

Cathedral in Touch

A Newsletter for our Community

Trinity 18 | Sunday 11 October 2020



Leicester Cathedral
A beating heart for City and County

Welcome

This week we marked 100 days of lockdown in the City. It seems like forever and life is far from normal. For example, between 11 am and 3pm on Thursday we only welcomed 26 people into the building. As much as I enjoy the peace, it would be lovely to see more signs of socially distanced life going on. We then leap from that to the extremes of groups of people largely ignoring the advice.

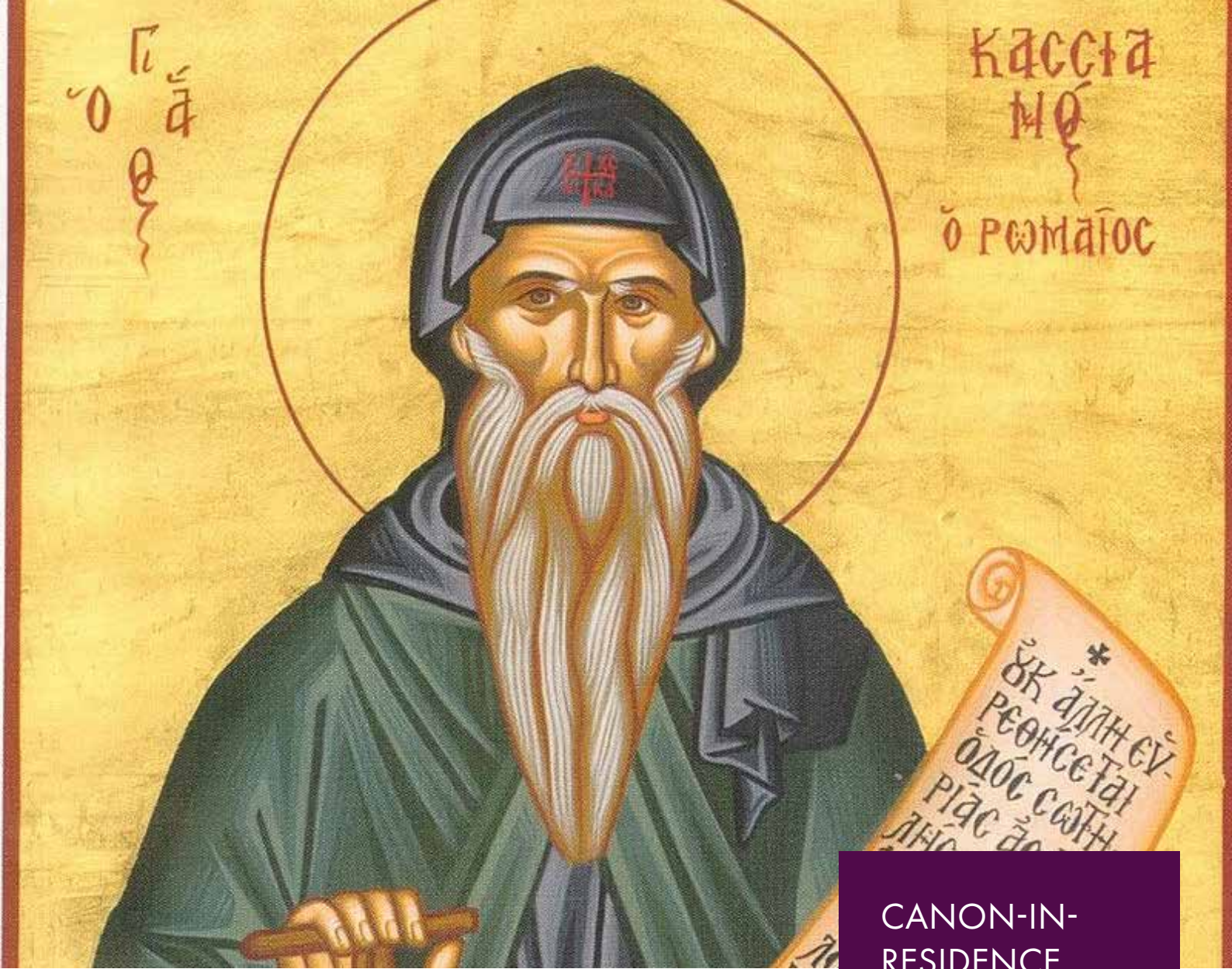
I was surprised to discover an article in a national newspaper this week drawing our attention to the writings of John Cassian which I read as a theology student. He was born on the borders of Romania and Bulgaria in 360. He founded a monastery near Marseilles influenced by ascetic Christians from Egypt. His writings are mainly about prayer and the struggles of the Christian life.

He vividly writes about a phenomenon he calls '*acedia*'. Sometimes this is badly translated as 'sloth'. He describes it as 'the midday demon' mentioned in Psalm 91 and it is more akin to waves of despair but not just 'usual despair'. It relates to an old English word no longer in use which Chaucer uses – *Accidie*. It literally means without care, concern or even grief. It is more than just feeling a bit fed up but it has the sense of suddenly being gripped by something. It has a strange mix of listlessness, the inability to be creative or to concentrate, and feeling anxious – but not especially about particular things but just generally anxious. Cassian noted that monks were particularly prone to this.

It is interesting that we are discovering afresh vocabulary that we had lost. However, it is also interesting to discover that we don't necessarily need to invent new words but rather we discover afresh the experience of our forebears. However, words do not just describe things or attempt to do so. They also offer meanings because they try to achieve a degree of order when everything feels chaotic. We have new groups of feelings which need describing but also we need to have a go at understanding them.

Psalm 91 speaks of not being afraid of the terror by night, nor the arrow of the day. Verse 6 says '*of the pestilence that stalks in darkness nor of the sickness that destroys at noonday*'. The Psalm goes on to speak of the steadfastness of God – '*I am with them in trouble, I will deliver them*'. We might say that we are more aware of the 'demons' and indeed are identifying a few we had forgotten about but so too abounding are the gifts of God and the blessings of life.

The Very Revd David Monteith
Dean of Leicester



CANON-IN-RESIDENCE

ONE OF the clergy always holds this phone. Do feel able to contact us if you need but please be aware we cannot receive texts.

07399 523 330

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News from Leicester Cathedral

Keep up to date with news from your Cathedral. If you have anything you would like included in this newsletter, or any comments on it's layout or content, please get in contact with us.

Safeguarding

Readers will, no doubt, have noted that the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) published its report on the Anglican Church in England and Wales this week. Details of this, and the Church of England's response may be found [here](#).

If this has raised any issues for you personally, please do contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or one of the Cathedral clergy.

We at the Cathedral have an ongoing safeguarding action plan, and our team will certainly study this report to enable us to identify any further responses and actions we may need to make.

easyfundraising

What's the connection between my dad's new shirt and Leicester Cathedral? Well it's not that it is to be a new flag for the rooftop flag pole, nor part of a new liturgical outfit. The connection is money! I used the easyfundraising app to go to the Marks and Spencer's website, to order the shirt, to pay at the checkout – and Marks and Spencer's gave a percentage of what I'd spent to Leicester Cathedral.

It really is very easy and whilst we may not be able to complete the reordering project with the donation from my dad's shirt, little amounts from lots of people soon add up.

It didn't cost me anything

to download the easyfundraising app and it didn't cost me any extra to enable M&S to make the donation. And you can shop at thousands of different websites for your necessities as well as little extras – not just clothes either.

If you need help setting this up then I'm sure that can be arranged at a social distance. If you never shop online, then tell your family or friends who do to use this app.

Enjoy shopping!

Rachel Radford

Cathedral Opening Times

The Cathedral is open from Wed to Sun for the following times: 11 am-3pm on Wed-Sat; and 12pm-3pm on Sunday.



The Guild of St Martin Annual Dinner 2020

Wednesday 4 November 2020

A Leicester Cathedral Online Event

with guest speaker
The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani
'Belonging and Becoming'

Tickets
£10 from Claire Recordon

WAYS YOU CAN HELP LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

ONLINE GIVING

<http://easydonate.org/PLATE>

By TEXT

To donate £5, text PLATE to 70970

To donate £10, text PLATE to 70191

INTO OUR BANK ACCOUNT

Reference: 'C19 gift'
Account Name: Leicester Cathedral Chapter
Account Number: 03807282
Sort Code: 20-49-11

BY CHEQUE

Payable to: Leicester Cathedral Chapter
Address: St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane,
Leicester, LE1 5PZ





The Far and Near Lecture 2020

A Lawyer looks at Courage

Rt Hon the Baroness Hale of Richmond DBE

14 October 2020 | 6.30pm | Tickets: £5.00 from [Eventbrite here](#)
A Leicester Cathedral Online Event

Brenda Hale retired as President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, our most senior judge, in January 2020. After teaching law at the University of Manchester for 18 years (while also practising for a short time at the Manchester Bar), then promoting the reform of the law at the Law Commission for over nine years, she became a Judge in the Family Division of the High Court of England and Wales in 1994. In 1999 she was promoted to the Court of Appeal and in 2004 became the first and only woman 'Law Lord' – that is, a member of the appellate committee of the House of Lords.

In 2009, the Law Lords became the Justices of the Supreme Court, and she became its first woman Justice, Deputy President in 2013 and President in 2017. She is also President of the United Kingdom Association of Women Judges and a past President of the International Association of Women Judges. She has enjoyed working in all fields of the law, but her principal interests remain in family, welfare and equality law.



www.leicestercathedral.org | leicestercathedral@leccofe.org



Baby Loss Awareness Week

9-15 October
babyloss-awareness.org

It is unusual for me to talk personally about such matters, and I apologise if this is an upsetting topic for you, or one that rakes up painful memories. However it is just because of the pain of some peoples' memories, including mine, that I think this awareness week is so important.

The aims of the group driving this are threefold – remembrance, raising awareness and driving change. To support them, we are lighting up the Cathedral pink and blue for the week, as we did last year. Because of COVID, we're not handing out leaflets, but please do visit [their website](#) and share the details with anyone you think might appreciate it. Just to be clear, we are talking about miscarriage, stillbirth and neonatal death.

My own experiences, some 40 years ago, were, I hope, very different from those of today's parents. However I am by no means sure that is the case, and, for sure, the pandemic will have – as with other life-death situations – made things more difficult and, sadly I suspect, in some cases, more driven by practicalities than the emotional and spiritual needs of families.

Every death and the surrounding grief are particular and unique to the people concerned. Which is why saying 'I know how you feel' is not always a very helpful remark. In the case of a baby's death, this disconnect is magnified, not least because often that death comes unexpectedly and also because a child's death feels against the natural order of things. Add to that comments like 'well you have (or will have) another child'. My memory of such remarks is that they provoked huge anger in me: any, in my case, potential other child would never be THAT baby, or a replacement for them – each was precious in their own right.

It may be at a routine scan when you learn that your baby is no longer alive in your womb. Or it can be a dramatic and physical painful drama. Intensely emotionally draining, following either, is giving birth to a dead baby. Staff and family attitudes are so important: it was a long time ago in my case, but, for example, having asked for a priest, on arrival it was clear that person was totally out of his depth and better not in the room! Thankfully the Church of England has good guidance and liturgy nowadays, with better developed hospital Chaplaincies. Babies are expected to be named. However I believe that parents can still be rushed into decisions about what to do next – particularly if the body is quickly disposed of – with the result that grief is not named and vocalised. Often there is no photo.

For some mothers there can be the added guilt that your body has not functioned as expected. You've let your baby down. Which, if accompanied by a false optimism – this can be fixed next time – can be quite emotionally toxic.

Some of what I describe is not unique to baby loss, of course. Underlying all of this, whatever the situation and whether we are directly impacted or in a supportive capacity, is the need to be attuned, aware and informed. Let's also remember that grief, particularly if unresolved in the ways I have hinted at, is long and deep. 40 or so years on, and with adoptive children and their children around me, I still shed a tear for my lost ones.

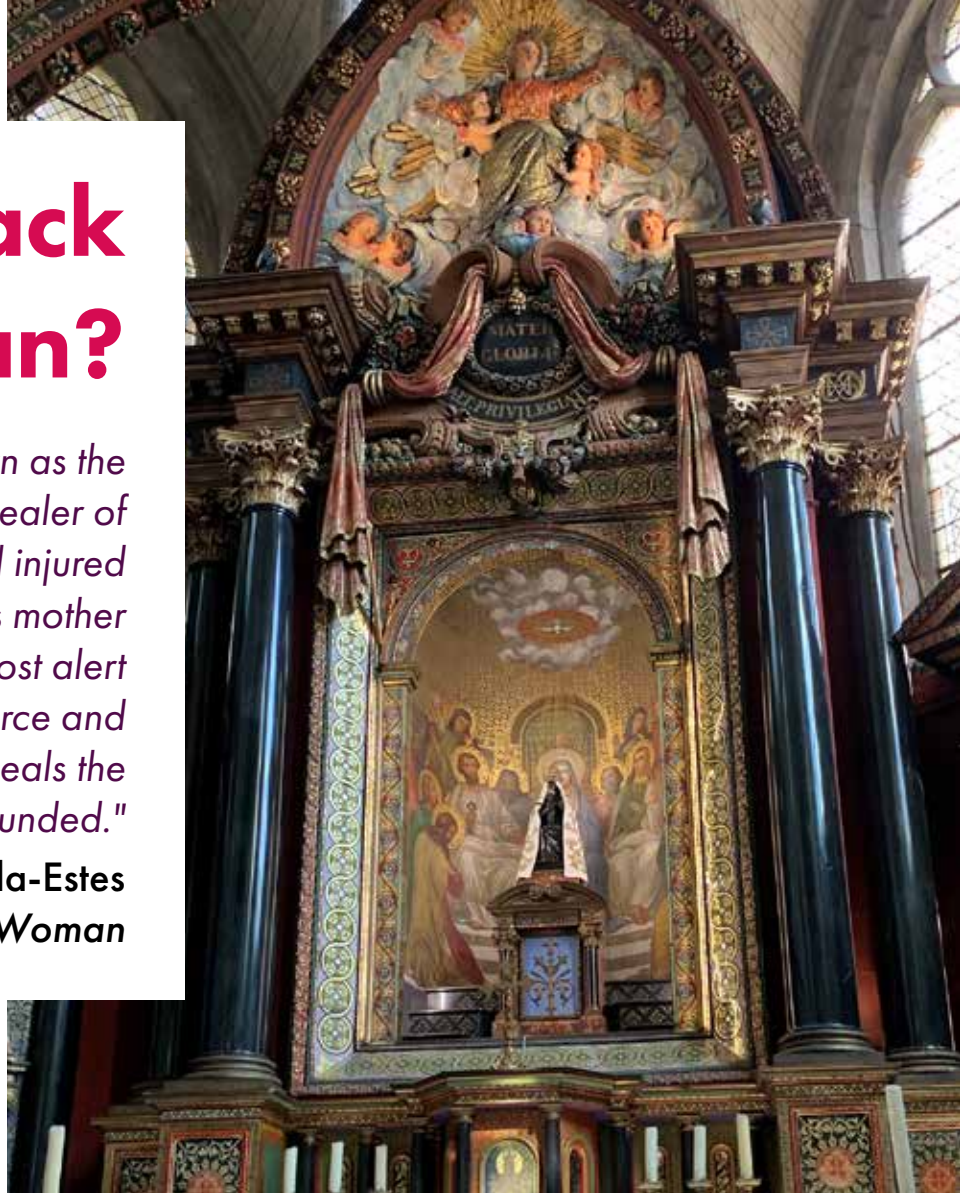
The Revd Canon Alison Adams Canon Pastor and Sub-Dean

God is a Black Woman?

"The Black Madonna... is known as the healer of crippledness, the healer of harmed women, hurt men, and injured and abused children... she is mother mild and tender, mother most alert and tending to, mother most fierce and protective, and mother who heals the worst of the wounded."

Clarissa Pinkola-Estes
Untie the Strong Woman

*Black Madonna in Basilica
of Notre-Dame de Liesse*



This August we were on a family break in rural France, when we visited the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Liesse. This lovely little church in the north of France was built during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. There, between the beautiful, big paintings with imagery of a typical white Jesus and his disciples and blond angels in the clouds, we suddenly found ourselves standing in front of a black Madonna statue.

As I stood there in silence with my 8-year-old daughter, I could see excitement in her face. I guessed she could relate to this image of a mother holding up a young child, as this is what she witnesses on a daily basis when her mother sees to her 2-year-old sister. But more importantly than recognising her mother, her being a young, black woman of dual heritage meant she could somehow see something of herself in this statue.

Black and Beautiful

There is quite a bit of research done on the existence and meaning of black Madonnas. There is one that talks about them being darkened to illustrate a text from the Song of Songs: 'I am black and beautiful,' while another talks about it stemming from ancient earth-goddesses, who were often pictured as black, being converted to Christianity.¹ Whatever the reasons, I am interested in how this portrayal of Mary or even God as a black woman can challenge our perceptions of who God is and the way we see and interact with her.

¹ Michael Duricy, *Black Madonnas: Origin, History, Controversy*,
<https://udayton.edu/imri/mary/b/black-madonnas-origin-history-controversy.php>

We seem to naturally associate the Divine with whiteness and light, so it can be difficult for us to embrace a God in black skin, especially in black female skin. In her book 'Christ our Black Mother Speaks', Dr Christena Cleveland writes about her recent pilgrimage, visiting eighteen Black Madonna statues in remote French village churches. She shares painfully how *'while the idea of a female God perhaps raises eyebrows, the idea of a black female God literally disgusts people. Our conditioning has taught us to automatically perceive femininity as untrustworthy and blackness as dirty.'* That is exactly why she decided to go on this pilgrimage, looking for images of black women as holy and trustworthy as a way of moving closer to the Divine.

A God Who Understands

There is a lot we can learn when we step away from our usual imagery of God. For me, sitting with the image of God as a black woman reminds me of my own motherhood and the love for my children. How this female God understands the life growing and developing in the darkness of the womb, the pain of childbirth, the giving of self and the unconditional loving through all of life's circumstances. How she comes from a place of powerlessness and is able to identify with

everything that life throws at us. On an even more personal note, how she understands our particular circumstances as an intercultural family, what it means to be black and our daily experience of racism, also within the church.

For my daughter it means getting to know a God who is like her – a God that relates to her as a black, dual heritage woman and understand her particular challenges and joys. Might her delight in finding this black Madonna in a remote church in the French countryside encourage us to reflect on the imagery on display in our churches, newsletters, social media and the course materials we use? Can we spend some time wondering whether the people walking into our buildings or joining our sessions and events will be able to recognise themselves and feel understood? And are we in turn able to recognise the image of God in those who are so different from ourselves?

I wonder what your images of God looks like? Could you spend some time thinking about how you imagine God? Could you try and find new or different images of God and reflect on these and what they might mean for your faith, and how you relate with those who are different to you?

Miriam Ngoy-Verhage Discipleship Officer

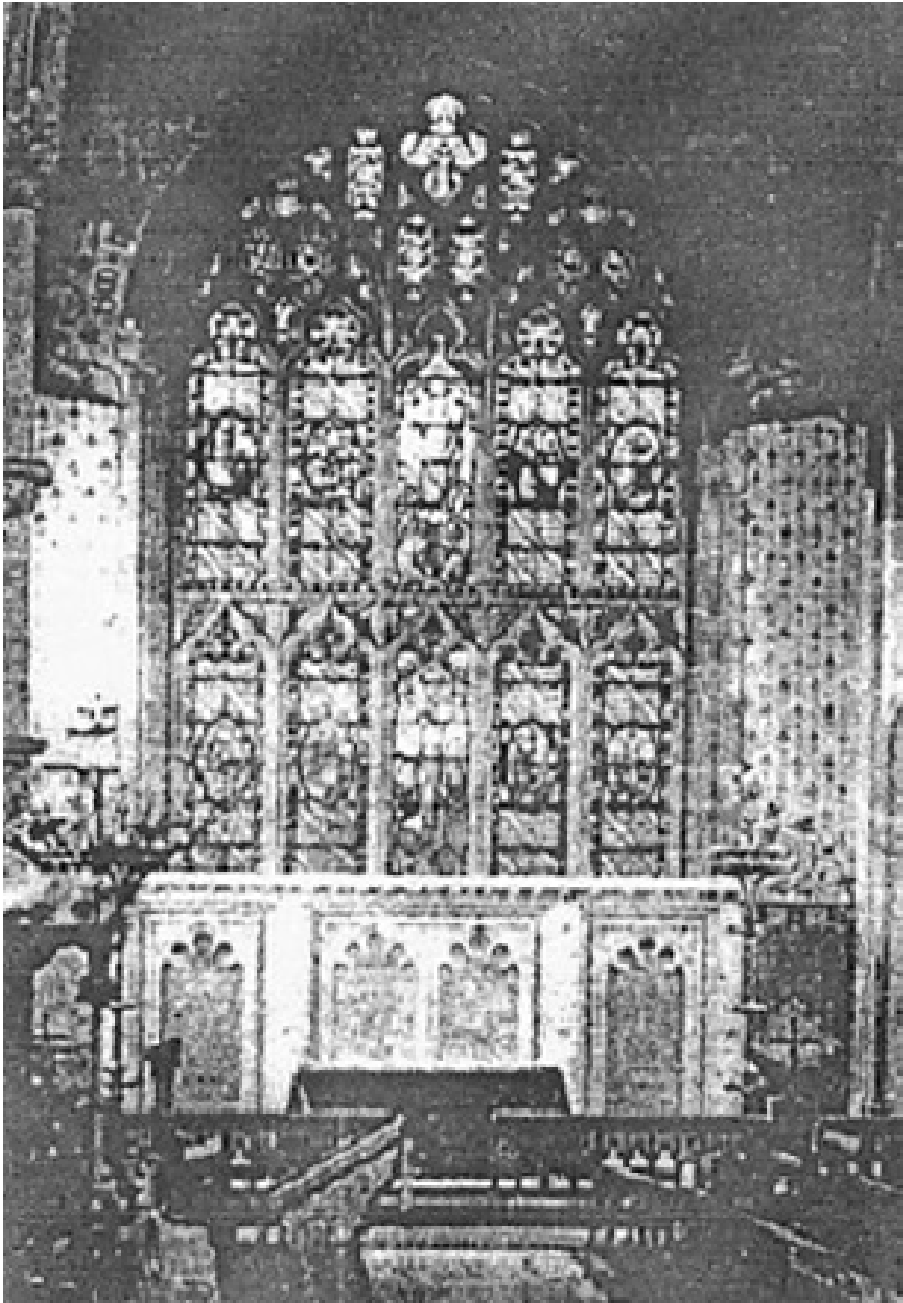
A replica of the Black Madonna in Laon Cathedral were we could see it up close



Alterations made at the East End of St. Martin's

On 28 April 1920, a document of authority was signed by Frank Theodore, the Lord Bishop of Peterborough, presented by Church Wardens Charles Girling and Percy Allen. (Taken from document DE1564/396 - ROLLR). The work authorised was to be part of the War Memorial to those who were killed in WWI which included the new Great East Window.

This included replacing the existing dorsal and curtains in the Sanctuary. The crumbling Victorian stone reredos was replaced with a gilded and painted carved oak reredos designed by Temple Moore and Moore. The London based Temple Moore Company, was renowned as being late Gothic Revival Church Architects during the late 19th to early 20th centuries.



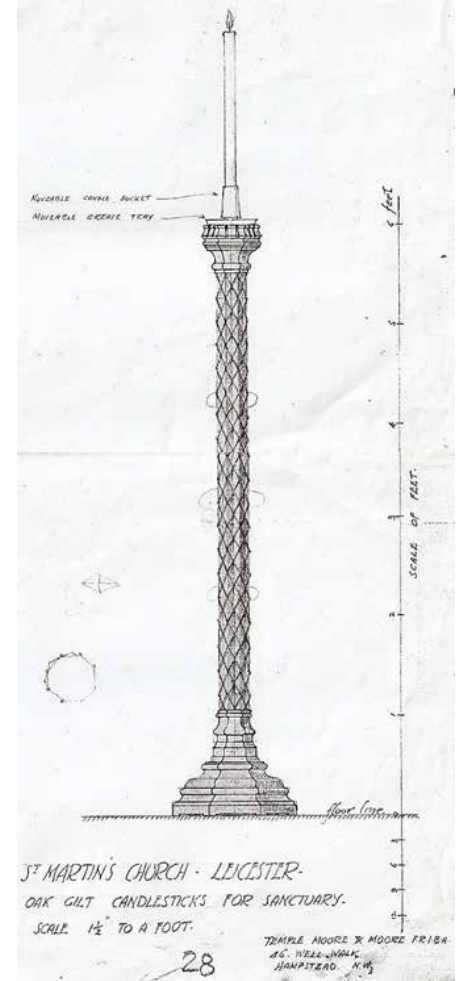
The photo shows the previous east window donated by a parishioner, Mr Luck, in approximately 1846. This was replaced by the Great East Window designed by Christopher Whall in 1920. The parishioners of St. Martin's raised over £2,000 to pay for the new window.

Mr Luck's window was intended to be remounted and moved to another location in St. Martin's. Unfortunately Christopher Whall advised that the glass was so thin and repairs would exceed the cost of a new window. Therefore this window could not be saved.



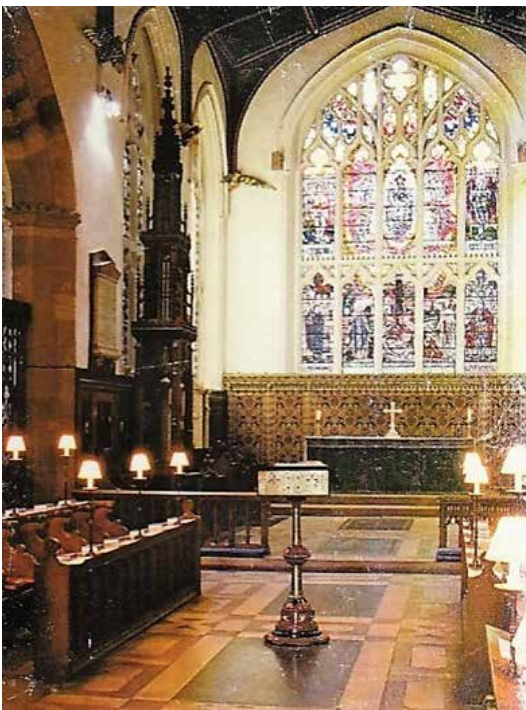
There was new altar table designed by Temple Moore and Moore which replaced the existing 18th century altar table. The altar candlesticks were replaced with new ones made of gilt bronze, also designed by Temple Moore and Moore. They used to stand on the floor at either side of the altar, but they are no longer on display at the present time.

Detail of the oak painted Reredos design



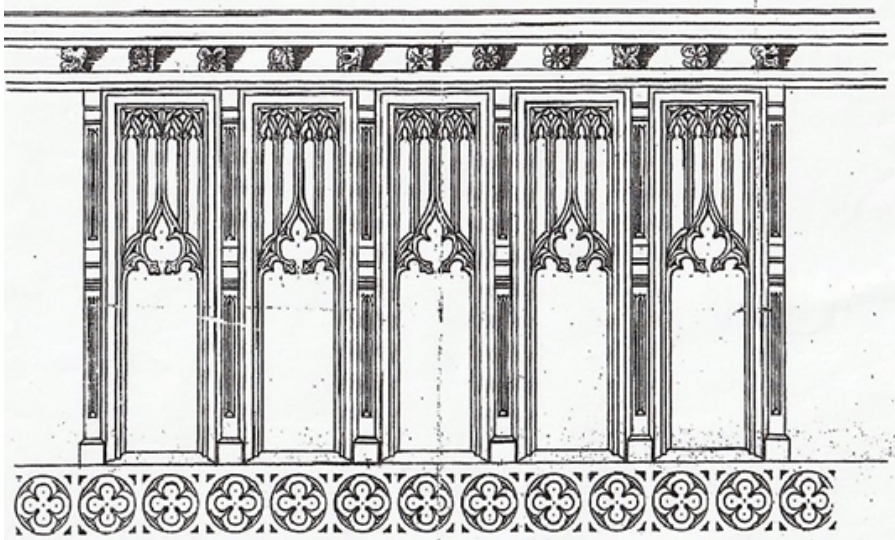
This is a 21st Century photograph showing the altar and reredos with modern candlesticks

The north and south walls of the then Sanctuary received new oak panelling to replace the existing wall coverings, but without making any alterations to any of the memorials. The total cost of the work carried out was £1700, and the totals of £1300 and £75 had been raised by subscriptions. The remaining balance was also raised by subscription at a later date.



This image shows part of the Chancel and Sanctuary before the alterations started in 2014 to make the Cathedral ready to receive and re-inter the remains of King Richard III. Here the 19th Century Communion Rails designed by the Architect Raphael Brandon can be seen at the entrance to the Sanctuary.

Communion - Rails.



Elevation.
2 Inch Scale.

R. & I. A. BRANDON, ARCHT^s

*Plan of Raphael
Brandon's 19th Century
Communion Rails*



This photograph shows the now Chapel of Christ the King with Brandon's Communion Rails in front of the altar at the east end of the Cathedral.



Reflection

Walking Slowly

As we reflect on looking after our mental health, this month I am very conscious that we are living with grief at the moment. We are grieving for those who have died: our loved ones and beloved members of our congregation and community. We have said goodbye to people moving on; students have left home, and there are many people we have not seen for months because of our current circumstances. Our workplaces have changed, if we have work. Our health or the health of those we love may have altered. Even the way we do things here at the Cathedral has changed. As a Diocese and national church we are aware that the place of the Church of England in our national and community life is very different to our 20th century experience as the established church and that the shape of the church in the future must be very different. It seems to me all of us are living with loss in one way or another.

The Kubler-Ross framework for understanding the ways we react to loss can be helpful. She helpfully described feelings of shock and disbelief, frustration and anger, bargaining, low mood/sadness, acceptance and integration. We know that these feelings are normal as we adjust to the losses we live with. They come and go, and as time passes we feel less overwhelmed and

disorientated by them. Living with grief is a process of reorienting ourselves in our own time to all that has changed and has been lost.

So what helps?

Recognising the losses we are living with, and the validity of the feelings we experience, which are, with very rare exceptions, perfectly normal and helpful as we adapt and adjust to change. If you are feeling all at sea with COVID – that's how others feel as well. If you are overwhelmed or angry in your loss, that is normal. Secondly, as people of faith, commending ourselves, others and our institutions to our loving God. For myself, metaphorically laying them on the altar, placing them in the giving plate and handing them up to God, confident that he loves and holds us all, has been really helpful.

And finally, walking slowly, something we might be a little better at having changed gear during lockdown.

WALKING WITH GRIEF

Do not hurry
as you walk with grief;
it does not help the journey.

Walk slowly
pausing often:
do not hurry
as you walk with grief.

Be not disturbed
by memories that come unbidden.
Swiftly forgive;
And let Christ speak for you
unspoken words.
Unfinished conversations
will be resolved in Him.
Be not disturbed.

Be gentle with the one
who walks with grief.
If it is you,
be gentle with yourself.
Swiftly forgive;
walk slowly,
Pausing often.

Take time, be gentle
as you walk with grief.

*Celtic Daily Prayer (Prayers and Readings from the
Northumbria Community), 2005, Harper Collins,
p230*

The Revd Canon Karen Rooms
Canon Missioner





Diana Belton
Pastoral
Assistant

Prayer Thoughts

from our Pastoral Assistant

I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future nor any powers neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all of creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.38, 39

Hello everybody, I hope this finds you well.

This is hard. I am sitting at my computer feeling quite tired today, struggling to know where to start and what to type. The sky is black out of the window but the sun is shining. Stormy in one direction yet sunny in another. That is a bit like our life at the moment isn't it? Well, my life any way. I, with most other people, can see a potential storm ahead but am so lucky that inside I have sunshine. I am very blessed. Then I notice it. The box on my windowsill. It's been there for quite a long time, many years and is very tatty now. On it is written a poem:

To Nana

This is a very special gift that you can never see,
The reason that it's special is it's just for you from me
Whenever you are lonely or when you're feeling blue.
You only have to hold this gift and know I think of you.
You never can unwrap it, please leave the ribbon tied.
Just hold this box close to your heart,
It's filled with love inside.



As I said above, it's very tatty now. I must have held it close many times. In these times, or any time really, we need to know that there is a love that we can hold on to that will never fail us, that will always be there despite what is going on. It will be steadfast and true because it isn't on the outside. It's a love that holds us deep inside.

I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future nor any powers neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all of creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.38, 39

Richard and I attended the Sunday 10.30 Eucharist last Sunday for the first time since March. It was good to be back. It was good see people again. It was different but good. It felt safe. It was not how I imagined our return would be back in March, when people were saying we will have a big party when this is all over and we return. I did find one thing especially difficult. I am a touch person. I had not seen face to face most of these people, my Church family, for over 6 months and my natural instinct was to touch them, be it a hand on shoulder, or a big hug. I couldn't do that and I found it very difficult. There I was 2ft apart both wearing a mask. Me not being the me God made.

Please note that the reflections I have shared with you today are my own personal thoughts on the message I believe God wants to share with you.

The Lord bless you and keep you, keep you safe.

The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and all you hold dear.
The Lord give you His peace, today and in the days ahead.
Amen.

This brings me to the second box on my windowsill. A pyramid shaped box with sparkly paper. On it is a poem:

To Nana

Never open this box.
It's full of love for you.
When you feel down
hold this tight and think of us.
If you open it the love will fly away.
So never open this box.



About 12 months ago I decided my old box needed rewrapping. It was so tatty it might just fall apart. So I asked the boys if they could make it good. One of them said he had never seen the box and we realised he was not even born when the box was given. They agreed to make me another box so it would have twice as much love in. They searched the internet for the poem and couldn't find it so decided to make one up. The first box was special and I will always keep it but the second box is extra special because it is truly deep down them. No rhythmic rhyming well trodden poem, just raw, this is how it is, words from the heart. It gets no better. I found it a challenge to be the person God made me on Sunday but when I next come I will have spent time working out what that might look like with these present restrictions in place.

I wonder if you have similar challenges.

So, go gently, stay safe and have courage to spend time with God this week reflecting on what you are finding a challenge in these times.

A big hug if that is what you need. One day I will be able to offer you the real thing!

Diana
diana.belton@leccofe.org



WORSHIP

THE YOUTUBE SERVICE (non-Eucharistic) will continue to be posted on www.leicestercathedral.org/online-services for the usual time of 10.30am on Sunday.

Sunday 10.30am Eucharist

Our socially distanced Eucharist services take place on Sundays at 10.30am. These are a simple Eucharist with organ music but no singing. Places will be limited and worshippers will need to book a place for this service.

While a small number of places will be available on the day, capacity is limited for this and we strongly advise worshippers to book a place to be sure of entry.

The Verger Duty phone will be taking bookings from 3.00–5.00pm on the Friday before the service only. The number to ring is 07947 896 464.

Wednesday 1.00pm Eucharist

A smaller scale weekday Eucharist also take place on Wednesdays at 1.00pm.

No booking is required, but upon arrival you will be asked to give details for the NHS Track and Trace system.

You will need to wear a face mask or covering for the duration of your visit to the Cathedral. Please arrive in good time to ensure and abide by social distancing measures.

We will seek to reintroduce services in a gradual way as we build up experience in how to do this well with risks managed.

We are working towards the live-streaming of our Eucharist services as well, so that those who cannot physically visit the building may still join with us.



Did you know that whenever you buy anything online you could be raising free donations for Leicester Cathedral with easyfundraising?

There are over 4,000 shops and sites on board ready to make a donation – including eBay, Argos, John Lewis, ASOS, Booking.com and M&S – and it won't cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds.

All you need to do is:

1. Go to this link [here](#) and join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping.
3. After you've checked out, the retailer will make a donation to Leicester Cathedral at no extra cost to you whatsoever!

Thank you for your support.



All information is correct at the time of printing. If you have anything you would like included in this newsletter please get in contact with us.

leicestercathedral@leccofe.org | www.leicestercathedral.org