



SAINT
Barnabas
CLARKSFIELD

March 2024

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Services at St Barnabas' Church

Sunday 9:30 am Parish Worship

Wednesday 10:00 am Bible study

Thursday 10:00 am Holy Communion (said)

**The first Wednesday of each month: Holy Communion
at the Alexandra Nursing Home in Glodwick, at 11:15 am.**

Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

**Please submit items for the April magazine by 15 March.
Please e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com**

People at St Barnabas' Church

Vicar

The Revd Dr Paul Monk

St Barnabas' Vicarage, Arundel Street, Clarksfield, Oldham OL4 1NL

Tel: (0161) 624 7708

Lay Readers

Peter Haslam (0161) 345 0215

Lucie Reilly (07880) 861 751

Wardens

Peter Haslam (0161) 345 0215

Lucie Reilly (07880) 861 751

Administrator

Sarah Gura (07708) 714 813

Community Worker

MaryAnne Oduntan (07908) 004 682

Treasurer

Mrs Vicky Heaton (07468) 463 753

Parish Hall bookings

The Vicar (0161) 624 7708

Letter from the Vicar

We know almost nothing about Jesus between his coming-of-age bar-Mitzvah ceremony, when he turned twelve, and the start of his public ministry, when he was baptised at the age of about thirty. But we do know he was both a carpenter and a rabbi.

The role of a carpenter then, as now, meant taking trees and making timber; taking timber and making useable wood; taking wood and making houses, furniture, and so on. He also made tools for farmers—in Matthew 13, he talked about the yokes he made; and ancient traditions suggest ploughs as well. It was hard work and required great skill. It also needed commitment.

The role of a rabbi involved teaching and leading public worship, so in some ways he will have operated much like a part-time church leader today.

Lent started on Ash Wednesday, 14 February, and will continue all through March until Easter on Sunday 31 March. During that time, Holy Church invites us to look at ourselves and amend. That 'amending' traditionally means looking closely at ourselves in penitence and faith, seeking to become more Christlike.

This Lent, I invite everyone to look at themselves as Jesus would have done, as both a carpenter and as a rabbi. By that, I mean, asking Jesus the carpenter to look at us like a piece of beautiful wood requiring fashioning to make us more useful to his purposes. And asking Jesus the rabbi to teach us the faith, how to pray, and how to approach God. Both modes of observation, as carpenter and rabbi, are intended to perfect us to the greater service of God.

In 1900, Arthur Gray Butler wrote a prayer that was once well known and deserves to become so again. In amended form it says:

O Christ, the Master Carpenter,
who at the last through wood and nails
did purchase our whole salvation;
wield well your tools in the workshop of your world,
so that we who come rough-hewn to your work bench may be
fashioned to a truer beauty by your hand.

Wishing you every blessing as we come to his workbench in preparation for Easter.

PAUL

Church diary for March

Sunday 10 March	9:30 am: service for Mothering Sunday .
Sunday 24 March	9:30 am: service for Palm Sunday .
Monday 25 March	No Lady Day service because of Holy Week.
Thursday 28 March	7:00 pm: service for Maundy Thursday .
Friday 29 March	9:30 am: service for Good Friday .
Sunday 31 March	9:30 am: service for EASTER DAY . Please be aware the clocks change on Easter Day.
Tues–Fri, 2–5 April	10:00—2:00: Holiday activity club , at St Barnabas.
Sunday 14 April	10:45 am: Annual Parochial Church Meeting .
Sunday 16 June	Mid-afternoon: annual Confirmation Service .



That first moment of introduction ...
before the serpent first had a chance to speak.

Bible readings for March

Sunday 3 March

Third Sunday of Lent

First: Exodus 20:1–17
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 11:18–25
Gospel: John 2:13–22

Sunday 17 March

Passion Sunday

First: Jeremiah 31:31–34
Epistle: Hebrews 5:5–10
John 12:20–33

Sunday 31 March

Easter Day

First: Isaiah 25:6–9
Epistle: Acts 10:34–43
Gospel: John 20:1–18

Sunday 10 March

Mothering Sunday

First: Numbers 21:4–9
Epistle: Ephesians 2:1–10
Gospel: John 3:14–21

Sunday 24 March

Palm Sunday

First: Isaiah 50:4–9a
Epistle: Philippians 2:5–11
Gospel: Mark 15:1–39



The picture on the cover of this magazine for Holy Week and Easter is

Deposition from the Cross

It was carved in walrus ivory by an anonymous English master craftsman in about 1190–1200.

It was originally made for a much larger Passion altarpiece.

© The V&A Museum in London.



**SAINT
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Mothering Sunday

Sunday 10 March

Service starts at 9:30 am

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**SAINT
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Good Friday

Friday 29 March

Service for all the family, at 9:30 am

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**SAINT
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Maundy Thursday

Thursday 28 March at 7:00 pm

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**SAINT
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Easter Sunday

A joy-filled service for Easter

Sunday 31 March at 9:30 am

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Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), sometimes called Nicholas of Kues, having been born in Kues, now Bernkastel-Kues, a town on the River Mosel in Germany, was a Catholic cardinal appointed on merit in 1449 by Pope Nicholas V. Nicholas of Cusa was the son of a prosperous boat owner and, like Thomas à Kempis, was initially educated under the 'Brethren of the Common Life' in Holland. In 1416, aged sixteen, he studied the liberal arts in Heidelberg and then, a year later, law in Padua, where he gained his doctorate in canon law in 1423. He also pursued his interests in astronomy, Greek, map-making, mathematics and statics while at Padua. After a brief stay in Rome, he returned to Germany in 1425 to study theology in Cologne so he could take holy orders.

All this learning made Nicholas something of a polymath, and yet he was also experienced in diplomacy. On many occasions he was called upon to assist in important matters. Among other things, he became secretary to the Cardinal Legate in 1426; in 1431 he was hired by a local German nobleman to represent him at the Council of Basel, where he became a member in 1432, presenting a treatise on reconciliation between Church and Empire in 1433; in 1437 he was sent as a papal envoy to meet with the Greek patriarch in Constantinople to discuss bringing the Eastern Orthodox Church back into union with the Catholic Church; once appointed Cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli (in Rome) in 1449, he was sent first to Germany in 1450 to work for reform, where he was well received, and then, though the Pope initially wanted to send him to England to work for peace in the Hundred Years' War with France, to his Tyrolean diocese of Brixen in 1452, where he had been made Bishop in 1449, to try and sort out the seeming chaos that had developed over the years, only to be robbed and imprisoned at one point; and, finally, Nicholas acted as Governor of Rome in 1459 until a new Pope was elected. After his passing in 1464, Nicholas's body was buried at San Pietro, but his heart was taken to the chapel of the hospice he had recently founded in Kues—even in death he was much travelled.

As to Nicholas's teachings, in his work of 1440, *De docta ignorantia* ('On Learned Ignorance'), proceeding from the position that as human beings 'we desire to know what we do not know', he argues that since it is impossible for us to fully comprehend an infinite God by reason alone, all we can do is accept our ignorance and 'strive upwards unknowingly'

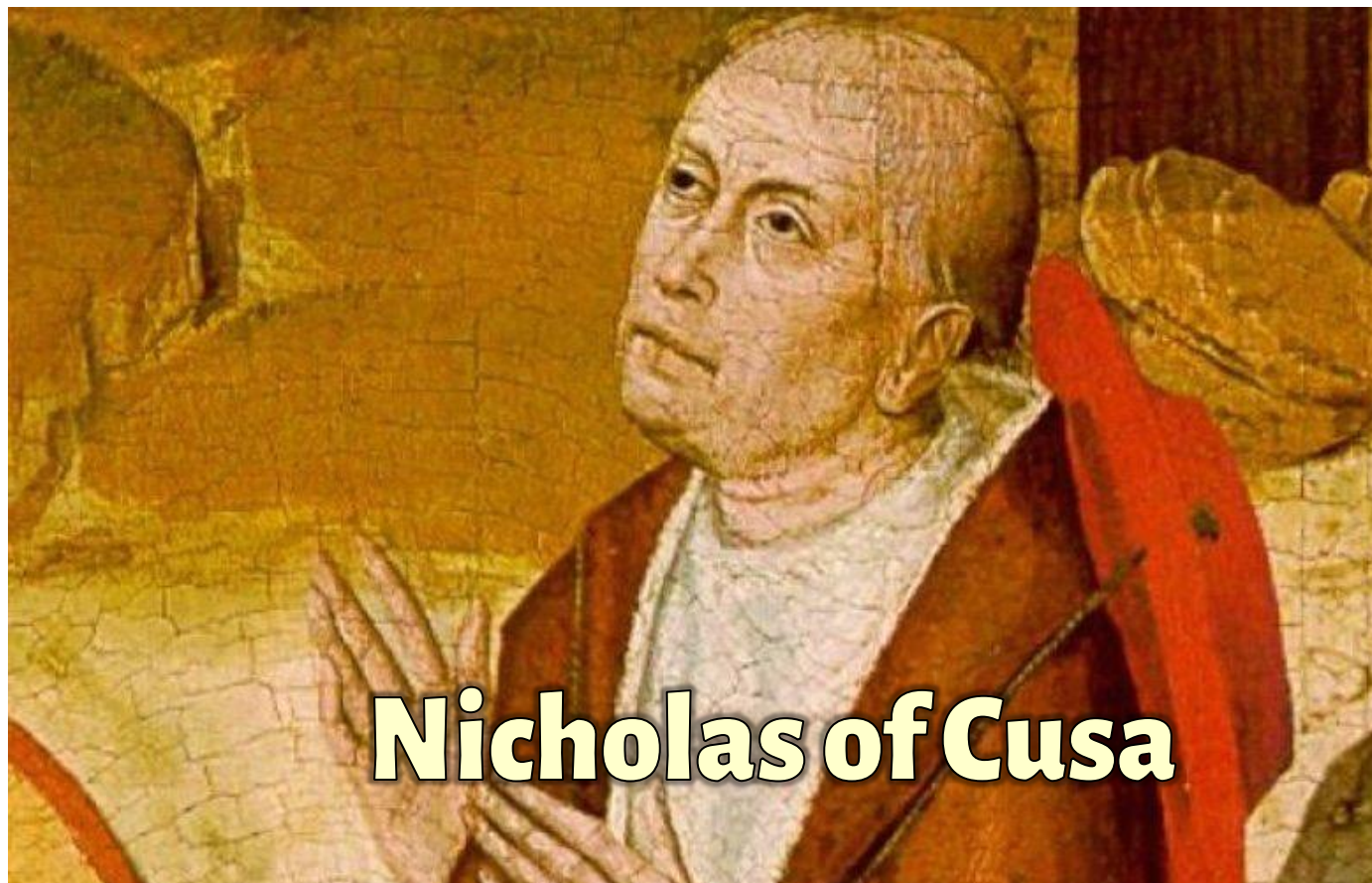
(as the earlier Christian writer Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite advised). His assertion: 'The more [a person] knows that he is unknowing, the more learned he will be.'

Centuries before the philosopher Hegel (1770–1831), Nicholas de Cusa sought to reconcile conflicting notions ('contradictories' as he termed them)—albeit on a more theological than philosophical level, firmly believing that there can be no discord in God. For example, in his work of 1453, *De visione dei* ('The Vision of God'), Nicholas speaks of God's 'Absolute Sight', comparing it to a portrait where the eyes follow you wherever you stand in the room—and not only you but also everyone else who is present. He writes:

[God's] gaze looks at you in equal measure in every region and does not desert you no matter where you go [...] and you will say: O Lord, by a certain sense-experience I now behold, in this image of You, Your providence. [...] For You who are the Absolute Being of all things are present to each thing as if You were concerned about no other thing at all. [...] For You, O Lord, behold each existing thing in such way that no existing thing can conceive that You have any other concern. [...] Teach me, O Lord, how it is that by a single viewing You discern all things individually and at once.

The late religious writer and commentator Evelyn Underhill said of Nicholas, 'He lived towards God on every side of a rich and powerful personality: as scholar and philosopher, as churchman and reformer, he is one of the greatest figures of the fifteenth century.'

John Booth





It was quiet. What had the sentry
to cry, but that it was the ninth hour
and all was not well? The darkness
began to lift, but it was not the mind
was illumined. The carpenter
had done his work to sustain
the carpenter's burden; the Cross an
example of the power of art to transcend timber.

R S Thomas

Laboratories of the Spirit

for three years he did nothing but work with wood;
he'd served his apprenticeship, root and branch,
could smooth the roughness from damaged goods
and cut to the living heart

the sap that ran him was pure
flowed through his hands and words
a whole song, so they marvelled
at something they'd never heard

except he was just too good:
in the end they took his own tools,
killed him on a hill
with wood and nails

three days he lay
a seed in the sleeping earth, until
he burst open, back and beautiful—
here, and here, and here, and here

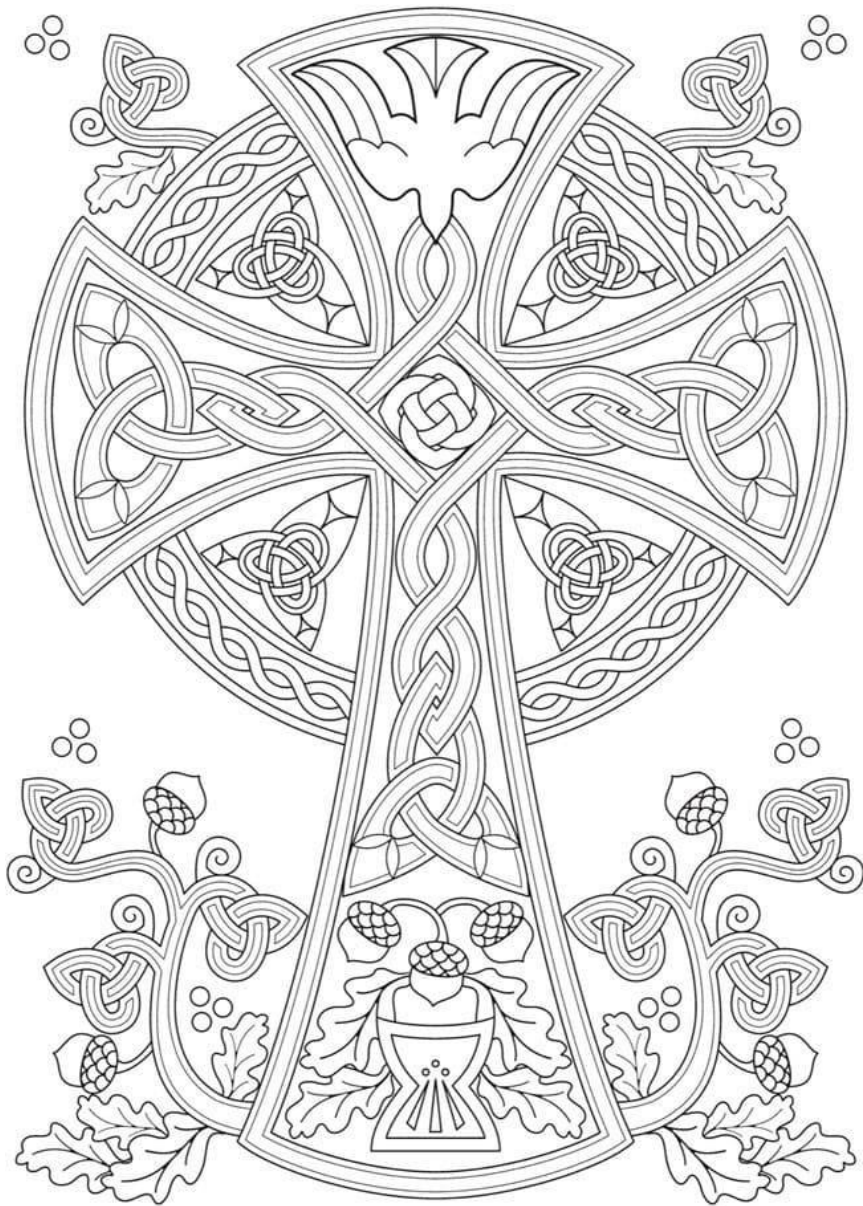
Kenneth Steven

Evensong, SPCK, 2011

Good Friday

The carpenter





Colour this page



APOSTLES
BETRAYAL
CAVE
CHURCH
CROSS
CROWN
CRUCIFIXION
DISCIPLES
FAITH
GOOD FRIDAY

JESUS CHRIST
JUDAS
LAMB
LAST SUPPER
LENT
MARY
MIRACLE
PASSOVER
PENANCE
PENTECOST

PRAYER
REDEMPTION
REJOICE
RESURRECTION
RISEN
SAVIOR
SON
THORNS
TOMB

Wordsearch

Can you find these words in the grid above?

This image shows a design by Toronto-based artist Serge Averbukh. It displays a style of art often known as 'Celtic' and which is characterised by swirling and interlacing threads, itself called 'knotwork'.

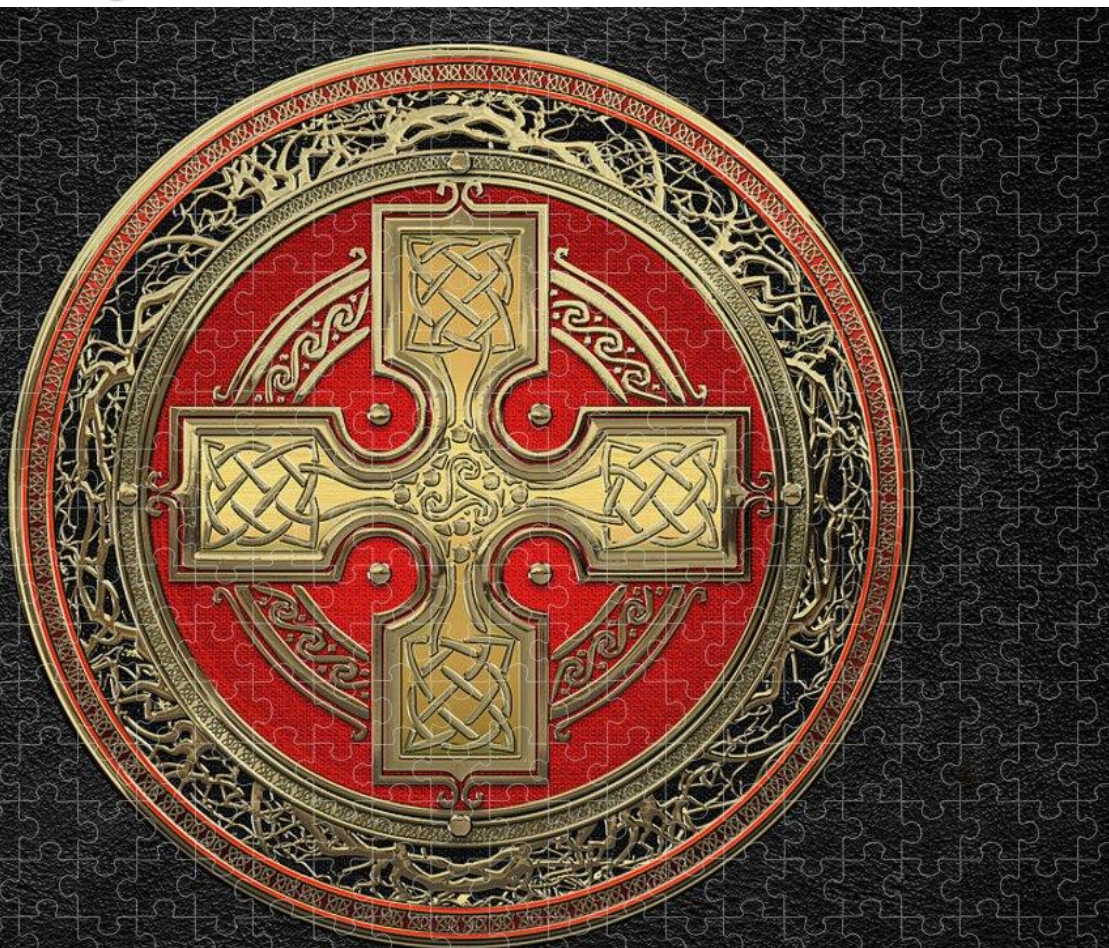
Many of the most famous examples of Celtic art trace the initial letters in manuscripts of the Gospels—think of the Lindisfarne Gospels or the Book of Kells. But heavily-stylised animals were also popular. The example here shows a cross.

The cross here is superimposed on a series of circles, which itself offer an image of eternity because it never ends but goes round for ever: that's why a wedding ceremony is accompanied by the giving and receiving of circular rings. The limbs of the cross here are overlaid by interlaced threads which display endless complexity and interest, threading above and below one another.

But it's a cross! Crosses were used from centuries before Jesus as an instrument of appallingly painful execution. They are still used today for grisly executions in Saudi Arabia and by Islamic State in Yemen.

These forms of artwork demonstrate a trend that started in the very earliest days of Christianity.

I survey a wondrous cross



People of faith meditate on Jesus' death on a cross and try to express the sheer depth of their gratitude. One of their ways of trying to show they appreciate the cost of their forgiveness and to demonstrate the spiritual value of the atonement they achieved through the cross was to spiritualise it, often with the result that a revolting instrument of torture becomes a thing of beauty.

This ancient trend appears repeatedly in all forms of art. For example, read below the first lines of an Anglo-Saxon poem *The Dream of the Rood* (where 'rood' is an ancient word for cross). It was probably written in the eighth century but the version we have today is ninth- or even tenth-century. Interestingly, it tells the story of the crucifixion from the point of view of the cross itself. But like the artwork showing a Celtic cross (left), the poem makes the cross a thing of interest, then wonder, beauty and light.

What—most choice of dreams I choose
to chatter, what dreamed me in midstest night,
once other chatterers crept to couch ...

Every inch bethinks me, what eye blinks to see,
tree of your dreams borne aloft on breeze,
dragged out in dazzle, brightliest of beams.

Thoroughly gotten in gold, poured & pouring,
a beacon, a trace — a sign

[as if covered in]
gems from foreign corners
faraway fairness all enfolded.

The dream of the rood

The full text of the poem

<https://oldenglishpoetry.camden.rutgers.edu/dream-of-the-rood>

More about the poem

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Dream_of_the_Rood

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“I’m sorry sir. This is a ‘not-for-prophets organisation’.”

He blesses every love which weeps and grieves
And now he blesses hers who stood and wept
And would not be consoled, or leave her love's
Last touching place, but watched as low light crept

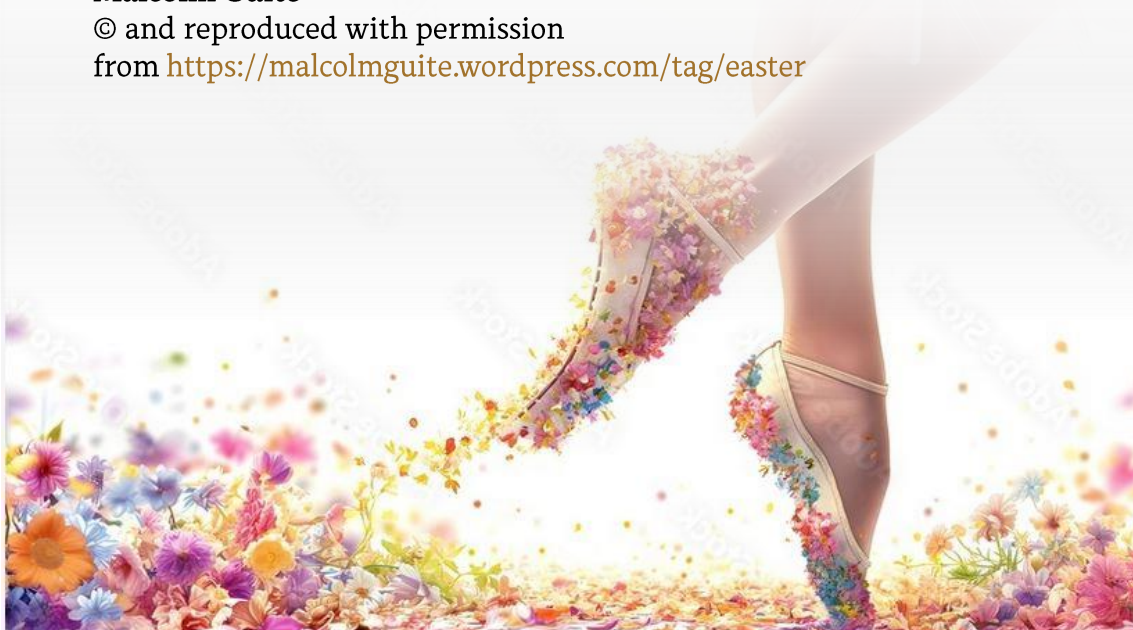
Up from the east. A sound behind her stirs
A scatter of bright birdsong through the air.
She turns, but cannot focus through her tears,
Or recognise the Gardener standing there.

She hardly hears his gentle question ‘Why,
Why are you weeping?’, or sees the play of light
That brightens as she chokes out her reply
‘They took my love away, my day is night’

And then she hears her name, she hears Love say
The Word that turns her night, and ours, to Day.

Easter dawn

Malcolm Guite
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Rejoice!

The stone is rolled away,
grave clothes neatly folded,
no more the smell of death,
behold the empty tomb!
Halleluia! (He is risen!)

Rejoice!

Scripture has been fulfilled,
the sting of death is gone,
the victory has been won,
behold the risen Christ!
Halleluia! (He is risen!)

Rejoice!

The curtain's torn in two,
our God invites us in,
Christ's sacrifice enough
to wash away our sins!
Halleluia! (He is risen!)

Rejoice! Alleluia!

https://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Easter.htm#gsc.tab=0

From the parish registers

Holy Baptism

Saturday 10 February
Sunday 25 February

Ivy Elisabeth Alexander
Hazel Forrester-Lord
Rowen Forrester-Lord
all three occurred at Waterhead Church.

Christian funeral

Thursday 8 February
Friday 9 February
Tuesday 13 February

Jean Kirkup.
Gwendolyn Robinson.
Rhoda Johnson
all three occurred at Oldham Crematorium.

Try telling someone a joke they've heard before. Although the punchline may be very good indeed, it will lose its full force.

Like repeating an old joke, as we approach Holy Week and Easter, we often don't sense the shock felt by the first disciples and for much the same reason. They lost the person around whom their entire lives revolved, and a person whom they believed to be God's Messiah—they 'lost' Jesus at the Crucifixion.

So when we recall the stories of Holy Week and Easter, try to feel the dread shock and speed as the events unfold. Although we know the ending, the 'punchline', try to enter into the disciples' fear, despair, then triumphant joy. It's worth it!



Experience the joy!

Annas

Roman records say that Annas was High Priest between 6–15 AD. These dates imply the ministry of John the Baptist started well before Jesus', because Luke 3:2 says, 'In the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness'.

The Romans forced him from office, but he still wielded considerable power behind the scenes. Five of his sons succeeded him as high priest. He was the father-in-law to Caiaphas—the high priest who was in office at the time of Jesus' ministry.

Annas was also a powerful political figure as well as a spiritual leader. That's why he was often called 'high priest' even after he left office. That power was obvious: after Jesus' arrest, he was brought to Annas first rather than Caiaphas who was strictly the senior priest. As it says in John 18:13, 14, 'They led Jesus to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people'.

The Bible shows the examination before Annas was unproductive (see John 18:19–23), so Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas as he was the current high priest. As John 18:24 says, 'So Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest'.

Caiaphas

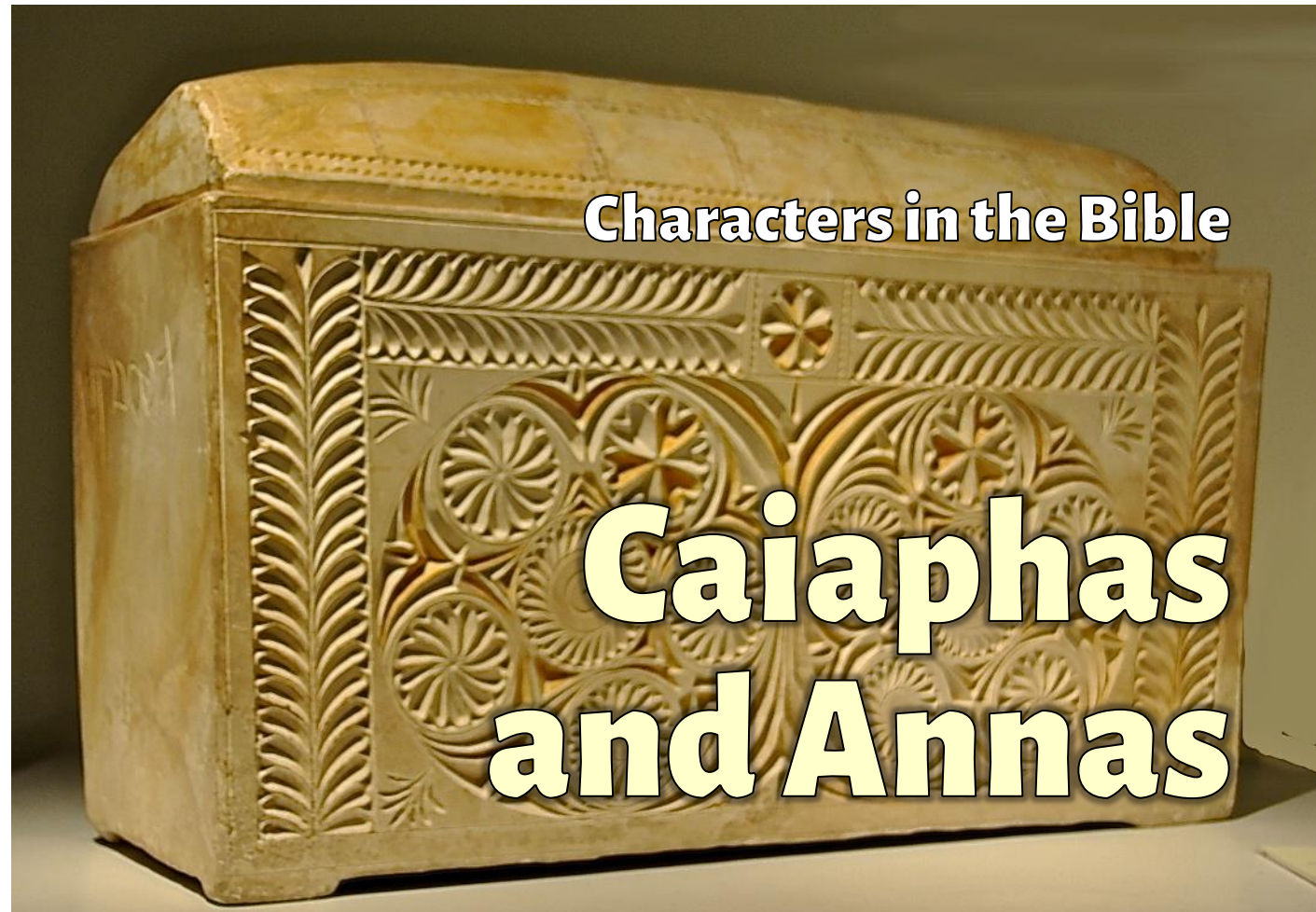
Caiaphas was High Priest during all of Jesus' ministry, holding office between 18–36 AD. Jesus' ministry is usually said to cover the years 30–33 AD.

Caiaphas conducted the next phase of Jesus' trial. He had more spiritual authority than Annas, so he was able to precipitate the crisis during Jesus' trial that could achieve the verdict he wanted. Three passages: Matthew 26:3,4, Matthew 26:63–66 and John 11:49–53 describe this aspect of the trial.

Annas and Caiaphas both feature prominently in the Gospel Passion narratives, especially in Matthew and John.

Annas and Caiaphas next appear after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension. Acts 4:6,7 describes them interrogating Peter and John about a miracle they had performed.

There is one further fascinating footnote to the story. Caiaphas is the only person mentioned in the Bible for whom we have proven physical remains. In November 1990, workers constructing a water park south of the Old City of Jerusalem accidentally uncovered a small burial cave containing twelve limestone mortuary chests. These types of chests were known as 'ossuaries' and used in the first century AD. In one chest were the bones of a man who died at an age of about sixty (below). The style and lavish carving point to a High Priest, and the lettering suggests a man whose name was Caiaphas.





Deciphering the resurrection story

Eugène Burnand 1850 – 1921

Peter and John Running to the Tomb

1898—oil on canvas (82 × 134 cm).

enters it before John does. The Gospels and traditions alike all paint a picture of Peter as a hasty, impulsive man so, true to form, he lunges forward without thought of safety or even etiquette. He wants to see into the tomb, see its secrets and meaning.

So Peter and John enter the tomb, and see a pile of abandoned grave-clothes ‘as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place, apart from the linen’ like an afterthought.

St John in his Gospel relays the story of Jesus’ resurrection with precision and clarity, and displays a clear eye for detail. And he gives us a story of drama and incident. But some of those details needs a little unpacking.

Firstly, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, who mistakes him for a gardener. Maybe she doesn't expect to see Jesus and struggles to explain why a man should be there at such a time. Jesus says to her, ‘Do not touch me’—a phrase that has confounded scholars for millennia. There’s a simple explanation: the Bible was first written in Greek, and the slightest difference in the shape of one letter transforms the phrase into Jesus’ trademark, ‘Do not be afraid’. So, even after the trauma of crucifixion and resurrection, his first thought is for Mary and her fear.

Next, Peter and ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved’ (presumably St John himself) run toward the tomb. Peter sets off first but John gets there first. John is a young man and Peter is middle-aged if not older. So John is faster. Finally Peter reaches the tomb and

But it’s no afterthought. To this day a Palestinian craftsman shows his satisfaction with a completed work by taking a cloth and wiping his brow with it. He then places that cloth before the work. And Jesus the master carpenter placed a face-cloth in front of a task he thought satisfactory.

But what is the task? To answer that question, consider the plinth on which Jesus’ body lay, a catafalque hewn from the bare rock. On it, the disciples saw two angels. The image reminds us of the ark of the covenant, a gold-plated box made to contain the two stone tablets of the Law that God gave to Moses. On its lid were two angels: God was thought to dwell in the space enclosed by their outstretched wings.

As we combine these images, the Scriptures invite us to see that Jesus was pure God again, for our sins had distilled from his body at the moment of his resurrection.



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May I never boast except in the
cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
through which the world has
been crucified to me, and I to
the world.

Galatians 6:14

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The Lord Jesus gave a mission to his church, which he often expressed in terms of his idea of 'the Kingdom'. Helping to create this Kingdom lies at the centre of the template prayer he taught us when he told us to ask God, saying, 'Your Kingdom come!'

The mission to create the Kingdom is a big subject, so the Church helpfully issued a manifesto on mission, calling it the 'Marks of Mission'. It is based on Jesus' own mission and expresses the Anglican Communion's understanding and commitment to mission.

The Church sub-divides the topic into five interconnected 'Marks' that each works toward the same goal.

The third second mark of mission is to respond to human need by loving service

When it is true to its Lord, the Church seeks to alleviate human suffering. That quest will always require two related strands:

1 Helping our fellow human beings in need, local and known personally or unknown and, say, suffering as a result of disaster such as famine or war.

2 But the church also helps to prevent future suffering by adopting a role of protest. In this, it needs to counter propaganda, that 'faith and politics should not mix' which does not come from the Bible as is often stated, but was first stated as such by the Tudor monarchs at the time of the Reformation: God spoke through the prophets and tells us to do the same; Jesus 'spoke truth to power' and so should we.

The third mark of mission

**Learn to do good, so seek justice, reprove the ruthless,
defend the orphan, plead for the widow.**

Isaiah 1:17

**The King said, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one
of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'**

Matthew 25:40

Jesus said, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'

Mark 12:30



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