



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

Dear friends,

We all know the Commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill.' At the same time, we recognise that there are circumstances, such as self-defence, when killing is permitted. For the avoidance of doubt, as they say, we had better first define what constitutes self-defence. Imagine an armed police officer faced with a man who may be able and willing to kill him. At what point would you say that the officer would be justified in later claiming that he shot the gunman in self-defence? Consider the following scenarios:

- The man was known to be unpredictable.
- The man was known to be violent.
- The man was reported to be armed and had a bulge inside his top pocket.
- The man was reaching inside his top pocket.
- The man produced a handgun.
- The man pointed the gun in the air.
- The man fired a shot in the air.
- The man fired a shot in the general direction of the officer but well wide of the mark.
- The man aimed at the officer and missed.
- The man shot the officer in the upper left arm, only inches from his heart.

At which point would you personally feel justified in shooting the gunman? Police firearms officers have guidelines for such situations and members of the armed forces know when they go into action in what circumstances they may legally use lethal force. Now think about countries which claim to have attacked other countries in self-defence. Even accepting that there may be such a thing as pre-emptive self-defence ('I shot him before he could shoot me'), at what point is it permissible for one country to attack another? You can take the examples given in the bullet points above and translate them into confrontations between nation states. The difference here, of course, is that not just two but thousands of people will be affected by the decision. Similar principles apply, however, such as the use of minimum force to accomplish the objective and the prevention of harm to non-combatants.

This Lent is a time of grave international conflict. Those who initiate violent actions justify them with some version or other of self-defence. As we continue to pray for peace, we may reasonably ask ourselves what the real reasons for military action may be behind the public justifications. 'Thou shalt not kill' may not be an absolute rule but it is one that should be broken on only solidly defensible grounds.

With my prayers and good wishes for us all, Cortland.

Update on the work at St Peter ad Vincula: Please note that we are expecting to be back in the main chapel on **Sunday March 22nd** for the services of Holy Communion at 0915 and Choral Matins at 1100. Because of the presence of scaffolding, access will be from beside the Beauchamp Tower and past the Chaplain's house. Debbie will send out a separate email on **March 20th** to confirm this return, and we are all, I am sure, very much looking forward to being back in St Peter ad Vincula.

Please note: - Change to Chapel service time after Easter

From Sunday 19th April our second service will be moving from 11am to 11.15am.

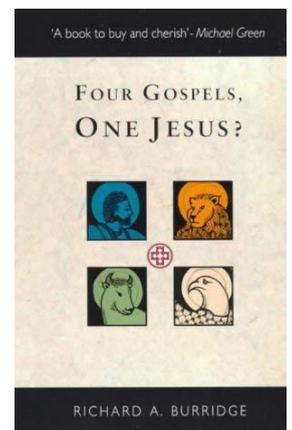
Service details for Sunday March 22nd, 2026
The Fifth Sunday in Lent
0915 Said Holy Communion, St Peter ad Vincula
1100 Choral Matins, St Peter ad Vincula
Readings Hebrews 9:11-15 and John 8:46-end.

Collect for the Fifth Sunday in Lent

We beseech thee, Almighty God, mercifully to look upon thy people;
that by thy great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore, both in body and soul;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Third Lent book suggestion; *Four Gospels, One Jesus?* by Richard A. Burridge.

My book recommendation for this week is *Four Gospels, one Jesus?* It was written in 1994 by the Reverend Richard Burridge, who went on to be Dean of King's College, London, from 1994 to 2019. As the title suggests, the book tackles the undeniable issue that the four Gospel accounts of Jesus are not identical, a fact which causes some non-Christians to dismiss them as unreliable, and which can cause anxiety even for committed Christians. Burridge's book, written in straightforward language for the non-specialist reader, sets out the contrary case – that the very differences between the Gospels heighten their credibility. This is not specifically a Lent book, but I commend it to anyone who has ever wondered why the Gospels treat the same episode in different ways or not at all. As it was first published over 30 years ago, it is freely available second-hand at little cost. I heartily recommend it.

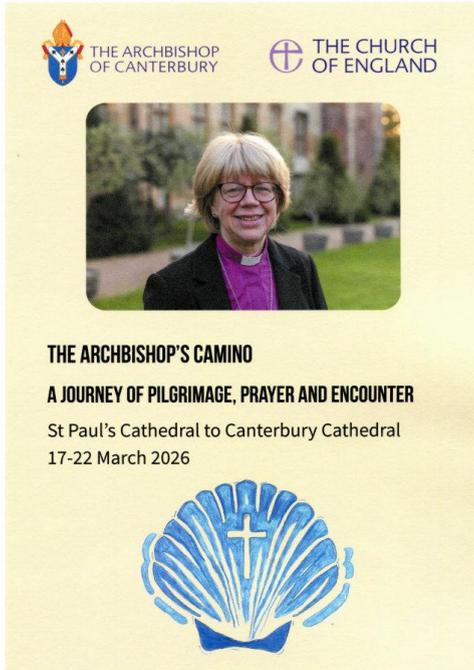


Magnolia trees at Lambeth Palace, early March 2026



Archbishop Sarah's Pilgrimage from London to Canterbury

On Tuesday 17 March, Archbishop Sarah and her husband Eamonn, together with a group of fellow pilgrims, set off on the 6-day, 87-mile walk to Canterbury as part of her spiritual preparation for her Installation service at Canterbury Cathedral on Wednesday 25 March. They will be walking along the Becket Camino from St Paul's Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral, reflecting her journey from Bishop of London to Archbishop of Canterbury.



This prayer card will be given out along the route. The shell motif was designed by children at Ospringe Primary School, Kent.



Archbishop Sarah setting off from St Paul's Cathedral after a short Service of Blessing of Pilgrims on their departure.

Music – *Alma Redemptoris Mater* sung by Joe Deery of our choir

Master of Music Colm Carey writes: *Alma Redemptoris Mater* is one of four seasonal Marian antiphons of the Western Church, traditionally sung from Advent until the Feast of the Purification. In flowing Gregorian plainchant, it honours Mary as the loving Mother of the Redeemer and the guiding star of the faithful.

Text and Translation

*Alma Redemptoris Mater,
Loving Mother of the Redeemer,
quae pervia caeli porta manes,
who remains the open gate of heaven
et stella maris,
and the star of the sea,
succurre cadenti, surgere qui curat populo:
come to the aid of your falling people who strive to rise again.
tu quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem:
You who gave birth, to the wonder of nature, to your own holy Creator.
Virgo prius ac posterius,
Virgin before and after,
Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave,
receiving that "Ave" from the mouth of Gabriel,
peccatorum miserere.
have mercy on us sinners.*

Jigsaw More magnolias, this time in North London, against a blue March sky. The jigsaw can be found at: <https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=2d4596cf2765>



Prayers

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

RIP

Ursula Kosseda.

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.



Cortland.Fransella@hrp.org.uk

Assistant Priest
Chapels Royal
HM Tower of London

Deputy Priest in Ordinary
to HM the King

Our Safeguarding Officer

Anna Kimber, Deputy Governor and Head of Operations, HM Tower of London: 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.

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](#).

DIRECT DEBIT. It is also possible to use the links above to set up a Direct Debit if that is what you prefer.

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.

Please see below for the Standing Order and Gift Aid forms.

Thank you again for your generosity.

The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation



Standing Order

Standing Order

If you have an online banking facility, you should be able to use that to set up a Standing Order with the information in the box below. If not, please complete the form and send it to your bank.

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

of

Please remit £ _____ to the account detailed below commencing on

_____ [*date*] and monthly / annually [*delete one*] until further notice.

[*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	40-52-40
	Account number	00027597
	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

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is required to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below.

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.*

My details: Title ___ First name or initials _____

Surname ___ Home Address _____

_____ Post Code ___ Email _____

Phone No _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Please notify the charity if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment Tax Return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Please post, or return to:

The Chapel Administrator, 1 Tower Green, Tower of London, London, EC3N 4AB.

or send as an e-mail attachment to:

TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 1160859