



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

Dear friends,

More than one person has commented to me recently how depressing it is to listen to, watch or read the news at the moment. Each day seems to bring another instance of people's inhumanity to others. Apart from deliberate acts of violence, there are also examples of people suffering harm from negligence or, arguably worse, from others' refusal to admit their errors of omission or commission, failing to take responsibility for their actions and preferring to maintain organisational reputation. This can often have the consequence of perpetuating private misery.

The church, which should surely aim for a higher standard of integrity than secular institutions, has sadly not been an exception where this kind of behaviour is concerned. Even new groups which offer a radically new, pure expression of the Christian faith, are likewise not immune from such tendencies. Over and over again, examples such as the [Nine O'Clock Service](#) and the [L'Arche Community](#) have turned out to have real evil concealed beneath their outward appearance of Spirit-led rebirth. We can be left feeling impotent to prevent such things, and equally at a loss to explain them.

Why do these things happen? It is because human beings are inherently fallible, and the church consists of people. The Collect for Sexagesima Sunday (below) recognises this fact and leads us to pray for God's help. There are many more good things being done by church members, such as food banks, warm spaces, drop-in centres and free lunches, to name but a few, not to mention the continuing major contribution to education made by church schools, so we can take heart that the Gospel is being positively proclaimed in deeds as well as words. However dark the news can sometimes seem, let there be light.

With all good wishes,

Cortland.

**Chapel notes:**

Thank you for the coats that have been donated in support of the Calling London Project. We are still collecting, so do keep them coming.

The City Hygiene Bank continues to collect toiletries for those unable to afford to maintain a basic level of dignity. Do, please, bring an item or two each Sunday and leave it in the collection box just inside the Chapel.

**Ash Wednesday (14<sup>th</sup> February):**

There will be a service of Holy Communion with Ashing at 7pm in the White Tower.

Please make a note of the bread, soup and cheese **Lent lunches**, which will start on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February, following the 11am services. Further details to follow.

**Sunday Service Details**  
**4<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**Sexagesima Sunday**

**0915** Holy Communion St John the Evangelist (White Tower)  
**1100** Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula

**Readings:**

Proverbs 8:1,22-31  
John 1:1-14

**Collect for Sexagesima Sunday**

**O LORD** God, who seest that we put not our trust in any thing that we do;  
Mercifully grant that by thy power we may be defended against all adversity;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**‘Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on the Cross’  
performed by the London Haydn Quartet**

**Tuesday 26th March 2024, 7pm**

One of the world’s leading period instrument string quartets, The London Haydn Quartet was born out of a passion for Haydn. They have received invitations to many of the world's most important concert series and venues, including the Wigmore Hall, Carnegie Hall and Sydney Opera House. Their complete series of recordings of Haydn’s quartets on the Hyperion label have met with international critical acclaim.

Haydn's ‘Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on the Cross’ is one of his most enduring works. Originally an orchestral work commissioned for Good Friday, this popular transcription for string quartet was made by Haydn himself. Following the recent release of the London Haydn Quartet's recording of the work, the Tower of London presents them live in concert at the Chapel Royal of St. Peter ad Vincula.

**Tickets available at -** [https://tickets.hrp.org.uk/hrp\\_b2c/palace.html?eventcode=TLCHAP](https://tickets.hrp.org.uk/hrp_b2c/palace.html?eventcode=TLCHAP)



## **Poem of the Week**

At this gloomy time of year, perhaps we need a little humor (sic) to relieve the seemingly unrelenting flow of grim news. Some of us cannot do better than turn to Ogden Nash, that great American wordsmith who produced so much wonderful light verse. His gently wry use of inventive rhyme is apparent in one of my personal favourites:

### ***The Perfect Husband***

He tells you when you've got on  
too much lipstick  
And helps you with your girdle  
when your hips stick.

Frederic Ogden Nash (1902 – 71) was an American poet well known for his light verse, of which he wrote over 500 pieces. With his unconventional rhyming schemes, he was declared by *The New York Times* to be the country's best-known producer of humorous poetry. When Nash was not writing poems, he made guest appearances on comedy and radio shows, toured the United States and the United Kingdom and gave lectures at colleges and universities. He said, 'I think in terms of rhyme, and have since I was six years old.' There have been many published collections of his verse. In 1941 there was war in Europe. The United States, although not yet a party to the conflict, keenly observed what was happening. Annual occasions such as Valentine's Day still came around, in spite of the darkening international scene. It is against that background that Ogden Nash produced this poem, which you might think about in a week or so when this year Valentine's Day coincides, unusually, with Ash Wednesday. Nash plays with or subverts the poetic tradition of striving to express the depth of love for the beloved – think of, *How do I love thee? Let me count the ways* by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, for example – and he deliberately uses ridiculous, inappropriate and negative comparisons. Even so, it is still a love poem.

### **'To My Valentine' by Ogden Nash (1941)**

More than a catbird hates a cat,  
Or a criminal hates a clue,  
Or the Axis hates the United States,  
That's how much I love you.

I love you more than a duck can swim,  
And more than a grapefruit squirts,  
I love you more than gin rummy's a bore,  
And more than a toothache hurts.

As a shipwrecked sailor hates the sea,  
Or a juggler hates a shove,  
As a hostess detests unexpected guests,  
That's how much you I love.

I love you more than a wasp can sting,  
And more than the subway jerks,  
I love you as much as a beggar needs a crutch,  
And more than a hangnail irks.

I swear to you by the stars above,  
And below, if such there be,  
As the High Court loathes perjurious oaths,  
That's how you're loved by me.

**(Frederic) Ogden Nash (1902 – 71)**

## **Jigsaw**

Tower Bridge at night

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=352dddc85daa>



## **Bluebells**

Photo from Rev. Cortland Fransella



## **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, Jeff, Margaret, Toby and Kofi.

## **RIP**

Clive Woodcraft

## **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, Cortland.



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