

Festival Time

This year's Edinburgh Festivals kick off on 5 August (with the traditional parade, one of those frequent events which takes over Jeffrey Street on a Sunday morning). At Old Saint Paul's there will this year be an increased contribution of events for the attraction of city residents and festival visitors.

As ever, the centre-piece will be our three Festival High Masses. The music this year includes Charles Gounod's *Messe Solennelle de Sainte Cécile*, an early work which began his musical reputation, on 12 August; Benjamin Britten's *Missa brevis*, written for treble voices, on 19 August; and Josef Haydn's *Missa in angustiis* (or *Nelson Mass*), written at a time of turmoil in Haydn's native Austria, on 26 August. The choir will also sing Evensong on 26 August. John Kitchen describes all of these in more detail in his article on page 2.

In addition to this, we are delighted to welcome Nancy Murray, a Dominican nun and sister of award-winning actor Bill



Murray. Sister Nancy will be performing her one-woman show 'St Catherine of Siena' for 10 nights from 6 August, Monday to Friday at 6pm. See below for more details.

Other Festival events at OSP include six concerts of Taizé chant, sung a cappella with baroque lute, on Fridays at 1.30 pm and Saturdays at 5 pm. On 10 and 18

August there are late-night classics at 10 pm from St Andrew Camerata. The second of these is a repeat of last year's sell-out performance of the Fauré Requiem. And downstairs in Venue 45, there is the usual mix of entertainment all day from 10 am through to midnight. Further details and tickets for all these events from the Fringe.

St Catherine of Siena

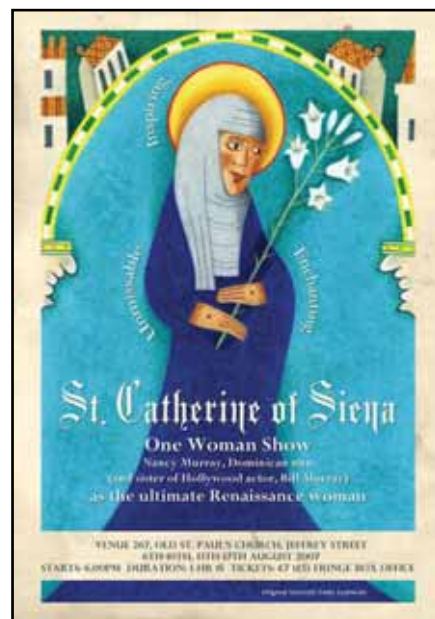
With her head and right thumb in Siena and her foot in Venice, it can be safely said that St Catherine of Siena's influence extends right across Italy. She's the patron saint of Europe and the one to whom you pray for (among other things) fire prevention. (This sadly didn't do much for La Fenice, however, when it burned down in the 90s).

St Catherine was one of the most influential women of all time, much less the Italian Renaissance - she influenced popes and kings and left behind a body of literature equalled only by the works of the Thomas Aquinas and other great catholic writers. Edinburgh's relationship to the saint, who died in 1380, was signed and sealed on the gift of an amount of land in the Grange to the nuns of St Catherine in 1517 - a mere hundred and forty-odd years after her death. How quickly her renown spread and how fast her reputation was established can be seen by the speed at which she was canonized - in 1461.

St Catherine had a peaceful death - don't confuse her with St Catherine of Alexandria (who we remember fondly as giving her name to the Catherine Wheel - just one of the methods of torture endured by this poor woman). Our St Catherine is one of the patron saints of Italy, and if you're interested in learning more, you'll be able to see a statue of her and a whole exhibition of the art of Renaissance Siena at London's National Gallery from October 24th 2007.

In the meantime - enjoy our show at OSP! Nancy Murray is five times as much fun as her brother Bill, and if you feel the need to know how much God loves you, this is the show for you!

The show draws audiences into the life-story of St Catherine, with vignettes from Catherine's life. These "bravura performances have enchanted, informed and inspired" all who have seen them. (How could you resist a review like that?)



It is performed in the church itself here at OSP, venue 267, on August 6-10 and 13-17 at 6pm. Tickets on the door or from the Fringe office for £7, concessions £5.

Janet de Vigne

Festival Masses

Our first Festival Mass generally falls near the Feast of the Assumption (Mary, the Mother of God) which is on 15 August. As in most years, we transfer that feast to the nearest Sunday which this year is 12 August. On that day, the musical setting of the mass will be Gounod's *Messe Solennelle de Sainte Cécile*, written in 1855. Although Gounod wrote some liturgical music in a rather austere, neo-Renaissance style, this mass is opulent and unashamedly operatic, using a wide range of mid-19th-century harmonic and melodic languages. Those who know his opera *Faust* (begun a year later in 1856) will hear echoes in this mass-setting. Originally scored for a large Romantic orchestra, we must make do with organ accompaniment!

By way of complete contrast, we sing Britten's *Missa Brevis* at High Mass on Sunday 19 August. Britten wrote this most imaginative setting in 1959 for the boys' voices of the choir of Westminster Cathedral. At that time the Master of the Music was George Malcolm, later to become renowned as a harpsichordist. Malcolm trained his singers, particularly the boys, to sing with a bright, reedy, gutsy choral tone, often referred to as 'continental tone' (to differentiate it from the then-prevalent white-toned 'Anglican hoot' which prized purity above all). The refreshing style of

singing, and the general excellence of the Westminster choir, attracted a number of composers to write for it, including Britten. His *Missa Brevis* is a tiny masterpiece, and exploits both voices and organ with great originality. Our performance will be sung by the sopranos and altos of the choir, along with the junior choristers.

On the third Festival Sunday we will sing Haydn's 'Nelson' Mass, or, to give it its proper title, the *Missa in Angustiis*; this rather odd Latin title may be translated as 'Mass in time of fear'. Two years earlier, in 1796, Haydn had written the 'Mass in time of war' when the French were invading Austria; the 'Nelson' Mass was also a 'mass in time of war' because it dates from the period of Nelson's victory over the French at Abukir. These were troubled times. At all events, the Mass soon became extremely popular, and has always been regarded as one of the greatest of Haydn's six late masses, written towards the end of his life. Haydn blends traditional choral writing with more operatic elements in the solo sections. The work fully deserves its reputation. On this Sunday, we shall also sing Choral Evensong, with music by Stanford and Bairstow.



Above: An image of the Assumption of Mary, Mother of God

In addition to these mass-settings we offer, as usual, appropriate motets, anthems and organ music (not to mention the hymns which contribute so much to our liturgies). Bruce Davis has kindly agreed to conduct the Festival masses this year. I will be doing most of the organ playing, with some assistance from our newly-appointed organ scholar, Calum Robertson.

John Kitchen

Tinkerbell's Top Tips

At last it has begun, that wonderful season of not being able to park anywhere near the Church and when trying to get a table for a bar lunch becomes impossible in the City Centre; Festival is upon us! So here at Tinkerbell Towers we have been crystal ball gazing (ooh er Missus!) to come up with one or two bijoux gemettes that may form a distraction for those of us associated with OSP or Venue 45 as it is also known.

A "must see" is Kit & the Widow, who have the perfect spot down at the Edinburgh Academy, 42 Henderson Row. They return to what is proving to be a favourite venue at the Stage by Stage with a show entitled "A Few New Songs, & Lots of Free Parking". If you like Tom Lehrer, Victor Borge, Fascinating Aida, Flanders & Swann or Anna Russell, chances are you'll love their show.

Their eclectic collection of music and bonne mottes will be fun for all the family. The

erudite Kit Heskith Harvey is always good value and "The Widow"; Richard Sisson constantly soothing to the eyes, perform with panache and style, so much so that we wanted them for a sermon slot - alas they declined - very much up the OSP street of entertainment.

Tayo Aluko presents a passionate exploration into the life of Paul Robeson in "Call Mr Robeson" - C Soco, Chambers St Southbridge and Cowgate. (No parking there then!) Paul Robeson is one of the unsung heroes of the Black Civil Rights movement in America and a man driven by the desire for social justice. With a voice like rich honey Tayo resurrects Paul Robeson for your delight and delectation bathes your ears with song and prose. Using original matter by the great man himself, Tayo will weave the past into the present so that you too are convinced both that Robeson lives and more, that he is right! Do NOT miss this.

I spent an afternoon enthralled at "Amazing Rare Things: The Art of Natural History in the Age of Discovery". (The Queen's Gallery, Palace of Holyrood House) The Gallery itself is worth a peek with the Balcony of the Royal Archers sweeping round the first floor. This exhibition belongs to the Crown but charges an entrance fee, keep your ticket, fill in a form and you can return time and again. Curated by the Royal Collection in collaboration with Sir David Attenborough; who does the little tour thing on the walkie talkie machine that they give you.

The exhibition brings together the work of four artists - Leonardo da Vinci, Cassiano dal Pozzo, Alexander Marshal, Maria Sibylla Merian and Mark Catesby - who have helped shape contemporary understanding of the natural world. The whole thing is gobsmacking and wonderful in its detail. Take in a tour of the Parliament Building whilst your down there, makes you realise it was worth all that money.

These Boots Are Made For Walking

Having just put the finishing touches to the OSP Walking Group's 2007/2008 programme, Alastair Learmont reflects on the Group's first twenty-five walks

Over the past two and a half years, Saturday walks have become a regular feature of life at Old Saint Paul's. The OSP Walking Group is now firmly established, with a number of members of the congregation taking part and organising walks.

Twenty five walks have taken us all over east central Scotland and the Scottish Borders: from the Fife Coastal Path to the Yarrow Valley, from the Ochils to Eyemouth. Closer to home, we have enjoyed Ranger-led walks in Holyrood Park and felt what Robert Louis Stevenson must have felt towards the "Hills of Home". Early on, we used to worry about running out of ideas but one idea has often spawned another. Limiting ourselves to what is immediately accessible may rule out the Highlands but certainly opens up hidden delights on our door step, quite apart from reducing travelling time. Perhaps the greatest surprises are the ones closest to home.

Walks generally take place on Saturday, where possible the fourth Saturday of every month. Typically we meet at the blue front door of OSP and travel together to the start of the walk. We try to keep travelling time down to no more than an



hour, at the most an hour and a half. If possible we travel by public transport but arrange lifts if necessary. The walk itself can be anything from three to thirteen miles in length and is always followed by afternoon tea or a drink. Details, including a description are circulated two weeks in advance. Unless otherwise specified in the description our walks are intended to be of general appeal. Some can be split into morning and afternoon sections

Typically, there is something of historic interest to enjoy, perhaps providing a taster for a future visit. In early 2006, our first four walks took us to Roslin Chapel, St Fillan's Cave, St Anthony's Chapel and unspoilt Abercorn Church. We have collectively developed our love of natural history. In our most recent walk from Eddleston to Peebles, we walked through tunnels of white hawthorn and saw much more besides: Russian Comfrey, Red Campions and Water Avens. On the Sunday after every walk, a superb

selection of photographs, courtesy of Brenda White, appears on the piano at the back of the Church.

For 2007/2008, we have devised a programme of eleven walks starting on Saturday 18th August with the John Buchan Way down in the Borders. Other highlights include a circular walk at St Mary's Loch, a city walk in the autumn and a remote stretch of the Berwickshire coast in the early spring. You can find full details of all our walks in the green leaflet on the piano at the back of the Church. Alternatively, you can contact Alastair Learmont (558 1253) the group co-ordinator, for further information.

OSP walks are a wonderful way to meet other members of the congregation, visitors and friends in an informal and relaxed setting. They remind us of our sense of community and our own extraordinary diversity. There is no typical walker. So come and join and us!

Walking Group Programme 2007 - 08

8 AUGUST:

The John Buchan Way. Organiser: Alastair Learmont (558 1253)

22 SEPTEMBER:

St Mary's Loch Circular. Organisers: Helen Tyrrell (229 5992) & Jennie Gardner (225 2921)

27 OCTOBER:

Craigmillar Castle/Blackford Hill. Organisers: Burt Edgerton (669 7160) & Alastair Learmont (558 1253)

24 NOVEMBER:

Longniddry Coastal Walk. Organiser: Paul Lugton (467 0843)

15 DECEMBER:

The River Almond (& lunch). Organisers: David/Sheila Rimmer (539 0283)

26 JANUARY 2007:

Water of Leith. Organiser: Alastair Learmont (558 1253)

23 FEBRUARY:

Tentsmuir to Tayport. Organiser: Alastair Learmont (558 1253)

29 MARCH:

Cockburnspath and St Abbs. Organiser: Alastair Learmont (558 1253)

24 APRIL:

Traprain Law and East Lothian. Organisers: Paul Lugton & Alan Turkington

26 MAY:

Falls of Clyde. Organisers: Christine Stevenson (668 3125) & Liz Graham (652 2046)

26 JUNE:

North Berwick/Dunbar. Organiser: Paul Lugton (467-0843)

One Foot in Front of the Other



Suzanne, Fred and Ella, former members of OSP are walking the Pilgrim's Way to Santiago de Compostela ...

Birdsong from scrub that burns with blossoms; someone's dirty old mop in the middle of the path that turns out to be a funny little dog; a kiss, a hug from an old lady who offers a candy, a cookie, a "*que valiente, que forte, que guapa*" for our tired little pilgrim; a fellow traveller who in real life is a masseuse who gives Fred a desperately needed shoulder massage halfway through his 25 km day; a rock sitting in the middle of the meseda, the desert of the Camino, with a hand painted message COFFEE 4 KMS -> ; a cool river for aching feet, and always, always, the sweet breeze from the west just when you're ready to give up - some of the gifts, the immediate gifts of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela. The bigger gifts come later. Sometimes, much later.

Make no mistake, though some guidebooks describe the Camino as "a gentle 900 km meander through the north of Spain" - and the Camino never threw at us anything more difficult than the equivalent of a really long hike in the Borders, or maybe one of the "lesser" (and I use the word lesser cautiously) Munros, or an average day hike in the Rocky Mountains - it is an arduous journey that takes or teaches tremendous inner strength. Endurance, focus, self-discipline, fortitude, the ability to withstand pain, as is the ability to endure or ignore the more unappealing behaviours of fellow pilgrims, are the ingredients of each day as one forces oneself to rise from an often uncomfortable or sleepless bed, eat

whatever one can find, shoulder a heavy pack and head out once again, with a tired, sore body not knowing sometimes where the next meal is, never mind the next bed. This is the Camino that ultimately eludes many someone told me that less than 50% of those that start, finish the Camino, and judging by what we saw in our early weeks, that may hold true. Bad feet, bad knees, bad attitudes felled people left, right and centre. Sometimes one simply has bad luck a very fit Danish woman had to quit after 400 kms because an ant bit her, and she got a crippling infection in her foot.

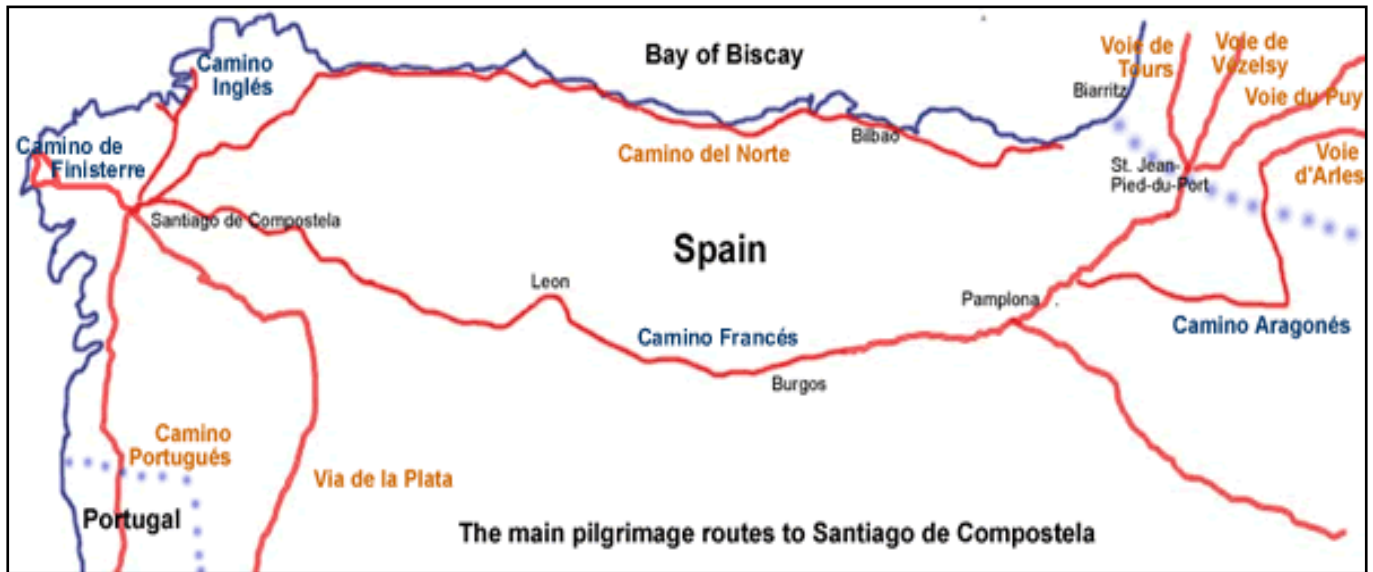
I look at photos I took at the 628 km mark, or maybe the 567 km mark, or even the 225 km mark, and marvel. Why didn't we stop? Wasn't 300 kms enough? Did we need to prove anything? And then I look at the photo I took of a hand painted rock that sat at the side of the Camino, a simple message in German written on it, "*Santiago ich komme*", a little blue clad pilgrim in the background of the photo, walking, walking, walking towards Santiago de Compostela, and my throat tightens. Of course, it's simple... we walked this ancient route to Saint James to feed some longing in our hearts and we walked for her, our child, for whom we made a promise to God that we would walk this pilgrimage ten years ago when she was born, when life was fragile and uncertain and we savoured each and every day given. But there are as many reasons to walk the Camino of Santiago de Compostela, as there are pilgrims. Some look for direction. Some are running away - from alcoholism, drug addiction, workaholic, sad lives. Some are celebrating completion of something: a university degree, high school, maybe twenty-five years of marriage. Some are



mourning the loss of a loved one, a marriage, a way of living. Some want to change something in their lives. Some are recovering from something, we saw heart surgery scars, a brain tumour scar, we met the depressed and discouraged, all carrying badges of a different kind of courage alongside their scallop shells.

Some pilgrims are giving themselves a mental and physical challenge. Some are looking for God. An ex-military man, an American, was hiking for Sister Scholastica, his fifth grade teacher who told him he'd amount to nothing. Some are looking for love (and we saw lots of that). Some just simply want to walk. Many don't know why they are walking; they just had to do it and didn't know why. Of the latter, most say they aren't religious, yet curiously, when it's time to receive their *Compostela*, their pilgrim certificate, they choose the religious rather than the secular, the beautiful *Compostela* written in Latin, the full-blown, unapologetically Roman Catholic certificate of pilgrimage complete with Saint and halo and swirls. And of all the pilgrims I met, I believe the latter, the ones who state their atheism outright, are some of the most beloved. I have no proof of this, it's just something whispered to me somewhere along the *meseda* as I met yet another of the Godless (their words), some of whom literally ran to Saint James. There was a perfume of "otherness" in the way they journeyed.

So how does one walk the Camino? It's stunningly obvious. One step at a time. One foot in front of the other. Sometimes giving a hand, sometimes taking a hand. Always, always asking for enough strength to make it up the next hill (or down, which is far more difficult). And when adversity strikes we had a deadly stomach flu in the



meseda, which almost stopped our trek stop, rest, regroup, see what other ways one can make this trek, take the path set out before you.

On our first day, I was told that the Camino is of three parts joy, death, renaissance: the initial joy of companionship, physical strength and challenge, the break from one's routine life; the death of oneself as one joins the rhythm of the landscape, the seasons, the weather, and ceases to think (this happens sometime in the late 2nd or 3rd week as one enters the meseda) or else the putting to bed a grief or grievance or life hardship - and there are many tears on the Camino; and the final renaissance of the spirit as one nears the end of the journey. The same person told me that the real pilgrimage begins once one is home. A priest who blessed us all at a pilgrim mass in Logrono, told us that while we walked towards Santiago, we walked westward into our shadow and that when we returned home, we would be leaving our shadow behind. He said we would be new people. I think there is truth in all these views.

And now we are home, I often hear the words, "I'd love to do the Camino but...." (fill in the blank with bad back, bad knees, overweight, no time, can't afford to etc. etc.), then I think about the blind pilgrim with her seeing eye dog, the pilgrim with the prosthetic leg, the pilgrim who had no legs but who had a special bicycle that towed his wheelchair, the 84 year old that walked 10 kms a day pushing his little wheel barrel, the two year old in his backpack whose parents, like us, went without income for several months and planned for several years, and of course, a little ten year old who never once said she didn't want to walk, and who even when

direly ill and was offered a bus to Santiago, said, "no, I want to walk". This pilgrim, clad in pale blue from top to bottom, already knew the gifts of the Camino - the comradely, the little birds, the wild dogs, the fields of wheat and blood poppies, the dust and anarchy and beauty of northern Spain, and ultimately, the chance to lay her head against the shoulder of Saint James, in a shadowy cathedral, still so far away.

Suzanne Steele
July 31st, 2007

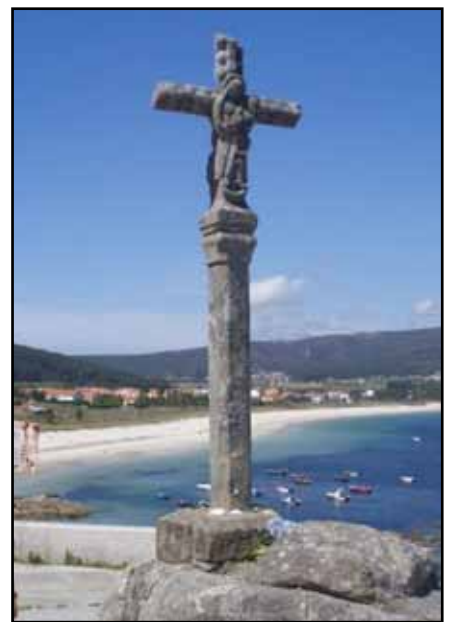
Note: I know many of you will be wondering, "How did Ella do it?" We let her determine the length of our days, and she was a wicked taskmaster sometimes. On long days she said she'd "watch a movie" as she walked and would ask me to stop talking while she daydreamed! Also, she had lots of fans cheering her on the Camino - a present or two every day from the Spanish who were so impressed. Ultimately, I always knew she could do it, but am completely in awe of her now that she has, now that I know just how big such a trek can be.

This trek is also a fundraiser for the Greater Victoria Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, as a thank you for our daughter's life. If you feel inclined, please visit our online site and make a donation. <http://trek4babies.wordpress.com> You may also see photos from our trek and read about our trek at this website as well.

Thank you

(Suzanne Steele, Fred Speckeen and Ella Speckeen were members of OSP from 2003-2005)

Above: Fred & Ella posing by a sign, Showing off the Pilgrim's Certificates, & A map of the route
Below: On route, & The final milestone



Greetings from Bangladesh!



Some of you might remember a Sunday last February when I said goodbye to Old St. Paul's and set off to do some volunteer work for the Church of Bangladesh. I have been meaning for a long time to give you a glimpse of all the adventures I have lived through, and to introduce some of the amazing people I met to you.

I went to Bangladesh intending to do journalistic field work on microfinancing and attempting to be of use to our sister church there on their social development projects.

I had the privilege of spending the first weeks in Meherpur, close to the Indian border, which is one of the most deprived regions of Bangladesh socially and economically. I was the humbled recipient of the most overwhelming hospitality from the Church of Bangladesh's Meherpur office. I have had the chance to visit the villages they work in, to interview the people they work with and to learn volumes about the pros and cons of micro credit, as well as the Church's fight against human trafficking, disease, HIV/AIDS, illiteracy, discrimination and ignorance.

It was great fun adapting to the local culture: I learnt to eat without utensils (I want to see you try to eat lentil soup with hand!), including the complex skill of breaking bread using one's right hand only. I also learnt that the only proper attire for a woman in this very traditional Muslim society is either a three-piece, where every bit of your body is covered by three layers of loosely-fitted clothing, or a sari showing six inches of bare midriff. I passed the first test when I learnt how to tie a sari (try

practising by wrapping a 20-foot curtain around your body without tripping), and finished the course when I survived riding sideways on a motorcycle wearing one. I learnt that in the rural areas a woman who wants to get somewhere is not supposed to walk, ride a bicycle, drive a motorcycle or ride on a public bus. (There are no cars.) Really, the only proper way for a woman to travel is on a rickshaw, seated next to her male guardian, or on a motorcycle riding behind him.

Naturally, my singleness was met with great disbelief. In a country where being unmarried beyond 16 is viewed as if one had a thorn in one's foot, my marital status (or rather, the lack thereof) arose pity in some compassionate souls, and I got daily offers intended at remedying my unfortunate predicament. But I resisted and didn't despair, not even after a woman of my age brought out her grandchild to meet me.

The conservative Muslim view is that a decent woman doesn't leave her house. One could say that most social ills in Bangladesh can be reduced to this. If a woman doesn't leave the protection of her home, she cannot contribute to the household income. Therefore, the family struggles to live on a single wage. Therefore, women are considered unproductive and a burden on their families. Therefore, poor families try to get rid of female children by marrying them off. Since the younger the girl is, the smaller dowry the family has to pay, women are often married by 12 or 13. Therefore, girls do not attend or drop out of school, which makes female illiteracy rates soar. These women then raise their

own offspring, unaware of basic hygienic practices, nutrition and care, so diseases and ignorance prevail. It's a vicious cycle.

Not surprisingly, a lot of the Church's social projects focus on women, whether they are young mothers learning about the value of good nutrition, entrepreneurial souls taking out a loan to start their business, or vulnerable children: child brides, day labourers, orphans or trafficked girls. The proximity of big sister India carries the risk of being trafficked - smuggled across the border to be sold into marriage or forced labour. Every year, some 20 000 girls are trafficked from Bangladesh, 65% of whom end up in the commercial sex industry.

The Church of Bangladesh has recently started a training programme for young women who have been or are at risk of being trafficked. In addition to receiving support and counselling, the participants also learn a trade (typically tailoring) which enables them to support themselves and their families. I have heard the most heart-wrenching stories there: of Khalida, whose father was too poor to pay dowry for his four daughters, so he gave her in marriage to a stranger, who took her to India and sold her into prostitution. After many attempts, she escaped and returned, penniless. Or take Hashina, who got trafficked on job promises, was forced to work as a prostitute, escaped and returned, only to get abuse from her family for shaming them. She emigrated to India, where she met and married a man, who offered to marry off her three younger sisters. She fetched them from home, but the man sold all four of them. Hashina managed to find her way back to her



village, but up to this day received no news of her sisters.

I have met the most amazing people: committed project workers, who exchanged their modern, urban life for an underpaid job in the country; villagers, who invited me in for a feast of boiled eggs - the only food they had around the house; and lovely, laughing children who followed me in hordes.

There is one person, though, whom I can't get out of my mind. Not a day passes without my thinking of beautiful, graceful Rubina, whom I met while collecting case studies. 22-year-old Rubina lives in a simple bamboo hut with her mother and siblings. Their father having abandoned them, they live on her mother's meagre earnings as a maid. I was invited into their home: they have no bathroom, not a toilet, not even a stove to cook on. The few pieces of clothing they own hang on a single line over the bed they all share. But it is not because of her family's poverty that Rubina can never hope to have her own family one day - or even to be considered a complete human being: polio contracted at age 2 left her limping. Disabled people are useless in traditional society, and Rubina was destined to spend her life in the darkness of her home making packets of sweets for sale. Fortunately, the Church of Bangladesh started an income generating training for disabled people, and upon hearing this, Rubina volunteered to sign up.

She finished the tailoring course with flying colours, and the story would have a happy ending, but she can't afford to rent a sewing machine to start her business: she

is too poor to qualify for a loan. How poor? My Bangladeshi journalist colleague gasped in horror when he heard the sum - how could a family live on 7-800 taka (£6) a month? Subsistence level income is 4-5 times as much! The project manager confided to me that they have plans to set up some scholarship for talented disabled people like Rubina, but the Church lacks the funds to do so.

I don't know how development workers don't get discouraged. For every wonderful achievement spring a dozen new challenges. And when I felt the most impotent, Rubina smiled at me and said thank you - for honouring her by being there. And that is the smile I can't get out of my head and what makes me carry her story around the world, back to you.

Barbara Kertai

Above: The village shop, Barbara in a sari in the project office, Church potluck lunch (a little different from OSP!) & Bangladeshi children

Below: A girl & Rubina and her borrowed sewing machine.



Overseas Giving

The Overseas Giving Group will meet in September to decide on donations for the forthcoming year. We intend to make three large grants and several small ones - from a few hundred to £1,500.

If you would like to propose a project, please ask Jean for the Guidelines and an Application form. The completed form with all relevant information should be submitted by the end of August.

Sheila Brock

Usherettes Wanted

Have you ever felt the urge to check tickets and show people to their seats? Or perhaps sell programs and ice cream? Well, if you have, this could be the opportunity you've been looking for - a chance to fulfil at least part of your dream...

Janet de Vigne is urgently seeking ushers for the performances of Catherine of Siena in OSP during the Fringe. The shows are on Monday to Friday at 6pm in the church. If you can help, please see her during coffee. You will also get to see what promises to be an excellent performance, free!

Fairtrade

Fairtrade, an OSP Parish Fair Trade stall was launched on Sunday 17 June. We need people to help run the stall and people with cars to collect and return the stock from Portobello, and of course, customers.

If you can help, contact Paul Lugton (467 0843 email pdlugton@yahoo.com) or see him or Jubin Santra after mass.

Coffee Rota

Thank you very much to those who have volunteered to help. There's still room for more.

Please see Janet de Vigne or Jean Keltie if you would like to help. It is a great way to get to know new people in the congregation.

The Intrinsic Connection

We asked various people to write about what moves them in OSP and why.

Tina Wood, who organises the Flower rota, explains why she feels so passionately about the flowers in church.

When I was thinking of writing an article about why I feel passionately about flowers in the church, I walked along to the city art centre and I found this quote from John Muir: 'Everyone needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in as well as pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul.' Places to pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to the body and soul-- that sounded to me very much like Old St. Paul's.

Flowers are like the nature John Muir talks about because they are part of nature, and alive, fragrant. Some flowers are not even static, sometimes growing in the vase. Like nature they don't collect the dust. They are never inappropriate. In three years that I have been arranging flowers for the church I have come to love them. I have come to respond to them and see the value of what they bring to our 'home of the soul' more and more in a way that I didn't when I first started.

I once saw a sticker in the window of a charity shop. On Valentine's day everyone was writing messages to their beloved on it and saying I love Louisa xxx! I love Jonathan, please don't cut your hair, xxx! And someone had written: I love a red rose. A flower never talks back (or something like that). At first I thought it was odd, but I can now see that like pets, flowers give so much back. The more you love them, the more they give back to you. They lend themselves to amazing grace, both posed in a building by humans and in nature itself, where they are the ultimate in gracefulness.

At first I thought my love of flowers had come from working with them at Old St. Paul's, but now I realize that flowers have not just grown on me recently, but that actually, I've had an immensely strong connection with nature in the early part of my life, which made a very deep impression



on me. I was born in Cheddar, a small village outside of Wells in Somerset. And you can imagine, those of you that know that area, that people used to tease me that I was born in a cave.

I was then carried to a stone shepherd's croft, on an outcrop high above the Honddhu river in the Brecon Beacons. This was a valley with no through road, and my parent's were, when they first moved there in 1939, the only foreigners (English as they were!) to penetrate this little scattering of sheep farms within a national park.

We lived above the cultivated fields surrounded by grass-clad slopes and hazel woods and there was a grove of amazing trees about 200 years old planted by Landor the poet, the ruins of whose house were about a half a mile away. He was a wealthy man and had planted sweet chestnuts, sycamores, beech trees and limes whose stature was immense at the time when I grew up. And then there was a wood where the local landowner reared pheasants. This wood was probably unchanged since prehistory, because at the bottom of the valley there were the gothic-style ruins of a Benedictine abbey. When the abbey was built, the surrounding area would have been completely covered in woodlands. What's this to do with flowers, you might say?

The answer lies in intrinsic connection between flowers and stone, which I will try to illustrate. Outside the croft, there were wildflowers as far as the eye could see, foxgloves, red campion, thyme, primroses, hair-bells, violets, meadowsweet, and then there were also rarer things, like starwort, moneymusk, wild mullein and orchids. My father had scattered bulbs of autumn



Left: Tina arranging her beloved flowers. **Above:** The flower arranging demonstration evening

crocus on the steep bank under our terrace, which made a field full of lilac pink flowers in the autumn, and planted Saxophone on the roof. Outside my bedroom window there were massive, pink rows rambling over the stone wall. I believe its horticultural name is Albertine Rose (which you see in Edinburgh in Duncan Street and Argyle Place).

Before I was born in 1943, they had cleared a bit of garden outside the croft door and bought some cultivated plants, and they had scraped a little path for my sister and me to have our own little special two foot gardens, which I remember incredibly well, staring for hours and hours and turning over the petals of these little flowers that I planted in that little patch. One of them was Aquilegia, which looks like little flying swans, and another Lamb's Lugs.

So there I was perched high up this mountainside, and as I grew older and began wandering alone farther and farther a field, along the valley and the mountain above, noticing, listening and watching. It was only when I was six that I left that place to go to school in London, but as soon as the term was over we would be back at the Welsh cottage and the same went for when I was a teenager going to boarding school.

That place, and the lessons that nature taught me, and the companionship that nature brought me became a part of my essence. And if you like, nature taught me how to pray. Once I started primary school I learned a concept of God, and how to pray to God, but of course I had already been kind of doing that, because the nature all around me, in its various manifestations,

the sheep, the river, the woods, the paths, the little places that each had their own ambience. I had been talking to them already.

It was almost impossible to be downhearted when you spend long hours surrounded by nature, because I became aware of its peace and stillness and delight and joy in the summer days. And I also enjoyed the stormy days, hearing the wind in the leaves like a mighty flooding river swishing. My father had put some thin, modern slates on the roof of the sheep shed that he had converted into an artist studio and connected to the house with a little gothic door that he made, and when the rain came, it was like thunder in there, like being in the bed of a river in spate.

The stone cottage was almost part of the hill itself. It was built onto the native rock, which was just below the surface of the ground. When they would mine for coal about seventy to a hundred miles away, lying in my bed, I could actually hear the rumble through the rock. It seemed to be vibrating. And I noticed that the brooks round about exposed the rock beneath and also attracted the growth of wild flowers.

The intrinsic connection between the stone and the flowers were a key part of that environment and a key vocabulary of that spiritual atmosphere that I was so lucky imbibe. So I realize that it wasn't just the four years of doing flowers in Old St. Paul's that made me appreciate flowers, but the notion of flowers in a stone church actually points to something much bigger, and a reminder of some basic transcendent unity that we call God.

Sign Up & Go Green

Are you prepared to pay 10p for a plastic bag? Would you sign a petition to charge 10p for plastic bags? Did you know that people in Britain use an average of 300 plastic bags every year? Each bag lasts up to 400 years, spending the vast majority of that time in a landfill site or strewn across the British countryside. People are becoming increasingly aware that we need to reduce our use of plastic bags.

In Ireland, a tax of 15cents per bag resulted in a 90% drop in plastic bag usage, and raised 3.5 million Euros which was spent on environmental projects. Bangladesh has banned polythene bags altogether while Taiwan and Singapore are taking steps to discourage their use.

Please take a moment to sign the petition to introduce a similar tax (to be spent on environmental projects) of 10p per bag in Britain, you can find it at: www.green-england.co.uk/plasticbagpetition

Calling All Singers

Fresh from their success with the Mikado, OSPROC (OSP Reduced Opera Company) will be performing Iolanthe on 10 November.

If you are interested in getting involved then come along to the first rehearsal / get together on Sunday 9 September in the church hall at 2pm. Clear your diaries now!

Future Dates

It might seem a bit early to think about events in the autumn, but here are some dates for your diaries. On Friday 28 September the Development group are organising another Quiz night. Helen Tyrell will be in the chair again, asking yet more taxing and teasing questions.

Whilst on Saturday 27 October, by popular request, there will be another music evening at Brenda White's. More details on both these events nearer the time.

Prayer Calendar

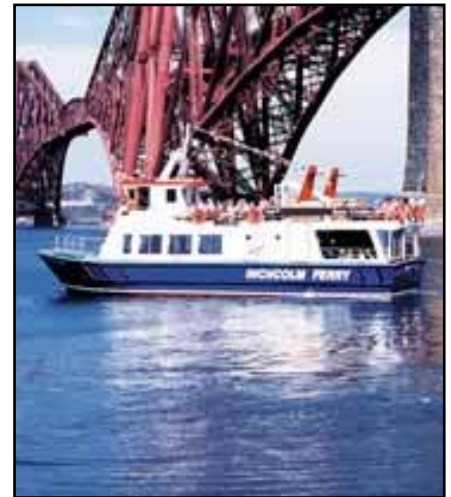
- 1st For those working for a peaceful solution in the Middle East
- 2nd For the work of the Alzheimers' Society
- 3rd For the future of the Ark
- 4th For the work of Spiritual Directors
- 5th Thanksgiving for the Eucharist
- 6th Thanksgiving for the Transfiguration of Our Lord
- 7th Boisil: For the early Christians and their prophetic spirit
- 8th Dominic: For Dominicans throughout the world
- 9th John Mason Neale: For his influence on Anglican worship
- 10th Laurence: For early Christian martyrs
- 11th Clare of Assisi: For Franciscans throughout the world
- 12th Thanksgiving for the Eucharist
- 13th Jeremy Taylor: For teachers of the faith
- 14th Maximilian Kolbe: For those who die for their faith in modern times
- 15th Thanksgiving for the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 16th Thanksgiving for all performers in the festivals
- 17th For all who suffer from mental health problems
- 18th Thanksgiving for family and friends
- 19th Thanksgiving for the Eucharist
- 20th Bernard of Clairvaux: For his reforming zeal
- 21st For the people of Zimbabwe
- 22nd For the work of Amnesty International
- 23rd For a deepening of our prayer life
- 24th St Bartholomew, Apostle
- 25th For our care of the environment
- 26th Thanksgiving for the Eucharist
- 27th For peace in Iraq
- 28th Augustine: For his influence on the early Church
- 29th Thanksgiving for the Life and Witness of John the Baptist
- 30th For the people of Sudan
- 31st Aidan: For the atmosphere of peace on Lindisfarne

Local Tourist

For all of you who live here but only ever say: "I have always thought about doing that ..."

Kim Moore Ede explores what's on our own doorstep, starting with Maid of the Forth Boat Cruises

If you are looking for a short venture on a lovely day, look no further than a boat ride on the Firth of Forth. The Maid of the Forth operates from South Queensferry in the shadow of the world famous Forth Rail Bridge. You can book a tour from Waverley Bridge and get a bus tour out or you can buy your ticket there, there is plenty of parking along the waterfront. On my particular trip, I took the standard 1.5 hour trip on the Forth and around Inchcolm Island with my visiting parents. The information offered by the staff during the ride was quite informative and entertaining. Did you know golf was once spelled **GOWF** and stood for **Gentlemen Only, Women Forbidden**? Well, that's the story we got, anyways! We also found out that firth is another word for estuary. We saw chubby little puffins and Sammy the Seal (what a ham!) as well as a huge variety of sea birds. We weren't lucky enough to see any dolphins or porpoises (which is not uncommon) but there were some interesting jellyfish in the water. The trip around the island was also quite interesting as you could see the remnants of the old war defences and the stunning 12th century abbey.



Time to go cruising?

Should you want to make more of an outing of it, why don't you plan to take along a picnic lunch and get off the boat and tour the island and the abbey? I plan to! It only takes an extra 1.5 hours (and a disembarkation fee) and would also offer a wonderful opportunity to see the sea birds' nesting sites. Also on the island are a visitors centre, lovely park and sandy beach for wading. Should the hair not be hovering over the city (as was so common this summer), there is a wonderful view of Edinburgh with the castle and Arthur's seat. So why not explore the surroundings in which we live and take a tour on the Firth of Forth?

Should you have any other locations you would like me to check out or if would like to write a local tour article yourself, please feel free to let me know at kmooreede@yahoo.ca.

Kim Moore Ede

Children's Worker Wanted

Old St Paul's is currently looking for a person with vision and enthusiasm for working with children. The duties will include planning, organising and managing our Sunday School and Crèche.

The post is for 45 weeks per year and the salary is £3600 per annum.

For an application pack, which includes a full job description, please contact the

parish office on 0131 556 3332 or email rector@osp.org.uk

The closing date for applications is 30 August 2007. Interviews are expected to be held on 4 September, with a view to the position commencing on 1 October 2007.

The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure Scotland check.

Tithing News

The Tithing Group awarded £1,000 to help the Science for Knowledge and Youth project in Syria last year. We thought you might like to hear something about the progress of this innovative scheme.

Young people in Syria have a very slight chance of getting a place in a university. Not more than about 12 per cent will manage to make the grade, but even for these people, the road is very difficult.

There are no grants or loans and of course students will have to support themselves in accommodation, food, books and so on as well as pay fees. Many families will put themselves into poverty to try and get a university education for at least one child.

Fahed Al Mohammad is a fairly wealthy businessman in Damascus; a sort of local Tom Farmer. He set up SKY to create a charity that would be able to provide some support to young students unable to take up an offer of a university place because they and their families simply couldn't afford it.

Fahed has been thinking not only in terms of immediate fees and living expenses but also the access to a computer and software and possible additional training like foreign language courses.

Our student is Ataa Kanaan from Qunaitera, a town to the south of Damascus. Ataa got a place at the University of Damascus Law School and SKY has paid for his first year living expenses, books and tuition fees. The total cost so far has been just over our



Above: Statue of St Paul being blessed, from the Church of St Ananias in Damascus - where he regained his sight after the blinding on the road to Damascus.

£1,000 contribution. Perhaps we will be able to help him again.

We also donated £500 to Fahed towards helping with temporary accommodation, food and essential drugs for some Lebanese refugees who had fled to Damascus during the massive attack there last year. He has asked me to let you know that all of the people - about 200 - whom he was helping to house have been able to return home safely, though no one is very sure what the future will bring.

Maggie Stanfield

Diary Dates

August

MONDAY 6TH - FRIDAY 10TH

6.00pm: St Catherine of Sienna by Nancy Murray, Dominican nun, £7

FRIDAY 10TH

1.30pm: Taizé chant with baroque lute £6

10.00pm: St Andrew Camerata, choral classics by candlelight, £10

SATURDAY 11TH

5.00pm: Taizé chant with baroque lute

SUNDAY 12TH FESTIVAL MASS

Gounod: Messe Solennelle de Sainte Cécile

MONDAY 13TH - FRIDAY 17TH

6.00pm: St Catherine of Sienna by Nancy Murray, Dominican nun, £7

FRIDAY 17TH

1.30pm: Taizé chant with baroque lute £6

SATURDAY 18TH 10PM

10.00pm: St Andrew Camerata, Faure Requiem by candlelight, £10

SUNDAY 19TH FESTIVAL MASS

Britten: Missa brevis

FRIDAY 24TH

1.30pm: Taizé chant with baroque lute £6

SUNDAY 26TH FESTIVAL MASS

Haydn Missa in Angustiis (Nelson Mass)

6.30pm Festival Evensong: Stanford in G & Bairstow Let all mortal flesh keep silence

September issue deadline : 25 August

Send any details to Jean Keltie or email: newsletter@osp.org.uk

Reloku

No. 24

This is a version of Sudoku, using letters and with a religious theme. Fill the grid in so every row, column and 3x3 box contains the following letters:

G O D C L A U S E

When completed, the grid will reveal an early stone inscription. Watch out for red herrings! This month's puzzle is rated easy. Solution next month.

This month's puzzle is rated easy.

			G					O
S	E	A		O			G	
G	O		L	U	S		D	
C			A		E		O	
	A	O			U			G
L		S		D		A	E	U
U	D		O				A	C
	C					S	U	
A	S			C				

Last month's solution, Jacobites, were supporters of the Stuart kings. The flight of James VII led to the establishment of OSP in 1689.

C	T	E	B	I	J	O	S	A
O	S	L	E	A	C	I	T	B
A	I	B	S	O	T	E	J	C
T	O	S	A	C	E	J	B	I
J	A	C	O	B	I	T	E	S
B	E	I	J	T	S	C	A	O
S	B	T	C	E	O	A	I	J
I	J	O	T	S	A	B	C	E
E	C	A	I	J	B	S	O	T

Calendar & Rotas for August 2007

Day & Observance	10.30 am High Mass				6.30 pm
	Readings	Readers	Intercessor	Offertory	Readings & Reader
August 5 10th Sunday after Pentecost	Ecclesiastes 1.2, 12-14; 2.18-23 Psalm 49.1-12 Colossians 3.1-11 Luke 12.13-21	Margaret Aspen John Dale	Jim Wynn-Evans	Maggie Stanfield Andy Collier	Evening Prayer said
Weekdays:	Mon 6 - THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD; Tue 7 - Boisil, prior of Melrose, c 642 Wed 8 - Dominic, priest and friar, 1221; Thu 9 - John Mason Neale, priest and hymnographer, 1866 Fri 10 - Lawrence, deacon & martyr at Rome, 258; Sat 11 - Clare of Assisi, religious, 1253				
August 12 MARY, MOTHER OF GOD	Isaiah 7.10-15 Ps 132.6-10,13-14 Galatians 4.4-7 Luke 1.46-55	Susanna Kerr Andrew Kerr	Sheila Brock	Rosemary Williams Sheila Miller	Evening prayer said
Weekdays:	Mon 13 - Jeremy Taylor, bishop of Down, Connor, Dromore, 1667 Tue 14 - Maximilien Kolbe, priest and martyr at Auschwitz, 1940				
August 19 12th Sunday after Pentecost	Jeremiah 23.23-29 Psalm 82 Hebrews 11.29-12.2 Luke 12.49-56	Alastair Learmont Elspeth Strachan	Margaret Aspen	Dick & Marjorie Turkington	Evening Prayer said
Weekdays:	Mon 20 - Bernard of Clairvaux, abbot and teacher, 1153; Fri 24 - St Bartholomew, apostle				
August 26 13th Sunday after Pentecost	Isaiah 58.9b-14 Psalm 103.1-8 Hebrews 12.18-29 Luke 13.10-17	Trevor Harding Helen Tyrrell	Pam Gilchrist	Elspeth Strachan Joan Burnside	Exodus 1.8-2.10 Matthew 16.13-20 Niall Franklin
Weekdays:	Mon 27 - Monnica, mother of Augustine of Hippo, 387; Tue 28 - Augustine of Hippo, bishop and teacher, 430 Wed 29 - The Beheading of St John the Baptist Fri 31 - Aidan of Lindisfarne; bishop, 651; Sat 1 - Giles of Provence, abbot, c 710				
September 2 14th Sunday after Pentecost	Sirach 10.12-18 Psalm 112 Heb 13.1-18,15-16 Luke 14.1,7-14	John Thompson Brenda White	Lynne Niven	Amy Richards Linda Griffiths	Exodus 3.1-15 Matthew 16.21-28 Nigel Cook
Weekdays:	Mon 3 - Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome & teacher, 604; Sat 8 - The Birth of Mary, Mother of the Lord				
September 9 15th Sunday after Pentecost	Deut 30.15-20 Psalm 1 Philemon 1-21 Luke 14.25-33	Hilary Campbell James Campbell	Bert Edgerton	Tina Wood Pam Gilchrist	Exodus 12.1-14 Matthew 18.15-20 Michael Thrusfield
Weekdays:	Thu 13 - Cyprian of Carthage, bishop & martyr, 258; Fri 14 - Holy Cross Day				

Month	Coffee Setup (9.30)	Coffee Server (10.30)	Morning Steward	Morning Sound	Evening Steward	Evening Sound
August	Volunteers wanted. Contact Janet de Vigne: 477 8197		Maisie Orr Frank Pottinger Kenneth Mackenzie	Peder Aspen		
September	Volunteers wanted. Contact Janet de Vigne: 477 8197		Mary Johnstone Bert Edgerton Mary Thorpe	Frank Ribbons	Bert Edgerton	Tim Blackmore

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