

# St Mary's Church Newsletter

## October 2018



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# FaithWorks 18 - A Week of Shared Mission

By Canon Simon Butler | October 2018

## Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October

This month we have a special and rare opportunity to allow God to help our faith grow. We are joining in a week of Shared Mission with our friends from Sacred Heart Church in special events which will give us and others a chance to deepen our trust in the Lord. The mission week is being led by Father Roy Shelley, a Salesian Catholic Priest from Carmel, California and there's a special invitation to an evening event each day from Monday to Friday. Each night, there is a particular invitation extended to those who work in particular ministries, when Fr. Roy will speak about how our particular role can help us and others come closer to God.

So...

if you are a **Eucharistic Minister** or would like to come closer to God in **Holy Communion...**

**come along to *We are a Eucharistic People* on Monday 8th October at 7 for 7.30pm**

**at Sacred Heart**

If you **Read the Lesson or Lead Prayers** or would like to come closer to God through **Scripture...**

**Come along to *We are a People Led by the Word* on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October (same time)**

**At Sacred Heart**

If you are a **Bellringer, Choir Member, Welcomer, Coffee Server** or would like to come closer to God through **Worship...**

**Come along to *We are a People of Worship, a Service in the Taize Style* on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October (same time) at St Mary's**

If you are a **PCC Member, Junior Church Leader, or Leader of Worship** our would like to know how to come closer to God in **Leadership...**

**Come along to *We are a People Who Lead* on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October (same time)**

**At Sacred Heart**

If you want to find out more about how God is drawing different Christians together in shared ministry and mission across different traditions

**Come along to *We are in This Together: Bishops in Conversation on Friday 12th October (same time) At Sacred Heart***

Finally, to celebrate the whole week, and to join in celebration of 125 years of ministry, come and join in an **Ecumenical Choral Evensong at St Mary's on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October at 6pm**. The preacher will be Fr. Shelly and the blessing will be given by **Father Angel Fernandez Artime**, Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco from Argentina (the global leader of 15,000 Salesian Priests, Bishops and Lay Brothers and Sisters).

I hope you will come along to a special week of events as we seek to work together for the glory and mission of God in Battersea.

Canon Simon Butler

## **A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of Peter Blumer**

By Canon Simon Butler | October 2018

According to a survey published yesterday, English people still have a taboo about death. Eighteen million Britons are uncomfortable talking about death the survey reports, although unsurprisingly the older you get, the more you think about it. Most of us are prompted to think about our own mortality when, as we do today with Peter, we experience the death of a loved one.

Sudden death is still very common, although I know that today Helen is particularly grateful for the additional years she had with Peter following his heart problems of the past. Perhaps in the past dying suddenly and unprepared was thought of as the least ideal way of dying, with no time to prepare or make your peace with God; today, it's the slow decline and death that most people fear. We can be grateful that Peter has been spared that experience.

But what for us, who remain? How do we move on when a loved one dies suddenly? What might we wish to have said to Peter had we had the chance? You know, those of us who are English are reminded on these occasions of the importance of never letting things go unsaid; sometimes the chance to say them is taken from us by the cruel hand of fate. The old Latin phrase *carpe diem* is a salutary one on occasions like this.

One of the things that struck me about Peter was the matter-of-fact way he approached matters. He was, as I look back on my knowledge of him, not an easy man to get to know. There was that outer politeness and charm that British schoolboys of previous generations have drummed into them, but getting to know someone, getting behind that, isn't always easy. But, with Peter, despite the privacy of his nature, I saw his

passion for life emerge when he was talking about music, a shared love. His eyes would light up and his enthusiasm would be palpable to see. As we've heard from Chris, that warmth, love and devotion were very much on show when Peter was with his family, but I for one am glad that I also saw it in his friendships with others and in this place as well.

So let me offer you a musical story as a meditation for this occasion.

One night the great jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis was playing a gig at a club in New York. He was playing the soulful ballad "I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance With You." At the song's most heart-rending point, a mobile went off in the audience, fully wrecking the moment. This unwelcome interruption should have killed the mood and ruined the moment. After all, giants of the music world like Marsalis shouldn't have to put up with interruptions. You hardly could blame him if he had walked off the stage.

After a few seconds, however, Marsalis did something amazing. Without missing a beat, he picked up on the ringtone tune and incorporated it into the song he was playing. He performed variations on it - blending it with what he'd planned to play - and then drew the whole ballad back to the original theme. The stunning result brought the house down. Wynton Marsalis took a rude interruption and changed it into a moment of glory. He didn't allow an unexpected shock to stun or silence him. Instead, he turned this setback into a comeback.

That's what good musicians do.

We gather today because life has been interrupted. The discordant, shrill ring of death has seemingly overcome the music and melody of life. Phones rang around the country this past week when Helen had to call so many of you with the news. Hearing and experiencing the ring of death makes us angry and frustrated. We want to know who's responsible for this interruption. Death makes us wonder whether we'll ever have a "ghost of a chance" of understanding, of getting back in tune, of feeling the music once again.

But today we need to recognise that God is standing at the microphone - the God who improvises a different tune, a variation on a theme. We gather today because we recognise that somehow God, the master Musician, is able to take the ring of death and discord and turn it into life. That's really what resurrection is about. Jesus walks out of the tomb, showing us that even death doesn't stop the music. The song goes on, perhaps a bit differently, more improvised, more subtly beautiful, but it goes on.

The death of someone close to us can force us to give up, or it can be an opportunity for improvisation - to find new ways of celebrating life amid tragedy. When Paul encourages the Thessalonians with the words of hope of our first reading, encouragement includes going on making the music of life. That's a powerful image. No matter how hurtful, how tragic, how unfair or how out of tune we might feel, God can work variations on the theme of life within us and turn it into something beautiful.

God's direction for us today is to follow his lead, to improvise, to start something new.

Music never dies. And because of God's promise of the Resurrection, despite the loss of Peter with all his kindness, care, generosity and fun, neither does he and neither do the people he cared about. No tragic ring of the phone can interrupt that.

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening into the house and gate of heaven, to enter into that gate and dwell in that house, where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling,

but one equal light; no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession; no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity: in the habitations of thy majesty and glory, world without end. Amen.

## Congratulations Grace and Aaron

By Newsletter Admin | October 2018



# Summer in the Square

By Newsletter Admin | October 2018

Photos from Summer in the Square today. About [1,000 people](#) came through over the day.



*collage of Summer in the Square*

## What people have said about St. Mary's

By David Britten | October 2018

Some 'soundbites' from emails rec'd after recent weddings:

Please convey our sincere thanks to Canon Simon Butler, the choir, organist and everyone involved in such a perfect ceremony with the right balance of gravitas and nerve calming informality! We are all most grateful.

*Wedding of Lucinda and James*

Now that that we've all had a chance to draw breath after the wonderful occasion of Jessie and

Jack's wedding last weekend, Alasdair and I want to thank you once again for the extraordinarily beautiful service you conducted for them.

*Wedding of Jessica and Jack*

# In God We Trust

By Gladys Ikeme | October 2018

In Life's Storm, We Need to Trust

In the midst of life's storm, we must trust the presence and the power of God.

The whole world, it seems to me, is being steamed. I use the word 'steamed' because lots of events are happening which are very uncomfortable. People are grieving, families worldwide have lost loved ones, and some have been made redundant through no fault of their own. Some areas of the world are facing economic hardship and citizens are unable to cope with life's pressures. Corruption worldwide is ripe with funds finding their way into the hands of very few. For some people, relations have failed them. Wars are being waged in many countries as some fight to acquire territories and positions. The list is long.

I start my day by turning on the radio to know what is going on. I want to know everything from the weather forecast to transportation issues and who is punching whom. After my exercises and prayers, I lie in bed, trying to take life easy these days. I'm not in a rush nowadays! Sometimes, the news is not palatable and I wonder, 'What's next? Where do we go? To where can we run?' I suspect most of us feel like this sometimes. Fears often hurt many of us daily.

At all times we have to trust the presence and the power of Jesus, and especially in the midst of life's storms. Recognising the inevitability of trials, Jesus said, "In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33). Our Saviour has spoken and we must listen.

Remember Psalm 34:1 'I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.' Also in the words of Helen H. Lemmel, we hear in the familiar hymn:

'Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.'

And finally, in the words of Joe Stowell we hear, 'We can rest peacefully in the knowledge that God is with us.'

Remembering all this, our prayer should be: 'Lord, in our weak and fearful moments, remind us that your love for us guarantees your presence with us and your power against our fears. Teach us to trust in you and to remember that whatever we are going through, at the end of the tunnel there's your light.'

May God bless you all!

Gladys Ikeme

(Child of God)

# Pan African Book Foundation - come and celebrate Africa

By Asi Munsi | October 2018



**SATURDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2018**  
**12PM - 5:00PM @ THE BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE**  
**LAVENDER HILL, LONDON, SW11 5TN**  
PLEASE GET IN TOUCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER YOUR HELP ON THE DAY

**JOIN THE PAN AFRICAN BOOK FOUNDATION**  
**WWW.PABF.ORG.UK**  
FOR OUR 6TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF AFRICA 2018

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KNOWLEDGE IS ENLIGHTENMENT • ELMU INI INI  
LE SAVOIR SOURCE DELUMIER • KNOWLEDGE IS ENLIGHTENMENT • ELMU INI INI

Join Asi Munisi and friends at the Pan African Book Foundations 6th annual Celebration of Africa 2018. With live performances from the UK Ghana Methodist Fellowship Choir, the Imani Congregation Swahili Children's Choir and more. Enjoy African delicious Cuisine from Deaba's, learn how to wrap your head, get your nails done and your face painted, all ages are welcome, fun for all the family.