

Thursday 23 April 2026 St George, martyr and patron of England c304

Dear Friends,

'Look graciously upon us, O Holy Spirit of God, and give us for our hallowing thoughts that pass in to prayer, prayer that passes in to love, and love that passes in to life with you for ever.'

A prayer written by Eric Milner White who was Dean of York Minister between 1941-63, a prayer I've long found helpful and often say before I preach and offer my own thoughts in church. I remember one of my homiletics tutors suggesting that sermons should live long in the pondering hearts of those who hear them, and this prayer develops that thinking and asks God to hallow (to make holy) the thoughts we have so that they enrich our life of faith and lead us to closer union with God. Eric Milner White was born on St George's Day in 1884, and so his prayer seems a good one to offer today as we also celebrate our Patron Saint and give thanks for his faith and example of courageous discipleship.

I mention the prayer not only because it was written by a priest whose birthday falls today, but also because holy thinking seems to be a dying habit, but one we are in need of encouraging and practicing now more than ever, especially when some in our country think it's appropriate to hijack the cross of St George and use it to promote and encourage their own uneducated and unholy prejudices. Last Friday I listened to one of the great theological thinkers of our own day, Rev'd Lucy Winkett, Rector of St James' Picadilly, as she offered her 'Thought for the Day' on Radio 4. Lucy reflected on her recent experience of being a witness in court for a baptised member of her congregation who was claiming asylum in the UK on the grounds that they had converted to Christianity and would be persecuted in the country they had been born in if they were to be returned. Lucy told how the man had been questioned in court and had been asked to name the 12 Apostles – he got to five before mistakenly mentioning Isaiah. The following Sunday Lucy asked the members of her congregation, some of whom had been churchgoers for 50 years, to name the 12 Apostles and discovered that no one could. Another question asked in court, this time directed at Lucy, was whether she thought it was possible to be a Christian and not be able to read. In her opinion, she said, she thought it was, after all for hundreds of years nothing in Christian doctrine was written down until the formation of the creeds in the fourth century.

And this got me thinking about another Saint whose feast day fell earlier this week on Tuesday: St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 11th century. I consider Anselm to be my own personal patron saint for lots of reasons, and his deep theological thinking and spiritual teaching have inspired and fired my own thinking and priestly formation over the years. Anselm felt very strongly that 'belief comes before understanding', and as I listened to Lucy's experience in the court room and wondered whether the Christian she was standing up for had won or lost his case, these particular words of St Anselm came back to me. As a very nervous new ordinand, worried that I knew very little, and with a fearful sense of calling which I didn't really understand, I appreciated Anselm's belief that even though I knew nothing God was still calling me to be a disciple of Christ in a way which could help others to learn more about themselves and more about the God who loved them and called them to follow Jesus even and especially when they too knew or understood very little.

So, on a day when we remember George our Patron Saint, a roman soldier from Turkey, who is remembered not just for his courage in giving up his life for his belief in Christ, but for his protection of persecuted minorities in his own day, I also give thanks for Eric Milner White's prayer and theological thinking on the anniversary of his birth, and for dear Anselm, for his belief that we can all live for Christ no matter what our background, where we come from, and even and especially when we know and understand very little. And like so many who have trodden this wonderfully enlightening discipleship path before me, I have found it to be true that the more I think I know, the more I realise I don't know!

With prayers and blessings from the Richmond clergy team,
Robert, Anne and Joe

This letter was written by The Revd Anne Crawford

Please pray for:

- ... **Fr. Jamil Khadir and the Anglican congregations in Nablus** in the West Bank; for the peace of Jerusalem and for an end to conflict
- ... **Christ Church**, the Anglican Church in Kyiv, and the people of Ukraine
- ... **Christ's School**, and other schools in the parish
- ... **All who work in the media**, especially those who risk their lives working in places of war and conflict.
- ... **Richmond Soup Kitchen**, for all guests and volunteers
- ... **Christians of Congo**
- ... **the sick and those in need** - Sarah Pryce, Georgina Merchant, Gerald Fearn, Julie Burman, Christa Browne, Irene Chalmers, Sabine Staton, Rebecca Fitzjohn
- ... **the departed, may they rest in peace** – Peter O'Toole

If you would like your own name added, simply [email the parish office](#).

If you would like to add someone's name, please ensure you have their agreement, if at all possible.

Prayer needs: The SMM prayer group meets regularly to pray in confidence over specific prayer needs. Please send your prayer requests to: richmondprayer.request@gmail.com or post a request anonymously on the prayer board at the back of SMM.

If you (or a loved one) would like to receive home communion, or if you would welcome a home or hospital visit from one of the pastoral care team, please do get in touch with the church office (admin@richmondteamministry.org)

PRAYER & WORSHIP:

St John the Divine's Sunday service at 11.00am is both in-person and live-streamed via their [Facebook page](#). Midweek service takes place on Tuesday evenings with half an hour of quiet contemplation focused on the Blessed Sacrament at 6.30pm, followed by the Said Eucharist at 7.00pm. The last Tuesday of the month is a Eucharist for Healing and Wholeness, with the opportunity to receive the Ministry of Laying on of Hands with Prayer and Anointing for yourself or on someone else's behalf.

From April to early June, Tuesdays will be open for prayer from 6.30pm with Said Eucharist at 7pm with no exposition.

St Mary Magdalene's Sunday services are at 8.00am, 9.30am, and 6.30pm.

Midweek Said Eucharist at 10.00am every Wednesday, followed by coffee and biscuits.

St Matthias' Sunday service is an in-person service at 9.30am Midweek Said Eucharist at 10.00am every Thursday followed by coffee and biscuits.

Orders of service / readings can be found on the News page of our website – here:

<https://richmondteamministry.org/news/>

Morning Prayer, Monday – Fridays, at 8.30am:

Morning Prayer takes place in church and on Teams. St Matthias on Mondays and Fridays, St John the Divine on Tuesdays, and St Mary Magdalene on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Morning prayer will be here every day:

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 331 749 912 278

Passcode: 96s9Aa

You may already have Teams downloaded on a Microsoft computer. However, if you are joining from an iPad or other device, you may need to download the App.

Please contact John Palmer if you have any concerns about this or need a hand with the tech.

Evening Prayer Wednesday now at 4pm, St Matthias

Private Prayer:

St Mary Magdalene is normally open for visiting and prayer Monday – Friday 8am until 3pm and Saturday 10.00am until 12.00noon.

CHURCH NEWS:

Lots to look forward to in the coming months, including the popular Day Retreat in May.

NEW: Celebrating Mike's 95th birthday at St Mary Magdalene

CHAMPAGNE & CAKE for everyone after the 9.30am service on Sunday 3 May at 11.00 in church to celebrate the 95th (!) birthday of my darling husband Mike (Michael Carleton-Smith). All welcome.

Penny x

Little Chicks is back

The new stay and play group for pre-school children and their carers takes place at St Matthias every Friday during term-time, from 9.15am – 10.45am. We have lots of age appropriate toys and games on offer including a ride-on train, play house and kitchen, and each sessions ends with a short story, song and a prayer. All welcome.

Friends of St Matthias BBQ

The Friends of St Matthias will once again be holding their annual bbq as part of the May Fayre on Sat 9 May, along with a cake stall. All offers of help gratefully received – please contact Chris Pearson for more information at cvpearson@btinternet.com

Sunday 3 May, 3pm - Richmond Piano Series: Roderick Williams + Christopher Glynn

In two weeks' time, St Mary's welcomes world-renowned baritone Roderick Williams and pianist Christopher Glynn to the series for a sumptuous programme of English song. These are major artists performing on your doorstep. Absolutely NOT TO BE MISSED! Tickets available on Eventbrite (search "Richmond Piano Series")

New vicarage for St Mary Magdalene: (good news: alleluia)

News came through last Friday that Southwark Diocese Property Department has exchanged with the owners of 5 Mount Ararat Road for this to be the new vicarage for the vicar of St Mary's. The plan is for completion in the middle of May. Whereas normally a new resident would enter the property straight after completion, the plan is for Robert and his family to move in at the end of June, after two of his children have completed their A levels and GCSE exams respectively. This will be followed by myriad, myriad housewarming parties (or at least one) to which everyone will be invited. In a wild card, it turns out that there are two tortoises resident in the garden in the summers there for the last fifty years. These may now become part of parish life...

May Fair – Saturday 9 May - in and around SMM

We are excited to be running the May Fair as usual on the Saturday 9 May in and around St Mary Magdalene.

We will be raising money for the Richmond Soup Kitchen. In order to make this event the usual huge success, we are looking for donations of the following items:

- Books in good condition – both for adults and children
- Children's toys – used but in good condition
- Donations for the Tombola – full bottles (wine, spirits, oil, bubble bath etc), new food items (chocolates etc) unwanted gifts (new)
- Baked items (cakes, biscuits, savouries), jams, marmalades, chutneys – please list ingredients

Please bring books, toys and tombola items to church from this Sunday (note the church is also open everyday Mon- Fri from 10 – 3 and Saturday morning) and baked items either on the day before or on the day itself.

We will also be asking you all to sign up and help – there will be the usual signup sheet at the back of church. And of course, do let friends and family know all about it and invite them to support us on the day. There will be flyers available for you to take and pass on.

THANK YOU
From the Fair Committee

Bells for your birthday?

Church bells are the most historic things that many of us ever hear. The bells ring to call us to worship on Sundays and also as a joyful celebration of weddings and more sadly when tolling for funerals. Here at St Mary's we offer you the opportunity for a unique gift for those special people in your lives. We will ring to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, births of children and grandchildren and any other special occasions you can think of. We can also offer a personal tower tour as part of the gift. Contact Jackie Harrison, Tower Captain for more information and an indication of proposed donation jackieharrison456@gmail.com

For all the latest bell ringer news, visit <https://richmondteamministry.org/bell-ringing-news/>

Giving, one off, regular and planned

At the end of each service you will find a plate at the back of church for your cash offering. Gift aid envelopes are available if you are a UK taxpayer. You can also give by using the card machine.

If you can, would you consider making a regular gift to the Richmond Team, for the upkeep of our churches and the work of the Team?

Last year we introduced the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS). Many thanks to those of you have joined the scheme. If you are still making regular donations by standing order, envelope or GiveALittle, please do switch to PGS if you are able to. This will help us enormously be reducing the amount of administration and significantly improving our cashflow. If you have any questions, please [contact Jackie Harrison](#) or 07747 111525.

Parish Safeguarding Team:

The Richmond Team Ministry takes its responsibility to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults very seriously. If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact our Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Representatives

[Jo Kitson](#) - St Mary Magdalene

07880 500528

[Gertrude Seaborne](#) - St Matthias

[Helen Kelsey](#) - St John the Divine

Or, [contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor](#)

Community News:

NEW: Day Retreat Wednesday 6 May, 9.30am to 5pm

Join us for a time of reflection in Kew Gardens and St Anne's Church, ending with Choral Evensong.

With Dr Martin Hodson plant scientist & environmental biologist & Revd Margot Hodson vicar & environmental theologian. Tickets available (£10) from www.kewtheologyandgardening.org.uk

Trustee vacancies for The Leprosy Mission Great Britain

The Leprosy Mission are seeking to appoint five Trustees. More details can be found [here](#)
Closing date is Wednesday 13 May.

With best wishes,
John
Parish Administrator

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Richmond Team Ministry
St Mary Magdalene • St Matthias • St John the Divine
www.richmondteamministry.org
Registered Charity No 1130018

Our Privacy Notice can be viewed at: <https://richmondteamministry.org/gdpr/>

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