



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

Dear friends,

Today is Ash Wednesday, Valentine's Day, and tonight the Yeoman Warders hold their Annual Dinner. All three occasions remind me of different things.

**Ash Wednesday** denotes the start of Lent, forty days (not including Sundays) representing the forty days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness. This forty-day period for Christians is a time for reflection, fasting and preparation for the Resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday. **Valentine's Day** reminds us of the early Christian martyrs, such as Valentine, who, out of their love for Christ, were prepared to die for the love they showed to their neighbour. **The Yeoman Warders' Dinner** is an annual event during which the Yeoman Warders remember those who have gone before them, invite friends and VIPs to join them, and celebrate together over a festive dinner. What a day of contrasts today is, but one which reminds us all of the rich colour and character each day can bring.

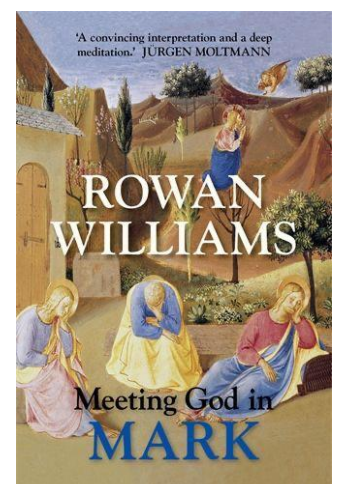
This week, prayers have been said and flowers left to remember **Lady Jane Grey**, the 'Nine Days Queen' who died, aged 17, on February 12<sup>th</sup> 1554. On February 13<sup>th</sup>, flowers were also left and prayers said for **Queen Catherine Howard** who died, also by execution, on the same date in 1542.



I would like to suggest a book for your reading during Lent. It is **Meeting God in Mark, by Rowan Williams**. In this book Rowan Williams explores the essential meaning and purpose of St Mark's Gospel. The book is a good read for all Christians at all levels and, in typical Rowan Williams fashion, asks us to think again and to see things in a fresh light. The book costs £10 and can be bought online and is also available on Kindle. Why not try it?

Please think about joining us for one of our four **Lent Lunches** and meet our preachers. Let Debbie know if you would like to come. All our preachers in Lent are exploring women who have influenced Christian thinking and made a difference to the church.

With my best wishes to you all, Roger.



**Sunday Service Details 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
The First Sunday in Lent**

**0915** Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula  
**1100** Choral Matins; the Preacher will be The Reverend Katherine Hedderly,  
Vicar of All Hallows by the Tower, and to be Archdeacon of Charing Cross from April.

**Psalm 25:** 1-9.

**Readings** Genesis 9: 8-17.  
Mark 1: 9-15.

**Collect for The First Sunday in Lent**

**O Lord**, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights; Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. **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

The play *King Lear* is a good play to reflect upon as we begin Lent. Whether Shakespeare was a Catholic, Protestant or simply agnostic is the subject of endless argument. However, one thing is certain: he knew his Bible. There are 1,350 references to the Bible in his complete works. The writer Ulrich Simon wrote: *'It is enough to say firmly that Shakespeare writes and produces tragedies in a Christian past and present. Baptised, married and buried in the Church of England, he lives and speaks within the resonance of the Bishop's Bible and the Prayer Book'*.

In this great play Lear wants to hand over his kingdom to his daughters, but is desperate for their love and pushes them to say how much they love him. Goneril and Regan say what they know he wants to hear, but Cordelia responds sincerely and truthfully that she would love her husband first and then her father. As a result, Lear rejects her. After a series of tragedies, Lear finds himself alone with his Fool on the heath, and reflects upon his misuse of power.

I quote this reflection and as we begin Lent, perhaps we can also ponder the use and misuse we ourselves may have made of power.

### **King Lear (Act III, Scene IV, starting at line 27)**

**Lear** Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease  
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder  
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.

**To the Fool** In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,  
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

**Fool exits** Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,  
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,  
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,  
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you  
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en  
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;  
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,  
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,  
And show the heavens more just.

**William Shakespeare 1564-1616**



### **Easter Flowers**

As in previous years, we are collecting money for Easter Flowers.

If you would like to donate towards the flowers, please bring either cash or a cheque with you on Sunday, or you can send a cheque to me at the address at the end of the newsletter.

Flowers are often given in memory of people who have died, and these names will be remembered at Easter.

Thank you.

## Spring Daffodils by the Tower of London



## Jigsaw

A suitably floral Valentine's Day from Hampton Court Palace's gardens.

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=096061769ca9>



## **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, John Pryme and Bill Hanbury.

## **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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