



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

Dear friends,

I wonder how much you know about Mellitus? He was the first Bishop of London, sent to this country by Pope Gregory I ('the Great') in the year 601. There is an image of him in front of the altar in St Paul's Cathedral; the London Diocesan clergy training college, which a friend of ours is currently attending, is named for him. In 601 St Augustine of Canterbury had already been in this country for a few years and needed reinforcements. A famous letter from Pope Gregory to Mellitus, recorded by the Venerable Bede, obliquely suggests that Augustine's full-frontal assault on paganism might not have been achieving what the Pope had wished. The letter includes the following:

*'Tell Augustine that he should by no means destroy the temples of the gods but rather the idols within those temples. Let him, after he has purified them with holy water, place altars and relics of the saints in them. For, if those temples are well built, they should be converted from the worship of demons to the service of the true God. Thus, seeing that their places of worship are not destroyed, the people will banish error from their hearts and come to places familiar and dear to them in acknowledgement and worship of the true God. Further, since it has been their custom to slaughter oxen in sacrifice, they should receive some solemnity in exchange. Let them therefore, on the day of the dedication of their churches, or on the feast of the martyrs whose relics are preserved in them, build themselves huts around their one-time temples and celebrate the occasion with religious feasting. They will sacrifice and eat the animals not any more as an offering to the devil, but for the glory of God to whom, as the giver of all things, they will give thanks for having been satiated. Thus, if they are not deprived of all exterior joys, they will more easily taste the interior ones. For surely it is impossible to efface all at once everything from their strong minds, just as, when one wishes to reach the top of a mountain, he must climb by stages and step by step, not by leaps and bounds.... Mention this to our brother the bishop [Augustine], that he may dispose of the matter as he sees fit according to the conditions of time and place.'*

This is a piece of change-management advice worthy of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century management consultancy manual: don't waste good solid buildings; let the people go on gorging themselves on meat but change the focus of their feasting; don't make them miserable but redirect their enjoyment; above all, don't rush things. Mellitus presumably both passed on this advice and followed it himself. He achieved widespread conversions and founded the original St Paul's Cathedral in 604. So far, so good, but he was later exiled from London by the pagan successors to his patron the king of Essex, following the latter's death around 616. The king of Kent, Mellitus's other patron, died at about the same time, forcing Mellitus to take refuge in Gaul. He returned to England the following year, after the Kentish king's successor had been converted to Christianity, but he was unable to return to London, whose inhabitants remained pagan. Mellitus was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 619. It rather looks as though Augustine's more uncompromising tactics won out because by 617 Canterbury had become safely Christian, but London remained pagan. What if Mellitus had ignored papal advice and had gone instead with Augustine's aggressive attack on paganism? Might London have become a Christian city sooner? Might the successors of the king of Essex have become Christian rather than adhering to their gods? We can only speculate. It will have to remain one of those great historical might-have-beens. Meanwhile we continue to honour Mellitus as the first Bishop of London, who went on to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Archbishop Sarah has now followed in his footsteps.

With all good wishes, Cortland.

**Sunday Service Details for 15 February 2026**  
**The Sunday Next before Lent - Quinquagesima**  
**0930 Said Holy Communion in the Chapel of St John the Evangelist**  
**in the White Tower**

Readings: 1 Corinthians 13:1-end and Luke 18:31-end

**The Collect for the Day**

**O LORD**, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth;  
Send thy Holy Ghost and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity,  
the very bond of peace and of all virtues,  
without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee.  
Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake.

**Poem of the week: Pax by D H Lawrence**

D H Lawrence is probably better known to some for his novels rather than for his verse, but he was as much a poet as a novelist. Many will associate him with explicitly sensual writing, but it is clear from this poem at least that he had a religious side. The poem's title *Pax* is the Latin for peace. Lawrence was a keen observer of animals and often wrote poems about them in a way which could be considered anthropomorphic – that is, attributing human characteristics to them. Here he effectively does the reverse, by suggesting that the way for the Christian to inhabit God's world is to be like a cat sleeping by the hearth in God's house. The first two lines of the poem, standing alone, give no clear indication that this is coming, although the word 'creature' is of course used to mean, in general, anything created but, more specifically, an animal. The third line makes the analogy explicit and the whole of the second verse elaborates on the theme. The final verse takes us into a metaphor – 'Sleeping on the hearth of the living world'- which is then developed to complete the thought. You may or may not agree with the statement in the opening two lines. You may feel that the image is too passive and omits the need for the Christian to be active. Nevertheless, likening the believer to one who draws reassurance from the simple presence of the great Protector is surely valid in itself.

**Pax.**

All that matters is to be at one with the living God  
to be a creature in the house of the God of Life.

Like a cat asleep on a chair  
at peace, in peace  
and at one with the master of the house, with the mistress,  
at home, at home in the house of the living,  
sleeping on the hearth, and yawning before the fire.

Sleeping on the hearth of the living world  
yawning at home before the fire of life  
feeling the presence of the living God  
like a great reassurance  
a deep calm in the heart  
a presence  
as of the master sitting at the board  
in his own and greater being,  
in the house of life.

**D H Lawrence (1885–1930)**

## **Music: Deep River, by Michael Tippett**

While we are temporarily out of the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula, Colm and the choir have made some recordings for us to listen to. Colm writes: "This week's piece, which goes out with this Newsletter, is Michael Tippett's *Deep River (from 5 Negro Spirituals)*. Michael Tippett's arrangement of Deep River forms the final movement of his oratorio *A Child of Our Time* (1939–1941). It offers a tantalising glimmer of hope and peace after the work's depiction of human oppression. In a manner akin to Bach using Chorales in his Passions, Tippett uses African-American spirituals throughout *A Child of Our Time* to provide moments of reflection and calm.

*Deep River* conveys a yearning to 'cross over' into a 'land where all is peace,' expressing the plight of oppressed peoples everywhere. Tippett commented that the piece is like 'spring with an ache in it,' embodying a muted form of hope. Sadly, the issues that Tippett was exploring in *A Child of Our Time* are as relevant today as when he wrote it, giving us all the more reason to perform it.'

### **Deep River**

Deep river,  
My home is over Jordan.  
Deep river, Lord,  
I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don't you want to go,  
To the Gospel feast;  
That Promised Land,  
Where all is peace?

Oh, deep river, Lord,  
I want to cross over into campground.

### **Traditional African-American Spiritual**

**Jigsaw** This week's picture is of a cat sleeping by a hearth, picking up the image in the D H Lawrence poem *Pax*. You can find the jigsaw [here](#).



## **Prayers**

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name: Ciara, Louise, Stanley, John, Rob, Kofi, Nick, John, Donald, Christopher and Brian.

## **RIP**

David Thomas MVO (former Crown Jeweller).

## **Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine and the countries of the Middle East:**

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine and the Middle East today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,  
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,  
for wisdom, discernment, and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,  
that you would hold and protect them.

This we pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen.

With best wishes to all, Cortland.



The Reverend Cortland Fransella  
Assistant priest, Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London  
Deputy Priest in Ordinary to HM the King  
[Cortland.Fransella@hrp.org.uk](mailto:Cortland.Fransella@hrp.org.uk)

## **Our Safeguarding Officer**

Anna Kimber, Deputy Governor and Head of Operations, HM Tower of London: [Anna.Kimber@hrp.org.uk](mailto:Anna.Kimber@hrp.org.uk) Telephone: 07785 954549.

## **Donations to the Chapel**

We are always grateful for financial contributions to help us in our work. If you would like to support the Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London by setting up a Standing Order, making a one-off donation to Chapel Funds or setting up a Direct Debit, this is how to do it.

### **Thank you in advance for your generosity.**

**STANDING ORDER.** This is our preferred method because it ensures that we get maximum benefit from your contributions in the timeliest manner. If you would like to set up a Standing Order, you should be able to do this online with your bank, using the following details:

Bank name: **CAF Bank plc**

Sort code: **40-52-40**

Account number: **00027597**

Account name: **The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation**

Reference: *[your initials and surname]*.

If you prefer to set up the Standing Order by hard copy, please complete the Standing Order form below and send it to your bank.

In either case, please be sure to complete the Gift Aid Form below if you are an eligible UK taxpayer, as this increases the amount of your donation by 25% at no additional cost to you. Please send the completed Gift Aid Form to the address on the form: *The Chapel Administrator, 1 Tower Green, Tower of London, London, EC3N 4AB* or scan it and send it as an e-mail attachment to: [TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk](mailto:TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk).

**ONE-OFF DONATION.** You can make a one-off donation online by clicking on [this link](#) or pointing the camera of your phone or tablet at this QR Code



and following the link which then pops up. If you are eligible for Gift Aid, please tick the relevant box and provide the required details on the CAF Bank online form. These two links are also available on our website [here](#).

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If you are an eligible UK taxpayer using the CAF Bank website via the links above to make either a one-off donation or to set up a Direct Debit, please remember to tick the Gift Aid box on the CAF site form. This method of Gift Aid payment does entail some delay in our receiving the benefit – hence our preference for Standing Orders. Gift Aid is available only to eligible UK taxpayers.

If you would also like to give to the Music Fund known as the Chapel Music Friends, please click [here](#).

Please note that Standing Orders and Direct Debits can be set up only from accounts with banks in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man. One-off payments may be made from anywhere in the world, using the card or PayPal options on the CAF Bank website from the links above.

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**Thank you again for your generosity.**

# The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation



## Standing Order

### Standing Order

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To: The Manager, \_\_\_\_\_ [*Name of your bank*] [*Address*  
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bank] [*Sort code*] \_\_\_\_\_ [*Account No.*] \_\_\_\_\_

Please remit £ \_\_\_\_\_ to the account detailed below commencing on  
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[*Signature*] \_\_\_\_\_ [*Date of signing*] \_\_\_\_\_

Use the information below to set up online, or return the completed form to your bank.

Please remit to: CAF Bank plc	Sort code	<b>40-52-40</b>
	Account number	<b>00027597</b>
	Account name	The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation
	Reference	[ <i>your initials and surname</i> ]

## The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation



### Gift Aid

#### Charity Gift Aid Declaration – Multiple donations

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I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_ and any donation I make in the future or have made in the last four years to The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in the tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. *If this does not apply, please strike through and continue with the rest of this form.*

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Please post, or return to:

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or send as an e-mail attachment to:

[TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk](mailto:TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk)

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