



The Chapels Royal of St Peter ad Vincula and St John the Evangelist
HM Tower of London

Dear Friends,

I was delighted with our Advent Sunday Carol Service on November 28th and would like to thank all those who took part. For the first time this year, we had an almost full chapel. It was also a pleasure to welcome many visitors to the chapel who, I hope, will always feel welcome to return on any Sunday.

The wearing of masks

Sadly, and I hope just for the time being, I must ask you all to wear a mask when you come to church, apart from those who are exempt. This is to ensure we protect and care for each other. The chapel is a relatively small building with poor ventilation. The cleaners are now regularly back in the chapel and we have restricted the use of the crypt. This is already having an impact on the many carol services and receptions that are due to take place in December. I want to assure you that I am doing everything I can to make sure everyone is safe and welcome in the chapel.

Part of this decision is based on the following Government recommendations: -

The new COVID rules mandating wearing face coverings in shops and in other settings are now in force. There's more guidance on the gov.uk site, Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The guideline for other settings is: 'You are expected and recommended to continue wearing a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where you come into contact with people you don't usually meet, and where the risk of transmission is likely to be greater'.

Thank you in anticipation of your support. Please keep the chapel and all the many services to be held there in your thoughts and prayers over the coming weeks. With my fond greetings to you all, Roger.

Sunday Service Details

5th December 2021 - Advent 2

0915 Holy Communion (White Tower)
1100 Choral Matins St Peter ad Vincula

Readings

Malachi 3: 1-4.
Luke 3: 1-6.

Collect for Advent 2

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by thy patience, and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Thought for the Day

From the Reverend Cortland Fransella

<https://youtu.be/lWbqu88Qhcc>

Christmas Services

Sunday 19th December

0915 Holy Communion (Chapel of St John the Evangelist)

1100 Christmas State Carol Service

(Please email Debbie in advance to be added to the guest list)

Friday 24th December

1600 Carols around the Crib

1800 First Mass of Christmas

Saturday 25th December

1000 Choral Matins

Sunday 26th December

1100 Said Holy Communion

Sunday 2nd January

No services

Poem

The Irish poet Patrick Kavanagh, having left his home in Ulster for Dublin, addresses his innermost self in the opening lines of his poem *Advent*, bemoaning his loss of innocence through self-indulgence. He sets out to restore his soul to be ready for the coming of Christ in the form of two sonnets, whose structure of 28 lines may suggest the four-week period of Advent.

Kavanagh wants the reader to join with him, in a child-like re-awakening, to 'the newness' in his stale world. He exhorts us to rediscover 'the luxury of a child's soul' and find a place of peace and calm; his was a particular Ulster hill for which he now longs.

In the second sonnet, he celebrates 'the ordinary plenty' of everyday life and declares himself rich. He recognises that even the most casual greeting can carry the breath of God.

We can trust, like Kavanagh, that our efforts to wait in hope this Advent may be fulfilled in the joy of Epiphany, when Christ comes 'with a January flower'.

Advent

We have tested and tasted too much, lover-
Through a chink too wide there comes in no wonder.
But here in the Advent-darkened room
Where the dry black bread and the sugarless tea
Of penance will charm back the luxury
Of a child's soul, we'll return to Doom
The knowledge we stole but could not use.

And the newness that was in every stale thing
When we looked at it as children: the spirit-shocking
Wonder in a black slanting Ulster hill
Or the prophetic astonishment in the tedious talking
Of an old fool will awake for us and bring
You and me to the yard gate to watch the whins
And the bog-holes, cart-tracks, old stables where Time begins.

O after Christmas we'll have no need to go searching
For the difference that sets an old phrase burning-
We'll hear it in the whispered argument of a churning
Or in the streets where the village boys are lurching.
And we'll hear it among decent men too
Who barrow dung in gardens under trees,
Wherever life pours ordinary plenty.

Won't we be rich, my love and I, and
God we shall not ask for reason's payment,
The why of heart-breaking strangeness in dreeping hedges
Nor analyse God's breath in common statement.
We have thrown into the dust-bin the clay-minted wages
Of pleasure, knowledge and the conscious hour-
And Christ comes with a January flower.

Patrick Kavanagh (1904-67)

Jigsaw

The Christmas decorations have gone up around the Tower, and this year they are bigger than ever. Based on the Tower's history as a menagerie, spectacular displays of festive decorations and illuminated animal-themed areas decorate the fortress - from majestic elephants to a twinkling winter wonderland scene where polar bears roam.

Below is the huge (22ft) Christmas tree on Tower Green.

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=392d5df4f0e2>



A Prayer

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very poorly, amongst whom we name: Lucy, Judy, Heather, Pat, Lorraine, Sue, Mark, Madeleine, Vivienne, Derek, Maria, Ann, Gordon and Bridget.

RIP

Peter Bayley (Priest).

Our Coronavirus Prayer

God of love,
We ask for your blessing on
those who are ill,
those who are vulnerable
those who are worried about
themselves and those they love,
and on those who mourn.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With best wishes and prayers, Roger



Canon Roger J Hall MBE
Deputy Priest in Ordinary to HM the Queen
HM Tower of London
07908 413045
Roger.Hall@hrp.org.uk
Twitter @RogerHall53