



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

Dear friends,

Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Every time we say Morning Prayer, we use the Collect for Peace:

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Praying for peace must lead us to reflect on the reality of war. The BBC [Bitesize](#) website provides a concise guide to the Christian concept of the 'just war', from which I have taken the following edited account. A *Just War* is one which is declared for right and noble reasons and fought in a certain way. It is not a war that is 'good' as such – it is a war that Christians feel to be necessary or 'just' in the circumstances, when all other solutions have been tried and have failed. It is a necessary evil and a last resort. The 'Just War theory' was first developed by St Thomas Aquinas, who set out conditions by which to judge whether or not a war should be waged, and how it should be waged.

Aquinas's conditions for a Just War:

- The war must have a just cause - eg against invasion, or for self-defence - and not to acquire wealth or power.
- The war must be declared and controlled by a proper authority, eg the state or ruler.
- The war must be fought to promote good or avoid evil, with the aim of restoring peace and justice after the war is over.

Later conditions developed by other Christians:

- The war must be a last resort when all peaceful solutions have been tried and failed, eg negotiation.
- The war should be fought with 'proportionality', with just enough force to achieve victory and only against legitimate targets, ie civilians should be protected.
- The good which is achieved by the war must be greater than the evil which led to the war.

The Just War theory, with some amendments, is still used by Christians and others today as a guide to whether or not a war can be justified and how it should be conducted. We hear echoes of this Christian theory – notably the concept of proportionality – in coverage of current conflicts. Discussion of right and wrong in war is never straightforward and seldom conclusive, but these principles of a 'just war' may at least help us as Christians to clarify the issues. There may be no easy answers, but they may help us to ask the right questions.

All good wishes,

Cortland.

Service Details for Sunday 28th April 2024
The Fourth Sunday After Easter

0915 Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula
1100 Sung Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula

Readings James 1: 17-21 and John 16: 5-15.

Collect for The Fourth Sunday after Easter

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men;
Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest,
and desire that which thou dost promise;
that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world,
our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Poem of the Week

Scott Clifford Cairns (b. 1954) is an American poet, memoirist, librettist and essayist. Christian spirituality plays an integral role in his writing. He is the author of eleven collections of poetry, one collection of translations of Christian mystics, one spiritual memoir (now translated into Greek and Romanian) and a book-length essay on suffering (now translated into Greek). He co-edited *The Sacred Place* with Scott Olsen, an anthology of poetry, fiction and nonfiction, which won the inaugural National Outdoor Book Award (Outdoor Literature category) in 1997. He wrote the libretto for *The Martyrdom of Saint Polycarp*, an oratorio composed by JAC Redford, and the libretto for *A Melancholy Beauty*, an oratorio composed by Georgi Andreev. Cairns's poems have appeared in journals including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Paris Review*, *The New Republic*, *Image*, and *Poetry*, and have been anthologized in *Upholding Mystery* (Oxford University Press, 1996), *Best Spiritual Writing* (Harper Collins, 1998 and 2000), and *Best American Spiritual Writing* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004, 2005, and 2006).

This week's poem is taken from his book *Idiot Psalms* (2014), in which he offers new versions of the psalms. Greek words and literature are evidently important to Cairns, and this may explain the otherwise surprising title of this collection. The word 'idiot', which in modern use means a stupid or foolish person, had a different meaning for ancient Greeks and did not carry the harshly derogatory or insulting sense that it does today. Instead, it referred to someone who was a private citizen or a person who did not actively participate in public life or politics. Given the importance which the ancient Greeks attached to participation in democracy (at least, as they defined it), those who did not do so were often viewed as deficient in some regard. As I read it, Cairns deliberately uses the word in that original sense, to suggest someone (like the Psalmist?) who observes what is going on in the world but, feeling disengaged and impotent to influence it, looks to God to make sense of life and to offer solace. If so, it may resonate with us when we feel helpless in the face of world events. Interestingly, whereas six of the eight verses in the original describe aspects of worldly evil as the psalmist observes it, Cairns reverses the emphasis by condensing all the ills of the world into the one word 'obscurity' (darkness) in the final line but devotes most of the poem to a reflection on the nature of our relationship with God. I wonder how this will strike you.

First, here is a modern translation of Psalm 12 (New Revised Standard Version):

Psalm 12 – A Plea for Help in Evil Times

Help, O Lord, for there is no longer anyone who is godly;
the faithful have disappeared from humankind.
They utter lies to each other;
with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.
May the Lord cut off all flattering lips,
the tongue that makes great boasts,
those who say, “With our tongues we will prevail;
our lips are our own—who is our master?”
“Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan,
I will now rise up,” says the Lord;
“I will place them in the safety for which they long.”
The promises of the Lord are promises that are pure,
silver refined in a furnace on the ground,
purified seven times.
You, O Lord, will protect us;
you will guard us from this generation forever.
On every side the wicked prowl,
as vileness is exalted among humankind.

Here is Scott Cairns’s poem from his volume *Idiot Psalms*:

Psalm 12 - A psalm of Isaak, amid uncommon darkness

O Being both far distant and most near,
O Lover embracing all unlovable, O Tender
Tether binding us together, and binding, yea
and tenderly, Your Person to ourselves,
Being both beyond our ken, and kindred, One
whose dire energies invest such clay as ours
with patent animation, O Secret One secreting
life anew into our every tissue moribund,
afresh unto our stale and stalling craft,
grant in this obscurity a little light.

Scott Cairns, b.1954

The London Hygiene Bank



The chapel continues to support this project, together with nearly all the churches in the centre of London. Lack of basic toiletries can be shaming and humiliating and result in social isolation.

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 currently needed, as well as how to donate - <https://thehygienebank.com> .

Chapel Spring Concert, 7pm, Wednesday 15th May 2024 (£30)
Classical Connections: Pastoral Mass (Mozart) and Nelson Mass (Haydn)

Tickets are available to buy at:

<https://www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london/whats-on/chapel-royal-spring-concert/#gs.6y1s6m>

Discover music by the giants of the classical era: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Franz Joseph Haydn.

The programme offers two highly contrasting Mass settings.

Mozart's Missa Pastorale (Pastoral Mass), written in 1770, was very popular in his own lifetime. Although composed when he was a teenager, the exuberance, joy and humour that characterised his later Mass settings was already clearly evident. Haydn's (so called) Nelson Mass could not be more different. Composed in 1798, the original title, Missa in Angustiis - Mass in time of Distress, is a relatable performance relevant to the present day.



Jigsaw

An aerial view of the Tower: <https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=055906bf9173>



Tracy's Garden – Lilac



Prayers

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

Ann, Ros, Mark, Barbara, Dan, Ian, Florence and Kofi.

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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