



Inside this issue:

Farewell to Wilma

<i>Farewell to Wilma</i>	1-2
<i>Wilma's Final Evensong Service</i>	3
<i>INS Charity</i>	4
<i>St Benedict's Prayer</i>	4
<i>Wild Church - A Year of Reflective Walks</i>	5-7
<i>Medieval Matters 1 - The Deposition from The Cross</i>	7-8
<i>Medieval Matters 2 - Medieval Women in their own Words</i>	8-9
<i>Commemoration of the Faithful Departed - All Souls'</i>	9-10
<i>Remembrance</i>	10
<i>Re-Roofing at St Matthias</i>	10
<i>Harvest at St Matthias</i>	11
<i>Concert with the choirs of St Mary Magdalene & St Elizabeth of Portugal</i>	11
<i>Richmond Team Ministry</i>	12



Wilma at the Altar with Bishop Christopher for the 800th anniversary service at St Mary Magdalene on 20 July 2019 and using the St Mary's original chalices from 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. These are on loan to the Museum of Richmond but had been returned to St Mary's to use at this special service.

Canon Wilma Roest announced recently that she would be stepping down as Rector of Richmond Team Ministry and as Vicar of St Mary Magdalene after 8 years. It has been a great blessing over those years to have her in those roles supporting and loving us, and this article touches on some of what happened during her time here.

A major challenge was the Covid epidemic, an unprecedented episode for the country which posed all sorts of challenges to people everywhere. These were difficult and constantly changing times with not always helpful direction from the Church of England so far as churches were concerned. People could not enter church,

hold services or receive communion and that was very distressing. Wilma, the Revd Neil Summers and the Revd Anne Crawford kept the Team and the individual churches together, both practically and spiritually, using electronic communication and reassuring messages.

... continued on page 2

Farewell to Wilma - continued



Wilma in the cassock of an Honorary Canon at Southwark Cathedral - Ronan Mulcahy



Giving a Blessing at the Animal Service - Revd Charlie Middleton



Installation of Wilma as an Honorary Canon of Southwark Cathedral October 2020 with Very Revd Andrew Nunn the then Dean, Revd Canon Wilma Roest and Revd Canon Dr Ann Nickson - Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark

Step by step, normality returned and we all came out of the pandemic with hope for the future of our churches and the Team Ministry.

Wilma also oversaw the extensive work during the re-ordering of St Mary's and ensured that the carefully staged moves to different parts of the building for months at a time really worked - the church remained a church. The 'new' St Mary's which emerged at the end of the re-ordering is a modern friendly church but which keeps the integrity of its historic building and a truly spiritual environment. And Wilma has ensured that the connections with the greater town of Richmond and its society are stronger and growing. The work on updating the Parish Rooms will provide a new resource for both RTM and for Richmond..

Wilma's interest in and training in music had been so helpful. The scheme to have Choral and Organ Scholars at St Mary's has been a great success adding to all the excellent work over many years by the regular choir. Although it is hard to say goodbye to Wilma we

celebrate all that she has achieved here and the legacy she is leaving us. We wish her every blessing in retirement from RTM, for her move to Sussex and the South Coast and whatever path she may take in the future. All our Love to you Wilma



The Bishop of Southwark, Wilma and Charlie at Charlie's ordination as priest in All Saints Kingston on 2 July 2022 - Revd Canon Wilma Roest



Richmond Park in the early morning taken by Wilma at the height of the pandemic in 2020 - Revd Canon Wilma Roest

Wilma's Final Evensong Service

Evensong has always been Wilma's favourite service. When she first came to England as an au pair many years ago, the first Church of England service that she ever attended was Evensong and was a wonderful introduction to Anglican music. So it was fitting that her last service in RTM was Choral Evensong. (Earlier in the morning she had taken part in the Team Service for Christ the King at St John the Divine.) The church was absolutely packed with (not surprisingly) a far larger congregation than normal. The service opened with Wilma's favourite hymn 'Christ Triumphant, Ever Reigning', and The Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis were the settings from Herbert Howells' Gloucester Service composed in 1946 for Gloucester Cathedral. In her last sermon to us

Wilma said that the most important thing and a theme she had returned to over many sermons was Love. After the prayers the choir sang the Anthem 'Worthy is the Lamb' from Handel's Messiah. Following the service the choir also sang Parry's 'I was Glad' which has an uplifting effect on listeners. The choir was quite large, some 40 strong, as many former choir members and former Choral and Organ Scholars had returned to sing at Wilma's last service.

After the presentation of gifts to Wilma and speeches, a large and very efficient team served members of the congregation at their seats with sparkling wine from a vineyard - appropriately enough in Sussex- and also tasty canapes. People talked,



Wilma Addresses RTM clergy - Sisi Burn

reminisced and lined up to say goodbye to Wilma. It had been a beautiful

service and evening. A fitting end to Wilma's ministry with us.



The Choir - Sisi Burn



Churchwardens John and Anthony with Wilma during the tributes and presentation - Sisi Burn



Present and Past Directors of Music Seb and Alex praised Wilma's great contribution to music at St Mary Magdalene - Sisi Burn



Wilma at the lectern - Sisi Burn

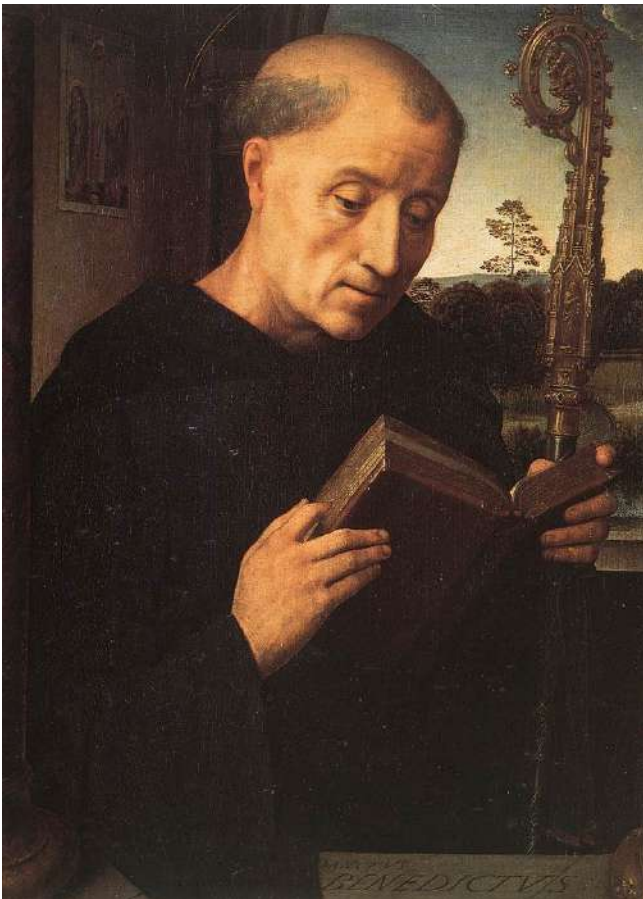
INS Charity

The Integrated Neurological Service (INS) is one of the charities benefitting from RTM's Away Giving programme which gives 10% of what RTM receives in direct giving back to local, national and international charities, both church-related and secular. The charity, which operates in Hounslow and Richmond, provides long term support for adults with neurological conditions, including Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis and stroke. All of these conditions can have a devastating effect on people's lives and on their

families. The charity also supports carers who care for people with these conditions, Access is given to affordable expert services to meet physical, social and emotional needs. Therapies are particularly important. So physiotherapy helps to restore balance and mobility whilst speech and language therapy enables clients to re-acquire voice communication and remedy difficulties with swallowing. The aim of occupational therapy is to improve the ability of clients to perform daily activities and

occupations. Referrals are made to NHS services and other relevant organisations. For carers - people providing unpaid care and support to an adult with a long term neurological condition - there is a Carers Information Group, counselling and a Carers Coffee Morning group. The charity provides advice and information sessions to all and there is a social worker to support both clients and carers. Over 100,000 people

have strokes every year and there are 1.3 million stroke survivors in the UK (Stroke Association). The support and services provided by INS to stroke sufferers and also those with other neurological conditions is extremely valuable. Website address: <https://ins.org.uk>



St Benedict in painting by Hans Memling and WikiComms

St Benedict's Prayer

Gracious and Holy Father give us the wisdom to discover You, the intelligence to understand You, the diligence to seek after You, the patience to wait for You, the eyes to behold You, a heart to meditate upon You and a life to proclaim You Amen

St Benedict c 480 - c547- was a sixth century Christian, an Italian monk and father of Western monasticism. He established the Benedictine Rule which

was the definitive plan for monastic living across Europe.

Wild Church - A Year Of Reflective Walks

Revd Anne Cranford



Three Women in a Boat Ferried Across the Thames in Style

Our walks began in Lent and were so well appreciated that we decided to continue on in to the summer, little thinking that this prayerful practice would become a valued, regular and settled part of our Team fellowship.

Each walk has a theme and echoes a different aspect of faith, with each season of the year adding its own flavour and an opportunity to see God reflected back to us in the beauty of the world around us. The Lent walks were weekly and focussed on the invitation at the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday, with the first walk framed around the first part of that invitation: *'Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return'*, and involved an amble around the old cemetery in Queens Road. Far from

being a sorrowful place, it was full of life – primroses, snowdrops and crocus all in full bloom in the early spring sunshine, a hint of resurrection glory to come. We stopped at some of the graves and thought about the people who have been laid to rest here, among them poet and Hermitage resident Wrenne Madeleine Jarman; we listened to a heartfelt poem she wrote during the second world war entitled *'Letter to Claudia'*. We also stopped at the grave of musician and composer Andrzej Panufnik, and gave thanks for his talent. We listened to the Kyrie written by his daughter Roxanna who grew up in Richmond, from Schola Missa de Angelis, a poignant reminder of the mark we make on the world (for good or bad),

and the blessings we can leave behind which enrich the lives of those who come after.

Our second walk *'Turn away from Sin'* followed the parish boundary in Kew Gardens. Our reflections took in the peace lantern at the Japanese Gardens where we sang a verse of *'Make Me a Channel of Your Peace'*; we then walked through the giant redwoods which begin life as tiny seeds which, like our efforts to make peace, take patient nurturing if they are to

survive and grow. We visited the enormous Alice in Wonderland table which speaks of the altar around which we gather to find peace and reconciliation with God; and then walked across to Syon View, the lion on the ramparts reminding us of Aslan in the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe – we listened to an excerpt from the book as we stood looking across the river. Our walk came to a close as we walked beside the lake to the Pan Am airlines memorial tree and remembered the cabin crew who lost their



Forest bathing and a slow amble under trees - perfect for a hot summer's day



Altar at the Star and Garter Chapel



The Thames Path near Kew - the day after our walk part of this path collapsed and was washed away into the river

lives over Lockerbie in Dec 1988. (Their flight path took them over Kew Gardens). We read the names of the crew and prayed for them and for all who suffer as a result of human sinfulness and inability to live in peace with one another.

The rest of our Lenten walks followed the same structure, with a walk through the Park to the Star and Garter on St David's Day, remembering St David's habit of being faithful in the little things. We had a guided tour inside, thanks to St Matthias couple James and Rebecca who live there, and ended our visit by singing Cwm Rhondda in the chapel! The following week our walk focussed on the encouragement to 'be faithful to Christ': with Mothering Sunday on the horizon we contemplated the part God calls us to play in protecting and nurturing Mother Earth, and so we met at Kew Gardens for a walk in two parts: the first to admire and reflect on the beauty of God's creation so wondrously on display at Kew as Spring got underway; and the second to come face to face with images of creation as seen through the lens of AI and a visit to Matt Collishaw's Petrichor exhibition in the Shirley Sherwood Gallery. The art installations here both disturbed and delighted and gave much food for thought

especially around our failure to be faithful stewards of all that God has given us to care for and nurture.

Our summer walks followed the same themed pattern. On a particularly hot July morning we gathered in the Park to experience the Japanese practice of Shinrin-Yoku, or Forest Bathing. Our walking was slow and we were encouraged to switch off our phones and still our minds and voices so that we could better appreciate the sounds, smells and feel of nature all around us. Immersing ourselves under the canopy of trees, and engaging all our senses, our walk was peaceful and incredibly refreshing.

In August we followed the Thames Path on the northern side. Conscious of the tide we were a little worried that our walk would coincide with high tide, but a neap tide meant that the flow of water stayed well below the pathway. In fact, the pull of the tide provided much material for reflection this week as we considered the ebb and flow of our own lives over the years especially as we grow older and life changes. We were guided in our ponderings by the Anglican priest and much-loved Celtic spiritual writer David Adam, Rev'd Anne pausing along the way to

read excerpts from his book 'Tides and Seasons'. It was a gentle walk beside the river, with stops at points of interest, among them the poignant and beautiful Belgian war memorial, and the famous black walnut tree which grows near the river bank at Marble Hill House. We crossed the river on the Hammerton's Ferry – well worth the £2 fare – with glorious views of the Star and Garter and the spire of St Matthias up on the hill. Our walk came to an end at Petersham with refreshing tea and delicious cakes and scones at the Nursery.

September saw us following some of the Richmond Trees Walk, stopping to admire our famous trees and marvel at the way they shape our lives and our landscape. In October our walk took us along the Thames Path from Richmond to Kew. We began at George III's Meridian Line marker and enjoyed reflecting on the King's love of this

particular landscape as well as his fascination with the stars and planets and his exploration of the Universe. For the King the meridian line was symbolic and spiritual, a way for him to create an alignment of this kingdom's most cherished landmarks from Kew to Hampton, and it kept us company all along the route, an invisible presence snaking beside and through the river, helping us to focus more intently on the beauty of the landscape we were passing through, so much of it unchanged since his day. Little did we know as we finished our walk at Kew that day that the immense volume of water which was building up on the Richmond and Kew side of the riverbank would cause the path to collapse and be washed away in a torrent of water the very next day. We count ourselves very fortunate to have walked in safety, and to live in such a beautiful and historic part of the world.



Walkers from across the Team enjoy time together in beautiful and historic surroundings

Our final walk of this year took place on Friday November 15th, but we will begin again on Friday 14th February. If you would like to join a walk and haven't walked with the group before then please drop Anne an

email and she will provide you with meeting place and time. All the walks are gentle and last around an hour and a half, finishing with coffee somewhere nice.

Medieval Matters 1 - The Deposition From The Cross

Elsbeth Fearn

In 2024 it was announced that a precious, rare and small medieval walrus ivory carving of the Deposition from the Cross dating from 1190 - 1200 had been saved for the nation. The carving had been on loan to the V & A Museum for 40 years

but the owners decided to sell it and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York made a successful bid at auction.. However, because of the immense importance of the carving, the Department for Culture Media and Sport placed an

export ban on it with a time limit and so a campaign to fund the £2million purchase price required was launched. This was successful with donations being received from the V & A itself, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art

Fund and numerous individuals and organisations. The V & A described the carving as 'one of the finest and most important examples of English Romanesque ivory carving to survive today'. It is thought to have been carved in York which was



The Carving of the Deposition From the Cross - The Victoria and Albert Museum.

an important medieval centre for the production of religious artefacts for rich patrons and would have been part of a larger scene including a cross. England had, from Anglo Saxon times, been renowned for its skilled carving of ivory. It was very fortunate in that although very many religious images were destroyed during the English Reformation in the sixteenth century this particular carving survived.

The Deposition from the Cross was a common theme in paintings and sculptures through the ages. Joseph of Arimathea was described as a rich man who asked Pontius Pilate that he might take away the body of Christ, purchased a linen shroud and took the body down

from the Cross. The carving is full of subtlety. One can see the immense strain in Joseph's face as he lifts Christ's body down from the cross which will be very heavy, but also a determination to succeed in his task. He grips Christ's loincloth to get a better purchase on the body. And as for the figure of Christ, although he is dead his arms fall forward in a way which seem to lovingly embrace Joseph. There is so much to observe in this small but amazing treasure. One thinks of the person who carved it and the thought they gave to their work. Thankfully the carving has been saved for us and will return to public display in the V & A in a few months time.

Medieval Matters 2 - 'Medieval Women in their Own Words'

Exhibition at the British Library running until 2 March 2025

This exhibition gives us a new more informed perspective using the latest historical research on the lives of medieval women, both the famous and the unknown not just in England but in Europe and the rest of the world. It also includes items newly discovered in the archives. Because this is an exhibition at the British Library, books and documents form a major part of the display and the lighting is kept a little muted to protect them. However, there are also interesting objects to see and the exhibition

benefits from loans from the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Louvre in Paris and other institutions. For example, the exhibition contains a birth girdle over a metre long with prayers and holy images which a birthing woman could gaze on for solace during her ordeal. Another example is a fine piece of silk weaving produced by a Muslim woman in Andalus in Spain, a leading centre of silk production. A particularly interesting item in the exhibition



Christine de Pizan lecturing a group of standing men - Wikicomms. Christine de Pizan (1364 -1430) was an Italian born French writer who worked for King Charles VI of France and also several French nobles. She served as court writer after the death of her husband and was the first professional woman writer of letters in Europe.'

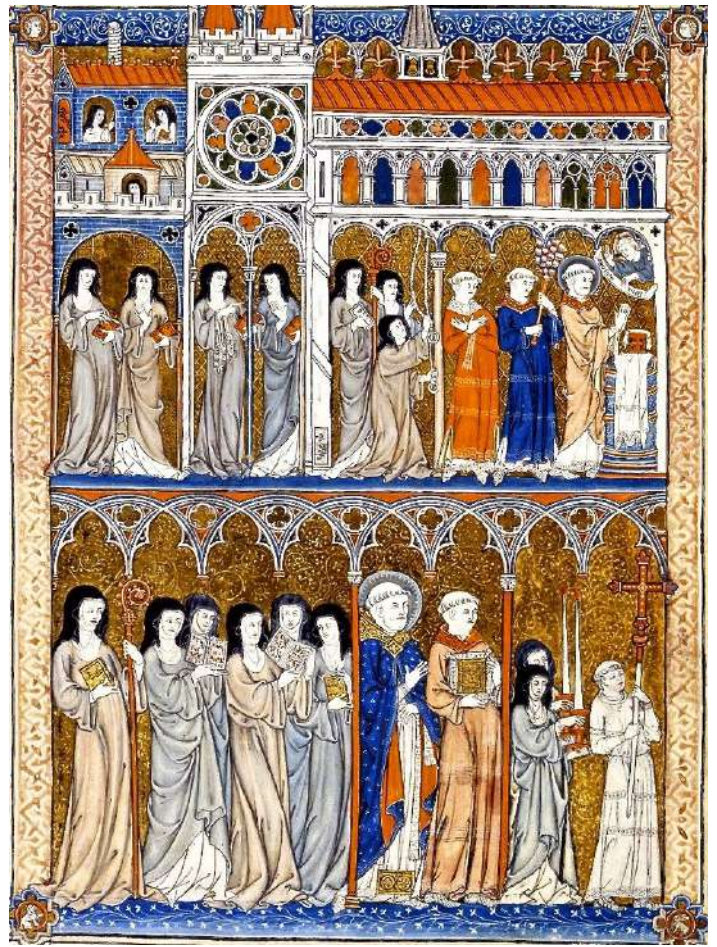
which has been lent from France is a document containing the signature of Joan of Arc. Although illiterate like most women of the time she was able to write her name at the end of this request to the citizens of Liom for more gunpowder and equipment to fight the English.

Women were medical practitioners, business women, authors, textile workers, publicans, brewers, and agricultural workers. Some problems never change – harvest records for Stebley in Essex show the wage gap with women being paid 1 penny less per day than men. The evil of slavery as ever also existed and the exhibition contains a petition in the 1490s from a Maria Morianso - probably an African immigrant - who objected to being sold by her master.

The religious aspect of the life of medieval women was an important

one and a considerable part of the exhibition is devoted to spirituality. Many women became nuns often being able to attain positions of authority such as abbesses and prioresses. The exhibition includes the only remaining copy of the Book of Margery Kempe (1373 - 1438) Christian mystic, which is thought to be the first autobiography in the English language. (An article on the life of Margery Kempe appeared in the summer 2022 edition of Team Talk.) Another female mystic and anchoress was Julian of Norwich (1343 - 1416) author of 'Revelations of Divine Love'. (Similarly an article on her appeared in the autumn 2023 Team Talk.)

This is a wonderful exhibition and completely changes our view of medieval women and what they could and did do. Seeing all these



La Sainte Abbaye France 1290 - 1300 from a Yates Thompson MS - The British Library

beautiful books and manuscripts with their vibrant colours and gold illustrations still fresh after all this time and also

all the interesting objects on display is a special experience. British Library website <https://www.bl.uk>

Commemoration Of The Faithful Departed (All Souls')



This reflective and solemn service is held every year at St John the Divine and in 2024 took place in the evening of Sunday 3 November. In this service we commemorate all who have died and remember them. We look towards to the hope of the resurrection and that death is not the end but the beginning of the journey to eternal life.

An important part of the service is the Reading of the Names of the Faithful Departed where the names of those known to us whether family and friends and who have died are read out aloud. During this part of the service and whilst the organ played quietly, members of the congregation were invited to come up from their

seats to light a candle and to lay it in the catafalque, in remembrance. Listening to the list of names you appreciate that every one belonged to someone loved and that hearing their names read out was

very comforting. The Eucharist followed and works from Faure's Requiem and then at the end of the service the church quietly wound down. The bustle and traffic in the Kew Road

outside, as always contrasted with the serenity of the service just attended, but looking back into the church one could see through the darkness, the brightness of the catafalque with all its candles.

Remembrance



The Urban Knitters' commemoration of Remembrance at the postbox on the corner of King Street Richmond - Elspeth Fearn



Poppy Wreaths at the War Memorial at Richmond Riverside - Elspeth Fearn

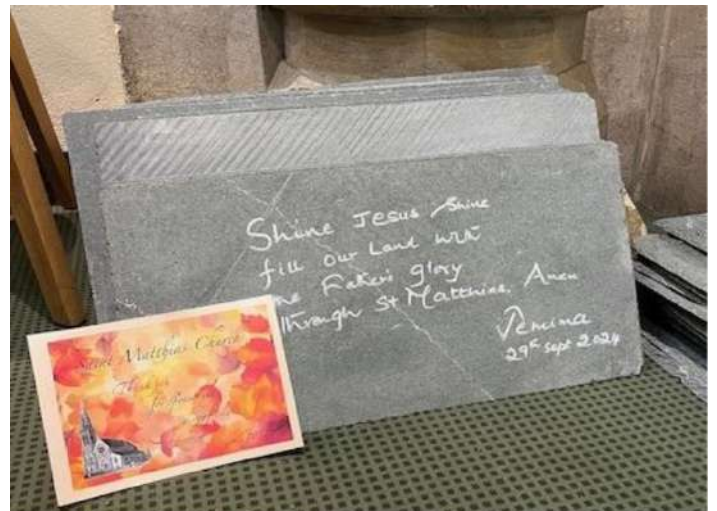


Poppy Cross on the pulpit in St Mary Magdalene - Elspeth Fearn

Re-Roofing at St Matthias

The re-roofing of the South Aisle and Organ chamber roof, along with stonework repairs to the north and south clerestory at St Matthias are going well. The slate tiles have finally arrived and work to secure them in place is about to begin. Congregation members, groups and schools with a connection to St Matthias have been invited to sponsor a tile and leave their mark on the history

of the church by signing their name and/or writing a message or prayer. A certificate has been created by Valerie Reading-Kitchen for people to take home as a small memento of their support.



Sponsored tile and certificate - Revd Anne Crawford

Harvest at St Matthias



Harvest at The Altar - Revd Anne Crawford



"They sowed fields and planted vineyards that yield a fruitful harvest" - Psalm 107 verse 37

Concert with the Choirs of St Mary Magdalene & St Elizabeth of Portugal

On the afternoon of Sunday 17 November the choirs of St Mary Magdalene and the Roman Catholic church of St Elizabeth of Portugal in The Vineyard came together at St Mary's to perform Brahms' *Ein Deutsches*

Requiem. (A German *Requiem*). As the concert took place during the season of Remembrance it was dedicated to those who mourn, those for whom the present time is a difficult one and also those who are in need of solace and comfort. The *Requiem* is Brahms'

largest composition which he wrote when he was 32 years of age. He had recently lost his beloved mother aged 76 which concentrated his thoughts in composing this work. The libretto consisted of Lutheran Bible texts which Brahms had assembled himself and which he had found very comforting. The *Requiem* focuses on the experience of human grief and is in seven movements lasting just over an hour. Although a popular piece with choirs and choral societies it is a challenging work for singers.

The combined choir was conducted by St Mary's Director of Music Seb Gillot who together with St Elizabeth's Director of Music, Stephen Bick, had prepared the choirs for the concert. The soprano soloist was JJ Lam, the

baritone soloist was Sam Lyne-Hall and the organist Andreana Chan. The church was full and at the end of the work the audience gave a very enthusiastic and prolonged round of applause to the choir. The music had been sublime. Speaking to Team Talk, Gerald Fearn, a bass in St Mary's Choir, said that the two choirs had enjoyed rehearsing and singing together. His personal favourite movement was the sixth movement 'Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende statt' ('For Here we have no Lasting Place') because it had some exciting passages to sing. The choir really appreciated the very warm applause at the end of the concert, which was a nice reward for all their efforts.



The young Brahms - WikiComms

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Our Churches

