

T H E B U L L E T I N .

The Annunciation Marble Arch

OCTOBER 2014

EDITORIAL BY FR GERALD BEAUCHAMP

Our autumn events continue the Annunciation's centenary celebrations. In September we had a sensational dinner with the catering most generously provided by the Churchill Hotel. Ben Wegg-Prosser's ever-resourceful black book gave us three distinguished speakers: Alain de Botton, Dame Tessa Jowell MP and Matthew Parris. Thanks to everyone who made the event such a success.

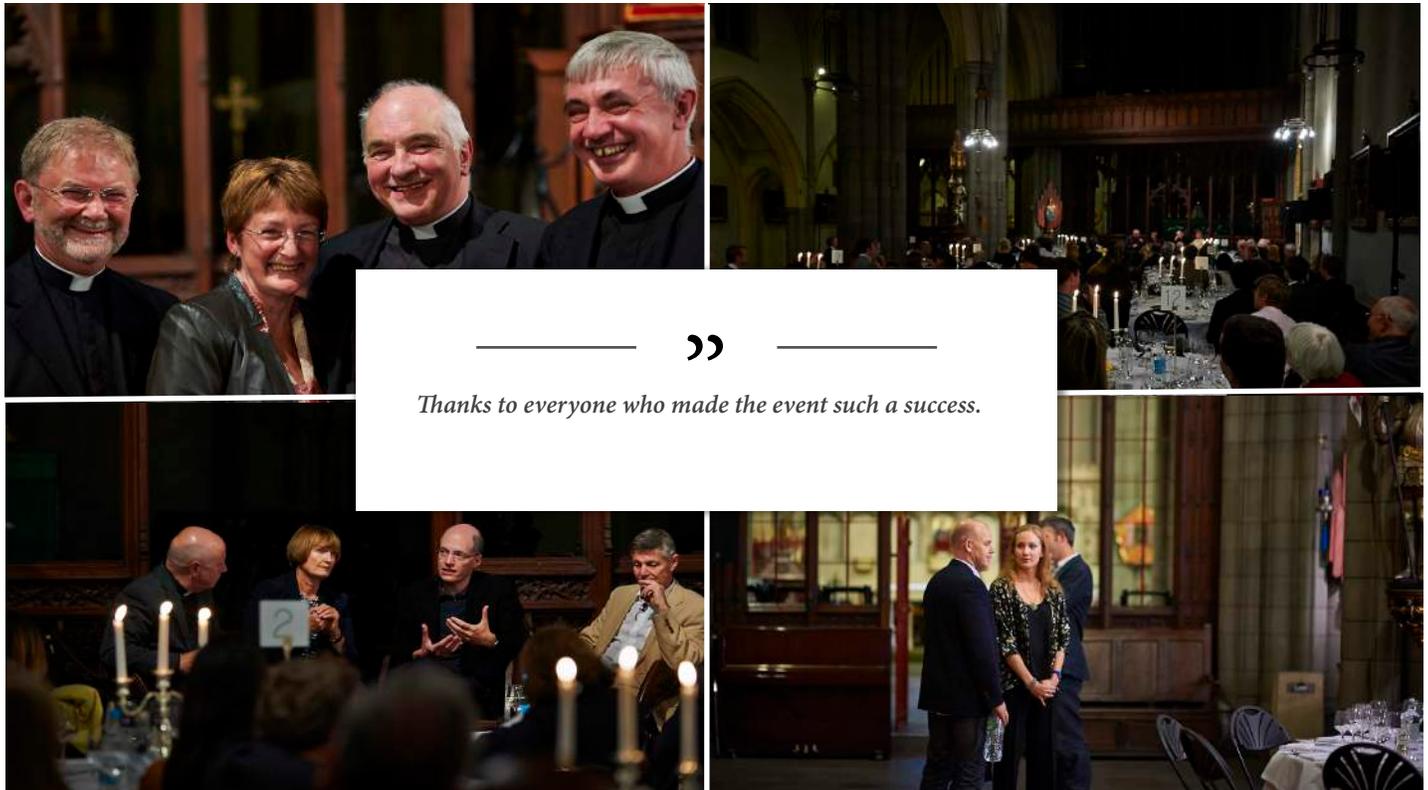
This month we have a concert produced by Jamie Lonsdale. Next month the Marylebone Interfaith Service will take place here. In December the Chaplaincy Among Deaf and Deaf Blind People Christmas Service will include the licensing of their new chaplain, the Revd Catherine Carlyon.

The Annunciation is now very much on the map in this part of London. With the doors open, a growing Sunday congregation, stronger connections with the neighbourhood (schools, hotels, Portman Estate and synagogues) we are developing an intentional community that can influence both church and society. But how will we do that?

One way is to grow in confidence as we address life's big issues. After the centenary dinner a number of people said that they would like to have asked questions. Tessa Jowell spoke up for the church's ministry. Alain de Botton had a 'religion for atheists' approach seeing the church as part of society's social capital. Matthew Parris charmed us and damned us in equal measure.

I think that the next stage is to deepen and develop the conversation. So I'm hosting an evening at the vicarage (4 Wyndham Place) on Tuesday 18 November, 8.00pm. Do come with your questions and let's search for a way of answering them.

Yours in Christ



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Thanks to everyone who made the event such a success.

IN CONVERSATION WITH...LAURA ROYDE

I am a Londoner and have always had a home in some part of the city mostly not far from here. For some years I was part-time in the calm of the New Forest with no neighbours, no light pollution and no noise. It was bliss and I loved it although my friends didn't think I would cope with the silence or the mud and laid bets as to how long I would last. My two sons were lucky to spend some of their childhood with that old fashioned swallows and amazons freedom, so rare these days and so hard to replicate in the middle of town.

Before children, who came late in my life, I had a career in the City as (the first female) Lloyd's Underwriting Agent but I did not return to it after the boys were born as there followed a number of years when I nursed my mother and then my father through their final illnesses. It was during this time I took on a variety of voluntary and charitable jobs, one of which was on the Research Ethics Committee at St. Mary's Hospital which is where I met Fr. Barrie Newton and was thus introduced to the Annunciation. I also worked for the Friends of St. Mary's, and the Paediatric Department as well as being a Governor of St. James and St. Michael's (now St. James and St. John's) Primary School. I also got to know Fr. Stephen who was the hospital chaplain. My interest in education and the difficulties parents have to grapple with grew and so I became a panel member on Schools Admission Appeals for Westminster. This, in turn, led to my conviction that this area of London was in desperate need of more places for boys at secondary level and so with Tim Carnegie and a small band of like-minded folk have spent the last two years setting up Marylebone Boys' School which finally opened its doors this term.

When I arrived at the Annunciation it was a very different place and had the reputation of the naughty child of the diocese, but the smiles and the welcome from the tiny congregation were huge and I found a peace in the liturgy which I realised I had been missing since school days when St. Cyprian's was my school church.



At the centenary dinner all the clergy who played a part in the recent history of the church were there and it felt like a family gathering, albeit on a grand scale! There was Fr Barrie who kept the place open for no pay and frequently little thanks for 12 years. Fr Alan Moses who with the Archdeacon positively schemed to find a long term solution, Bishop Michael Marshal and Soon who breathed a very different life into these stones and now Fr. Gerald who juggles with problems of scale that could not have been dreamt of.

So the Annunciation has been an important part of my life and I have been privileged to see and be part of the changes that have taken place and it is truly wonderful to see it flourishing in its centenary year.

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THE CENTENARY DINNER BY CAROLINE EXTEN-WRIGHT

On 16 September, the Church came to life, transformed from its usual solemnity by glittering candles and fine food on the tables, courtesy of the kind generosity of The Churchill Hyatt Hotel, and the speakers' gift of their time. We came together as a community to celebrate 100 years and to look forward to the next 100. The three speakers set out their stall: Alain de Botton with a focus on psychological need met by pastoral care, wisdom and meeting loneliness, owing to his position as an atheist. Equally, Matthew Parris held the same post, and challenged more aggressively that the church unduly focused on suffering not optimism. Tessa Jowell brought welcome relief as a believer. While recognising the long-held concern at the apparent retreat of faith, taking as her cue Matthew Arnold's famed "Dover Beach", she nonetheless felt confident the church could reach out and religious space be maintained, the question being how. Would this mean through Disestablishment? Would it mean reunification with a reformed Roman Catholicism? Would it mean prayer and vigil in home-based gatherings? Into this mix, London and the changes around The Annunciation would also bring its own challenges and opportunities.

All the speakers recognised the positive impact of the Church in effecting change, with Wilberforce and the lead of Anglicanism in anti-slavery gaining a mention. The complexity of the human experience and the desire for social justice informed the debate, with Father Victor Stock, author and former Dean of Guildford, dexterously channelling the flow, with many a witty and well-timed intervention. The discussions concluded with a real sense of vibrancy and community, and perhaps gauntlets to be picked up by the congregation. Over dinner, old friendships were renewed and new ones formed, on what was a very special occasion.



*We came together as a community to celebrate
100 years*



NOVEMBER EVENTS

01 NOV.

Saturday 1 November, 5.00pm at St Paul's Cathedral. Diocesan Confirmation Service at which Jethro Kruger and Quyen Chu are being confirmed

11 NOV.

Tuesday 11 November, 7.00pm Parochial Church Council Meeting in Church.

13 NOV.

Thursday 13 November, 6.45pm The Marylebone Interfaith Service. Everyone welcome.

18 NOV.

Tuesday 18 November, 8.00pm Conversation for adults about life and faith at 4 Wyndham Place W1H 2PS.

EDITORIAL NEWS

Kashani Wijetunga who co-founded the Bulletin with Caroline Exten-Wright has now returned to work full-time so she has now handed her role on to Niku Banaie. Many thanks to Kashani for all her work on this project and we look forward to the publication going from strength to strength.



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