

## **‘THIS TOO SHALL PASS’**

### ***Not the parish pew sheet***

*A miscellany of matter serious and not so serious*

Issue number 29: Trinity XVIII

*Our faith teaches us that death is not the end, but sometimes the poets can put it better; here is William Blake on the subject:*

The door of death is made of gold,  
That mortal eyes cannot behold;  
But, when the mortal eyes are closed,  
And cold and pale the limbs reposed,  
The soul awakes; and, wondering, sees  
In her mild hand the golden keys.

*Denise Inge, in Wanting Like a God, a study of the works of Thomas Traherne, reminds us of our duty to spread the love we receive from God:*

Being vessels of the love we have received, we may and must give joy and feel joy in knowing that we occasion joy in others. In a circle that Traherne calls ‘revolution’ and ‘reciprocation’, the human being may enjoy his or her emanations of love as God does, communicating something of the divine goodness he or she has received and so participating in circulation and communication not only as recipient/returner but also as giver unto others – to angels and humans and all creatures. This brings us finally to the idea of communion – that region where the circles of communication and circulation overlap so that the giver and recipient enjoy and give, delight and desire in mutual benefit and bliss.

*We have all heard of Murphy’s Law, but the following come from a compilation called Ms Murphy’s Law (subtitle: If anything can go wrong it will – and when it does it will be the woman who gets the blame!):*

Mrs Brown’s Dictum

*Any mother with only two arms is handicapped.*

Pam Brown’s Four Basic Cat Laws

- 1 *If you need anything, a cat is sitting on it.*
- 2 *A cat in the house is a cat in the bed.*
- 3 *Cats walk very slowly in front of people carrying hot dishes.*
- 4 *People who say ‘Leave it long enough and he’ll eat it’ haven’t got a cat.*

*Some uncompromising words from Pope Francis in Fratelli Tutti, his latest encyclical:*

If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbour was born in my country or elsewhere.

*And a provocative observation by the American writer Alice Duer Miller (1874–1942):*

We oppose votes for men . . . because men are too emotional to vote. Their conduct at baseball games and political conventions shows this, while their innate tendency to appeal to force renders them particularly unfit for the task of government.

*A couple of oddities from local newspapers reported by Cyril Fletcher in his collection of that name:*

No trains will run between Redhill and Tonbridge this Sunday and delays of up to 30 minutes can be expected.

Gentleman, 43, interested in gnomes, open cast treacle mining and blotting paper, seeks lady with totally dissimilar interests.

*And a report from the Stamford Mercury of October 1820 reveals that even then some things were not cricket:*

We have received from Newark some censorious remarks on the account given last week of the cricket-match between the Grantham and Newark clubs. We are sorry to observe the disputes to which these matches give rise, and we deem it friendly to decline publishing the ill-natured things that may be said on either side.

*A prayer of Lancelot Andrewes, from his Preces Privatae of 1675, which is still a model today:*

Grant me to love again them that love me,  
    albeit unknown to me,  
and bring them into thy heavenly kingdom,  
    even as myself:  
and grant me to shew them the mercy of God  
    in my prayers:  
that with them for whom I have prayed,  
    or in any sort am bound to pray,  
    and with all the people of God,  
an entrance may be granted me into thy kingdom  
    there to appear in righteousness,  
    there to be satisfied with glory.

*And finally, I hope that, whatever this Christmas brings, you escape the fate implied in this sentence from a child's essay on the subject: On Christmas Day we had goose for dinner and visitors for tea.*

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## **Readings**

*For this Sunday (Trinity XVIII) Isaiah 25: 1–9; Philippians 4: 1–9; Matthew 22: 1–14*

*Psalm 23*

*For next Sunday (St Luke) Isaiah 35: 3–6 or Acts 16: 6–12; II Timothy 4: 5–17; Luke 10: 1–9*

*Psalm 147: 1–7*

Lord, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee the only God; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

*Collect for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity*