

# THE WHITE ROSE

The Parish Newsletter of Old Saint Paul's      November 2013

## Remember, Remember



November is a month of Remembrance. For many people it starts with fireworks and bonfires to 'Remember, remember the fifth of November.' Whenever I recall that Bonfire Night started, not with fireworks but with finger-pointing, and was historically about suspicion against Catholics by a Protestant society, I start to hope that in multi-cultural Scotland, where sectarianism is still an issue, then the fifth of November is not something to remember, but something to forget.

But don't put the fireworks away yet. November is about other, more positive, acts of remembrance. All Saints Day and S. Andrew's Day are the 'bookends' of the month, framing it in celebration and hope, as we remember people who have been signs of Christ's love of God

and neighbour – all God's saints. They are surely worth a firework or two, and a bonfire to remind us of the light and warmth which they reflected into the world, and which they continue to reflect on us through their prayers. All Saints will be celebrated at High Mass on Sunday 3rd November at 10.30am, and S. Andrew at Mass at 12.20pm on Friday 29 November.

Then there are other, more sombre, acts of Remembrance. On All Souls Day we remember all the people we love, who have been part of our lives as we were of theirs, and who, in death, we have handed back to God in the hope of the Resurrection. On Sunday 3rd November at 6.30pm we will celebrate the Mass of the Departed, reading the names of the dead and praying for them as we lay a flower to remember them. And

on Remembrance Sunday, 10th November, we stand in silence to remember all those killed in the wars of the past 100 years.

So, while All Saints and S. Andrew are about Remembrance that celebrates life, All Souls and Remembrance Sunday are about Remembrance that faces death.

Funerals, like All Souls and Remembrance, are a time when we have to face death. Sometimes I am asked at funerals to use a reading which people think expresses compassion by making death seem less real. It is by Henry Scott Holland, and begins, 'Death is nothing at all. It does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room. Nothing has happened.' But I have always felt uneasy about using it, because it says things

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# Saint Margaret's Easter Road



Last year Bishop John asked Old St Paul's if we could look after the small Episcopal Church of St Margaret of Scotland on Easter Road after the retirement of Fr Geoff Hart and so from February I have had responsibility for the congregation. It has been a great experience, not without its challenges, and it has been good praying and working with the congregation to plan for mission and growth.

The church began in the 1870s with mission work among the workers who lived around the St Margaret's Railway Works led by two remarkable ladies Marion and Margaret Weir who were influenced by the Oxford Movement (it is interesting how often Episcopalian home mission work at that time was led by women). St Margaret became the patron of the church built in 1880 and even today there are lots of Margarets in the congregation. More information about the church can be found on our website: [www.stmegs.co.uk](http://www.stmegs.co.uk). There have been a number of links with OSP in the recent past, Fr Jim Wynn-Evans was formerly rector

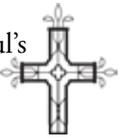
of St Margaret's and it was served from OSP for a few years around 1990.

Today it is a small and mainly elderly congregation in a mixed area which includes places among the most deprived in Edinburgh and some prosperous new developments. A large part of the congregation's income comes from a private Evangelical school, Mannafields, which occupies the old school buildings. The people of St Margaret's are very welcoming, the church is in good repair and well-heated and the Sunday Eucharist is sung with reverence; there are also good relations with the local London Road Church of Scotland. Our plan was to build on this by making the church more visible, with notice boards painted bright red and a new Episcopalian 'pub sign', and encouraging activities during the week which reach out to the local population. There are monthly film nights on a social justice theme, in Lent we held Christian meditation which was attended by people working in the area as well as members of the congregation, a popular Tuesday

Mass has been started and a group from the congregation has started a parent & toddler group which is obviously filling a need to judge by the number of baby buggies parked in the church! We have seen a 20% increase in attendance in the last few months but things are still fragile, especially financially. Please keep St Margaret's in your prayers as we pray for OSP.

The congregation value the link with OSP and it has been good to have members visiting St Margaret's for Mass. If you haven't come down to Easter Road yet, do. Mass is at 10.45am on Sundays and 12.30 on Tuesdays. On Sunday 17th November at 10.45am we are celebrating our patronal feastday and Bishop Richard Holloway will be our preacher – with Fr Ian's permission we invite all members of OSP down to Easter Road to join us!

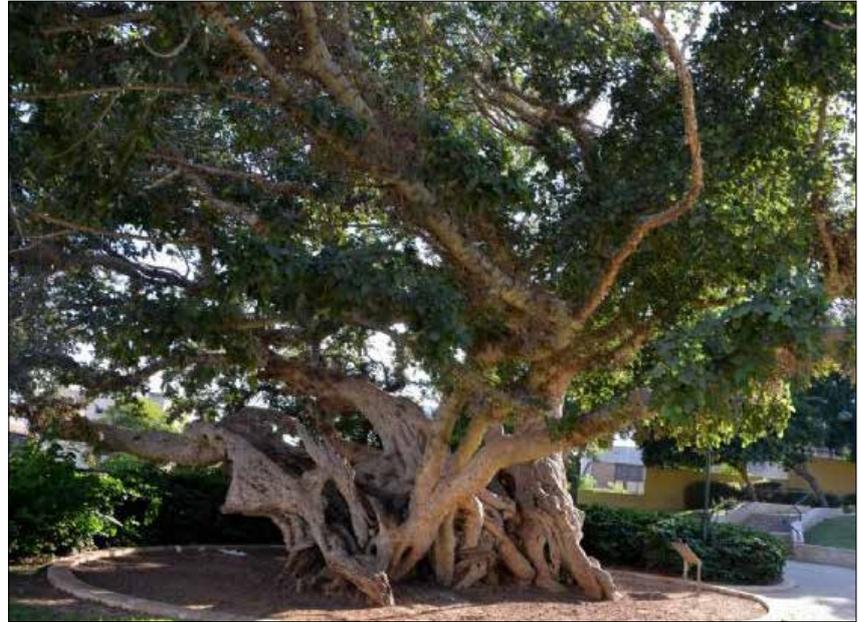
*Fr Stephen Holmes*



# Bible Plants: The Sycomore

The Sycomore is a species of Fig, *Ficus sycomorus*, also known as the Mulberry Fig, widely distributed in southern Africa and found also in the Holy Land.

Probably the best known reference to the Sycomore in the Bible comes from Luke 19,4 where the small Zacchaeus climbed into a Sycomore tree to get a better view of Jesus. But botanically a more interesting quotation comes from Amos 7,14 where the prophet exclaims that 'I am a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees' (RSV spelling). What is a dresser? The answer lies in the curious biology of this Fig. The flowers are fertilised by a small wasp that lays its egg in the ovary of the flower. As the young fig develops the wasp larva grows slowly within it where it has its personal food supply. The presence of the larva appears to delay maturing of the fruit. The problem can be overcome by slashing (dressing) the surface of the fruit and this enables ripening



to occur normally. Amos was therefore a fig-slasher - when he wasn't guarding his flock and listening to the Lord threatening the downfall of Judah.

The spelling of syc(a)omore often confuses even lexicographers. The 'a' spelling is best used for *Acer pseudoplatanus*, the familiar tree introduced to Britain by the

Romans, and the 'o' for the fig. The wood of both species makes excellent coffins!

*John Dale*

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that have to be unsaid almost immediately afterwards. Death is not nothing, it does count, and something has happened. It is surely hard to think of the millions of war dead, or of the death of someone close to us, and then to say that 'Death is nothing at all'. Death affects us all profoundly, whether a peaceful death at the end of a long life, a violent death in the trenches, or the tragic death of a child.

To be fair to Henry Scott Holland, I don't think he would have wanted his words used as they are. They are part of a sermon in which he tried to contrast two attitudes to death, and to say that they are both equally unreal – one that represents how we would like death to be ('Nothing at all'), and another which sees death as meaningless termination. The sermon invites the Christian to take these human attitudes seriously, and to bring them together in the Cross, to find in Christ's death and

resurrection both the cold reality of death and its transformation through love into eternal life.

This month of Remembrance is a time when we allow the liturgy and the season to form us more deeply in this, to help us to face death as we face life, in faith and with love.

*Fr Ian*

# How can Scotland blossom?

Debates about next year's Scottish referendum tend to be curiously dry affairs, choked by statistical back and forth about the economic viability of independence.

But 'How Can Scotland Blossom?', a discussion at the Radical Book Fair last week featuring journalist Lesley Riddoch and former Bishop of Edinburgh Richard Holloway, was a welcome exception: an inspiring exploration of the possibilities Scottish nationhood would afford for designing a new political framework that might encourage much greater civic participation. Indeed both speakers have recently published books suggesting principles that might guide the development of a new Scottish state.

Riddoch opened the evening by summarising the essential themes of her book, 'Blossom', which examines the widespread observation that Scotland's political culture has rather more in common with that of our Nordic neighbours than much of the rest of the United Kingdom. As in Scandinavia Scotland's outlook is essentially social democratic, strongly supportive of the principle that society should exercise collective action - through effective government - to design a stable and socially just economic and political framework.

But while respectful of the value and achievements of Scottish social democracy, Riddoch argued that an independent Scotland would have much to learn from the Nordic model. Our present system of government is much too top-heavy, with power concentrated centrally at the expense of local

forms of government. Remote administration of well meaning public programmes breeds political apathy, infantilises citizens and forms cultures of dependency. Independence would offer an opportunity to develop a more supple, decentralised and democratic political system facilitating much richer grassroots engagement. Riddoch noted various ways in which Scandinavian states fostered greater community involvement through wider and more localised distribution of political power.

Richard Holloway cautioned that an independent Scotland should take care to guard against another danger of an over mighty state: the persecution of minorities.

Summarising the argument in his booklet 'A Plea for a Secular Scotland', Holloway said that humans long ago conceived the necessity of developing community to provide some security against the harshness of atomised life within a pure state of nature. But the necessary cost of doing so was the entrustment of power to

government, which has proved ever susceptible to the temptation of arrogating power to itself at the expense of citizens, and minority groups in particular.

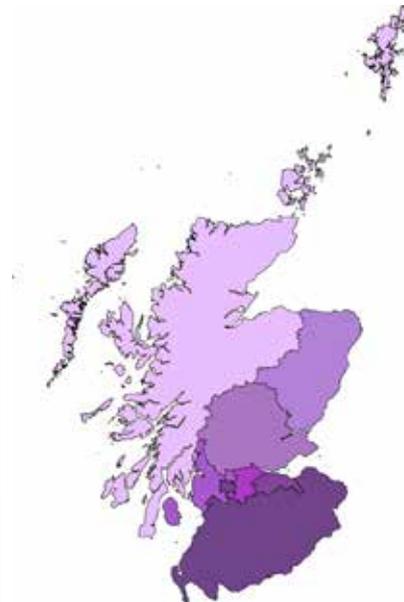
One chronic issue has been the tendency of governments through history to favour one religious group or another, generating cycles of persecution that were ended only by the emergence of the secular state, which has evolved over the past 200 years through the acceptance and adoption of two crucial Enlightenment principles: first, that religious leaders should only be allowed to exercise authority within their own faith communities; and second, that the state should maintain an equal distance from all religions.

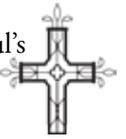
Holloway noted that the difficulty of maintaining neutrality was highlighted recently here in Scotland by the gay marriage debate, the government coming under intense pressure by religious organisations to grant particular concessions regarding the application of the new legislation. Indeed religious leaders went further, lobbying to seek to ensure that their own understanding of marriage continued to be the only one permissible for society as a whole.

Conservative religion poses a special challenge for government, Holloway said, because it can't in good conscience recognise the primacy of secular over divine authority: it is incumbent upon the believer to prioritise God's revealed law over secular legislation.

Reading from his booklet, *A Plea for a Secular Scotland*, Holloway argued:

'That is why, as the pace of social change quickens in Scotland,





# Local Tourist: Edinburgh Dungeon

**B**e afraid, be very afraid... well, no not really, but this tourist spot just down the road from OSP next to the train station is a good laugh that still keeps you on your toes waiting for the next scare! It took a while for me to get there but with the wonderful company of the lovely Elly, I finally ventured into the dark recesses of Scotland's seedy history...

You get to start your tour with a photo op of you and your friends – one of which gets to be the victim in a beheading, then tidbits of information await while you wait for the tour to start. For example, did you know it is still illegal in Edinburgh to be drunk in possession of a cow? Really?? When is the last time you saw a cow in town (not counting the fiberglass ones)? The eagle-eyed spelling police, aka Elly, spotted a couple of typos in our reading material, one of which was in the German

we must reassert the founding principle of the secular state and claim it anew for our nation. In the name of that principle we will continue to extend toleration towards institutions that are themselves intolerant; but we will not permit them to export their institutional prejudices in the secular sphere. They may continue to discriminate against and women and gays in the sanctuary; but we will not permit them to do so in the public square.'

Suffice to say, an excellent discussion led by two extremely thoughtful commentators.

*Justin Reynolds*



notice, but the main idea was still understandable.

There are 11 actor-led shows throughout the dungeon, the whole tour takes a time-flying 80 minutes. Seriously, I hadn't realised we had been in that long! Stages, scenes and special effects wait for you while you hear some of Scotland's harrowing tales from the last 1000 years. You start off in a courtroom for judgement – don't avert your eyes, you will get called on – then make your way through the tunnels for (among other things): a boat ride, visit the caves of Galloway to visit Sawney Bean's cannibal family, witness a dissection (with gracious thanks from Burke and Hare), make offerings in a graveyard to appease the spirits and even come face to disembodied head of the big man himself – no, not Alex Salmond – William Wallace! He was my favourite, very clever. Top it all off with an optional ride on the drop zone (I

was glad it wasn't that high!) and a tour of the mirror maze.

I spent much of my time looking around trying to find where/who would scare us next which did take away from the tour a little – just sit back and enjoy! A good jump is good for a laugh, although I did enjoy seeing everyone else freaked out.

Discounted advance tickets can be purchased or coupons can be found on the back of Lothian bus tickets (£6 off) to save money. Even with the discounts I found it a tad expensive but it was all good fun. I would personally steer clear from the pricey photos from the drop zone and execution however if you are so inclined, you could have one put into a travel mug or on a mouse mat. These little tourist spots are there to be enjoyed by all, not just the visitors, so make a visit to the dungeons today... if you dare!

*Kimberley Moore Ede*

# A coffee with ... ... Mary Jeffreys-Jones

I was born in the Yorkshire town of Sedbergh, the third of four girls, and educated in an Anglican convent boarding school in Berkshire. I enjoyed my schooldays very much and the beauty of the daily services with the music, liturgy, incense and intensely devotional atmosphere made a lasting impression on me, and fostered my life-long love of high Episcopalian worship. On leaving school, I trained as a nurse in Oxford before moving to Edinburgh forty years ago with my then husband, who was a teacher and political activist, and later a publisher.

I worked in Portobello and Craigmillar for twenty years as a district nurse during which time I also took a degree in nursing at QMUC, and after my marriage ended, I looked after our daughter Effie as a single parent. Some years later, I was introduced, by a friend in the Bach Choir, to Rhodri, a professor of American history at Edinburgh University and we have been married now for twenty two years. I retired from nursing in 2001.

A friend who, ironically, was a lay member of the clergy at St Giles, advised me which were the “highest” Episcopalian churches in Edinburgh. Old St Paul’s was my first port of call and I looked no further. I have been attending since 1973.

The two strongest influences on my life have both been women! My father was absent from our home, but my mother was a remarkable

woman who single-handedly brought up her four girls and gave us all a wonderful example of strength, resourcefulness and grace under pressure. She had practical skills, for example, she made all our clothes, and she created an atmosphere of security and dignity in our childhood, but she also offered a wonderful intellectually stimulating atmosphere for all of us - and our friends! She loved exploring ideas with young people and encouraged us to question and reflect on everything.

My other great influence had some features in common with my mother. Sister Brigitta was the Sister Superior of our convent school and although her demeanour was low key and gentle, she was a formidable intellect and academic, who also encouraged us to think for ourselves and to question everything - including religion - and to reach our own authentic conclusions. She was sent to run a sister house in Puna, in India and was eventually given leave to remain a professed nun but to live in an ashram and explore spirituality in a wider context.

Essentially I see my most fulfilling role in life as housewife and home-maker (a pity one almost has to feel apologetic about saying that, these days) and I’m always happy and relaxed when I’m engaged in home-making activities - even though it might look to others like work! I’ve always got some sewing project on the go, I have an allotment, whose harvest I turn into jams, jellies and chutneys,

and I’m a “happy snapper” with my camera, playing with Photoshop and creating collages. I do get out however! I have been a member of the Bach Choir for forty years and I belong to a book club, which keeps me plugged in to contemporary fiction, currently A L Kennedy’s latest. I’m a great fan of female American novelists like Jodie Picoult, Anita Shreve and, particularly Elizabeth Berg who combines penetrating psychological insight with beautiful style.

I’m generally a happy and optimistic person - perhaps because I think that if you expect the worst, you are nearly always pleasantly surprised! (Discuss) The one thing that makes me really angry and despairing is the madness of waging war in the name of religion - any religion. It always seems to me a grotesque distortion and negation of the true insights of the great spiritual traditions.

I’m happiest with friends and family - it’s people who are of first importance to me. I’m looking forward, in the new year, to the return to Edinburgh of my daughter Effie and her two children, who will all be staying with us temporarily, till they get settled. I love being a granny. I’m also the happy step-mother to Rhodri’s two daughters.

Hope is founded, for me on a realistic but persistent faith in human nature - that, despite it all, and the messy business of life, good often does prevail, and - sometimes - we see sense. That



## Relocation

**T**welve years ago we bought a field in Kintyre, with views across to Gigha, Islay and Jura. We designed a house and began landscaping a garden to occupy us in the early years of our retirement. We wanted to retain our link with Old St Paul's, first forged in 1997, and the first summer we surprised ourselves by getting up at 5 each Sunday morning to drive 165 miles through spectacular scenery to High Mass. Later on it became weekends of one or two nights in the city and the (retirement) working week in the country.

It was always our intention that before the creative pleasure became a burden of maintenance we would relocate to Edinburgh. We thought such a move might take years rather than weeks to accomplish. So, with no great urgency, earlier this year we put the wheels in motion. It has all happened much quicker than we expected. Between the bloom of spring bulbs and falling autumn leaves - with the bonus of an abundant harvest - we have sold, purchased, and on 1st November moved into an eighth floor apartment on the Newhaven waterfront, with views extending across to the Lomond Hills, taking in the Forth bridges, Edinburgh Castle and Arthur's Seat. We look forward to having time to enjoy the capital's culture and being just three miles from OSP.

*Joan and Rodney Matthews*

kind of hope is inherent in us or we couldn't live. Optimist again!

My dinner guests would have to include J S Bach, whose music I revere, because I'd like to know the man behind the genius. Two self-absorbed but immensely gifted artists, Charles Rennie Macintosh and Clarice Cliffe would argue about creativity, Art and Life. And to keep the peace between all three - Nelson Mandela.

Since my retirement I have become very involved with "Scottish Love in Action" which is helping Dalit (untouchable) orphans in Tuni, in India. The work started thirteen years ago when fifty Dalit children were offered a home, healthcare and education. Now we are caring for 500 children! At the moment I am helping three days a week in the office in Edinburgh (completely staffed by volunteers apart from one paid worker) and I have also visited the children in India.

Obviously funds are constantly needed to support this vital work. On Saturday 16th November we have a fund-raising coffee morning at 20 Merchiston Gardens, selling jams, jellies, chutneys of all sorts. So if you can, please come along to support it, have a coffee and who knows, pick up a few Christmas gifts!

*Mary was talking to Mhairéad  
Monelle*

**3 November ALL SAINTS***High Mass*

Revelation 7.9-14; Psalm 34.1-10; I John 3.1-3; Matthew 5.1-12

*A Mass for the Departed (6.30pm)*

Isaiah 61.1-3; John 6.37-40

*Weekday Observances*

Thu 7–Willibrord, archbishop of Utrecht and missionary to Frisia, 739; Sat 9–George Hay Forbes, priest at Burntisland, 1875;

**10 November 25th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST***High Mass*

Job 19.23-27a; Psalm 17.1-9 2; Thess 2.1-5,13-17; Luke 20.27-38

*Evensong*

Joshua 24.1-3a,14-25; Matthew 25.1-13

*Weekday Observances*

Mon 11–Martin of Tours, bishop, c 397; Tue 12–Machar, bishop in Aberdeen, c 600; Thu 14–Consecration of Samuel Seabury, 1784; Sat 16–St Margaret of Scotland, queen, 1093

**17 November 26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST***High Mass*

Malachi 4.1-2a; Psalm 98; 2 Thessalonians 3.6-13; Luke 21.5-19

*Evensong*

Judges 4.1-7; Matthew 25.14-30

*Weekday Observances*

Mon 18–Fergus, bishop in NE Scotland, c 750; Tue 19–Hilda of Whitby, abbess, 680; Thu 21–Columban, bishop on the Don, 615; Fri 22–Cecilia, martyr at Rome, c 230; Sat 23–Clement of Rome, bishop and martyr, c 100

**24 November CHRIST THE KING***High Mass*

Jeremiah 23.1-6; Psalm 46; Colossians 1.11-20; Luke 23.33-43/18.9-14

*Evensong*

Zechariah 9.9-16; Matthew 21.1-13

*Weekday Observances*

Sat 30–St Andrew, apostle, patron of Scotland

**1 December 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT***High Mass*

Isaiah 2.1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13.11-14; Matthew 24.36-44

*Evensong*

Isaiah 64.1-9; Mark 13.24-37

*Weekday Observances*

Mon 2–Nicholas Ferrar, deacon at Little Gidding, 1637; Tue 3–Francis Xavier, priest and missionary in Japan, 1552; Wed 4–Clement of Alexandria, teacher, c 210; Fri 6–Nicholas of Myra, bishop, 4th cent; Sat 7–Ambrose of Milan, bishop and teacher, 397

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**Next Issue Deadline**

The deadline for the December/ January issue of the White Rose is Monday 25th November. Please email contributions to media@osp.org.uk.