimes described as ‘the people’s laureate’.

He was born in 1958 in Birmingham, one of eight children, and had a violent and abusive father but a loving mother. To escape his father, he and his mother were constantly on the move and, in consequence, he left school at thirteen, unable to read or write. He spent time in both borstal and prison and described himself as a ‘naughty boy’ but one with a gentle and loving side. Determined to become a writer, he had begun writing poetry at 15 and, after he left prison, set about becoming a writer. By the time of his death, he had published 14 books of poetry, five adult novels and five children’s books, as well as being awarded numerous honorary doctorates. At this time of the year, one of his best-loved poems, and one which is a favourite of school children, is *Talking of Turkeys*. Its main theme is that of animal rights.

Talking of Turkeys

Turkeys just want to play reggae,
Turkeys just want to hip-hop,
Can yu imagine a nice young turkey saying,
‘I cannot wait for the chop.’
Turkeys like getting presents, dey wanna watch
Christmas TV,
Turkeys have brains an turkeys feel pain
In many ways like yu and me.

Benjamin Zephaniah 1958 - 2023

Jigsaw

A very festive view of the White Tower. <https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=23e4f5bd4b5b>



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name:

Norma, Ann, Mark, Dan, Ian, Patti, Florence and Kofi.

RIP

Linda Jones, Derek Newman, Ros Loftus

Please continue to pray for Ukraine, Israel and Palestine:

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine, Israel and Palestine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment, and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen

With best wishes to all, Roger.



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