



THE LOOP

The Monthly Newsletter for the Parish of Isle of Dogs

November 2009

A SEASON OF REMEMBRANCE (AND GLORY)

IS IT BY ACCIDENT THAT THE ARMIES THAT FACED EACH OTHER ACROSS THE MUD OF FLANDERS CHOSE TO END THEIR FOLLY IN NOVEMBER 1918? NOVEMBER IS A MONTH THAT SEEMS DESIGNED FOR REMEMBRANCE.

EACH TURNING AND FALLING LEAF SPEAKS TO US OF LIFE THAT HAS FLOURISHED AND NOW IS PAST; ONLY THE MEMORY LINGERS ON. WE BEGIN THE MONTH WITH THE FEASTS OF ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS. IT'S WONDERFUL TO CELEBRATE THE SMALL VICTORIES OF THE SAINTS BUT IT IS EVEN MORE POIGNANT TO MARK THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WE HAVE KNOWN, AND KNOWN WELL, AND CELEBRATE HOW THEY HAVE INFLUENCED US.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY IS NOT JUST TO MARK THE 1918 ARMISTICE — THE MINUTE SILENCE HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO TWO MINUTES TO REMEMBER VICTIMS OF CONFLICT IN BOTH WORLD WARS AND COUNTLESS OTHER CONFLICTS, SOME CONTINUING. WE ALL HAVE CONNECTIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE MISSING FROM OUR LIVES BECAUSE OF THE HORRORS AND FUTILITY OF WAR.

IF NOVEMBER BEGAN WITH QUIET MEDITATION ON THE LIVES OF THOSE WHOM WE LOVE BUT SEE NO LONGER, IT ENDS WITH A GREAT WHOOP OF PRAISE AS WE CELEBRATE THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST. FOR OUR PARISH, THE CELEBRATION IS EVEN MORE APPARENT BECAUSE IT IS OUR PATRONAL FESTIVAL.

REMEMBRANCE AND GLORY BELONG TOGETHER BECAUSE WE ARE CLAIMING A CENTRAL TRUTH OF OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH THAT DEATH IS NOT THE END. CHRIST HAS CONQUERED, AND RULES EVEN OVER SOMETHING AS UNIVERSAL AND FUNDAMENTAL AS DEATH. (REVELATION 21: 4)

Advent 2009

It will not be long until we enter the season of Advent and mark the beginning of the Church's year. The challenge is always to make something of Advent before we settle into preparation for Christmas. This year we have some church events planned that are quite distinct and different in focus from the run up to Christmas. On Sunday 29th November (Advent Sunday) there will be a special Advent Service of music and readings at 6.30pm at Christ Church. Then on Wednesday 2nd December the parish is keeping a day of fasting, prayer and reconciliation beginning at 6.00am with Matins, ending with the Healing Mass at 7.15pm, and between those times Prayers for the Peace of the World at 12noon and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 5.00pm. In the December Newsletter you'll find articles about fasting, reconciliation and exposition and why we do them. We have chosen to use these ways of prayer because Advent is a time of expectation (we hear John the Baptist's insistent cry "Prepare the way of the Lord"). We prepare for the coming of Jesus as a human being and we also prepare for him coming as a divine saviour and judge. While there is great joy in our preparations, still we need to put away the actions and thoughts that distance us from God and prevent us from responding with hope and

Question Time?

I expect that many of you like me watched Nick Griffin of the BNP on Question Time on 22nd October. I thought that the programme exposed the falsehoods and game-playing of the BNP. Many of you will remember the effort that was made a few years ago by the Christian community on the Isle of Dogs to oust the BNP councillor. At that point our community became sensitised to the real dangers hidden behind the BNP's public face. As we approach a significant election it is worth our while thinking again about where the Parish stands in regard to racism.

The Churches, and the Church of England in particular, are often used as a sort of guarantee of traditional values. While many of those traditional values are wholesome, some are not. Racism, however cloaked, is an attitude we should all challenge wherever we encounter it. It is a strength of our two churches that they are truly international in character – if anything our congregation is becoming more diverse week by week. The richness that we experience inside the Christian community, we also celebrate in relation to the Bangladeshi and Somali communities among others. In November we are taking part in the national Interfaith Week and we have invited representatives from the many ethnic groups on the Island to an Open Evening at Christ Church on the 17th November. The intention is to show those communities how Christians pray and live and what Christians believe in.

From April onwards we have money from the Department of Communities and Local Government a more thorough-going interfaith project which will explore areas of common concern and action.

The Angola, London and Mozambique Association (ALMA)

On 12 July 1998 a Covenant was signed between the Dioceses of London, Mozambique and Angola to form the Angola, London and Mozambique Association.

The formation of a link was the result of relationships formed over many years.

The intention is that the relationship between the diocesan partners should be a deep relationship, allowing each to learn from the other.



ALMA provides:

- ALMA Reports, discussion papers and talks
- Prayer Requests
- Background information on Mozambique and Angola

The work of the ALMA link in London is supervised by the ALMA Steering Group. Members of the Group come from across the Diocese. Each parish is encouraged to have a representative who acts as a link with ALMA. We haven't had one for some time but Julie Polowitzter has agreed to do this work for us. (See message below)

For further information, visit the [ALMA website](#).

Bishop Richard (with the hat!) laying a foundation stone

Greetings! My name is Julie Polowitzter. I have recently become a member of Christ Church and feel blessed to now be a part of such a cohesive community. I am pleased to announce that Father Tom has asked me to be the Parish Representative for the Angola London Mozambique Association (ALMA) and I have most willingly accepted. Africa and its people as a whole have always been a profound passion of mine, so I am truly grateful for this opportunity. ALMA is involved in several projects throughout Angola and Mozambique, including: literacy projects, building schools and churches, providing mosquito nets, provision of health education regarding HIV/AIDS, and supplying water to villages. As an ALMA representative I will be able to keep the parish informed and involved with these projects, with regard to how we can help and how they are progressing, and also have ALMA be included in our intercessions and worship when possible. If anyone would like further information about this organization, please don't hesitate to ask me or you can go to www.almalink.org.

Baptisms in October: Tori Barbara Keeleigh Cooper
 Mylie Holly Mary Driscoll
 Ciara May Driscoll
 Ariane Claudia Farey

“Fight valiantly under the banner of Christ against sin, the world and the devil and continue Christ’s faithful soldier and servant to the end of your lives”

Weddings in October: James Columbo Ong and Qiao Li

“God is love, and those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them”

Deaths in October: Marian Gladys Blackburn
 Lucy Clifford
 Doreen Isitt

“Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them”

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St Mildred’s House

If you have walked through Castaglia Square over the last few weeks you may have wondered what was happening at St Mildred’s House. St Mildred’s House has been for many years the home of our curates and our youth workers and has been a happy place for them. Most recently, of course, it has also been the home of the Walkers (and therefore Isobel’s first home).

Since the Walkers left last September we have been working hard to upgrade the house and modernise its wiring. In the course of the work we discovered that we needed to remove some asbestos cladding in the roof space and that work was done this summer. Both flats are now vacant and we plan to put them on the rental market while we have no curate or youth worker, so that they can be generating income for the parish. Over the last week the flats have been cleared of any remaining rubbish and have been painted and spruced up. The Albany Estate Agents across the road are dealing with the management of the flats. If you know of anyone who would like to rent a large flat (and both flats are a decent size) then please do see the staff at Albany.

Praying for people

In Christ Church and St Luke’s there are green forms for you to fill in if you wish to have a prayer said for yourself or someone else

We are planning to publish The Loop every first Sunday of the month along with the Parish diary which also comes out at that time