



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

Dear Friends,

We reflected at the height of the Covid pandemic on a sense of helplessness in the face of an invisible enemy, as we saw our everyday activities hindered or halted. That sensation of frustration is with us once more as we witness from a distance the barbarities being visited yet again upon an innocent nation – and especially on its most vulnerable citizens. In fact, as we all know, there were things that we could do to resist the Coronavirus and to protect our fellows, such as self-isolation when infected, wearing masks and maintaining physical distance. For each individual, these actions might have seemed insignificant, but their cumulative effect contributed to our current return to near normality. We cannot act physically to defend our Ukrainian brothers and sisters but that does not mean that we are impotent to help. We can contribute money to organisations which guarantee to deliver the right sort of aid where and when it is needed, such as the Disasters Emergency Committee ([DEC](#)). Moreover, as Roger has mentioned before, when a local initiative to provide help arises in Tower Hamlets or elsewhere in our vicinity, there may be more hands-on ways in which we can assist.

So, whilst it is true that we cannot intervene individually to stop the bullets and bombs, we can play our part in offering tangible assistance to Ukrainians in their hour of need. In doing so, we are giving practical expression to our faith. As Jesus said in his famous parable about helping the desperate, “Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matthew 25:40.) To this we must add our prayers, and you will find the Prayer for Ukraine, written by our two Archbishops, at the end of this Newsletter.

It has also been noted that the financial and commercial measures taken against Russia will adversely affect our own economic wellbeing. In our international efforts to contain Russian aggression, we will face higher prices and a drop in our standard of living. We may have to make financial sacrifices. These may be unwelcome, but they will pale into insignificance compared to the sacrifices being made by the Ukrainian people in losing their loved ones, possessions, homes and freedom. Let us stand firm with them in their resistance and welcome those who seek sanctuary here.

With my thoughts and prayers,

Cortland.

Sunday Service Details
11 March 2022, the Second Sunday in Lent

0915 Holy Communion - St Peter ad Vincula
1100 Choral Matins - St Peter ad Vincula

Readings

Genesis 15:1-12 & 17-18 and Luke 13:31-end

Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent

ALMIGHTY God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves;
Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls;
that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Poem of the week: *My Testament* by Taras Shevchenko

Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko, 9 March 1814 – 10 March 1861, also known as Kobzar Taras, or simply Kobzar (meaning ‘bard’), was a Ukrainian poet, writer, artist, public and political figure, as well as a folklorist and ethnographer. His literary heritage is regarded as the foundation of modern Ukrainian literature and, to a large extent, of the modern Ukrainian language. Shevchenko is also known as a painter and illustrator. He was a champion of Ukrainian independence. In 1847 Shevchenko was convicted by Imperial Russia of explicitly promoting the independence of Ukraine, writing poems in the Ukrainian language, and ridiculing members of the Russian Imperial House.

His poem *My Testament* speaks eloquently of his love for the land of Ukraine and of his fellow Ukrainians’ pride in their distinctive heritage, in spite of external aggression. You can find links to more of his poetry in translation [here](#). In this week, which marks the anniversaries of both his birth and his death, this poem reminds us of the heroism, determination and valour of the Ukrainian people in the face of oppression from without.

My Testament

Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

*Translated by Alexander Jardine Hunter
and reproduced here with acknowledgements and thanks.*

When I die, remember, lay me
Lowly in the silent tomb,
Where the prairie stretches free,
Sweet Ukraine, my cherished home.
There, 'mid meadows' grassy sward,
Dnieper's waters pouring
May be seen and may be heard,
Mighty in their roaring.
When from Ukraine waters bear
Rolling to the sea so far
Foeman's blood, no longer there
Stay I where my ashes are.
Grass and hills I'll leave and fly.
Unto throne of God I'll go.
There in heaven to pray on high,
But, till then, no God I know.
Standing then about my grave,
Make ye haste, your fetters tear!
Sprinkled with the foeman's blood
Then shall rise your freedom fair.
Then shall spring a kinship great,
This a family new and free.
Sometimes in your glorious state.
Gently, kindly, speak of me.

Lent.

In addition to Isabelle Hamley's book which Roger recommended in the last Newsletter (Embracing Justice), you might like to listen to the Radio 4 series of 15-minute Lent programmes at 8.45pm on Wednesdays, in which different speakers will talk about the meaning of Lent for them. If you miss them you can always catch up with them on [BBC Sounds](#).

Historic Royal Palaces – Superbloom update

A new sculptural structure on the horizon for Tower Superbloom. A space to pause and take in the views.



Want to be part of Tower Superbloom? HRP are looking for volunteers to help bring the Platinum Jubilee celebrations to life by joining the Welcome and Moat Interpretation teams.

You can get more information about volunteering following the link below.

<https://app.betterimpact.com/PublicOrganization/7f8d39f8-5869-424d-bf2e-103b1479bf99/1>

Jigsaw – Tuesday 8th March, International Women’s Day

Happy International Women’s Day from YW Emma Rousell and YW AJ Clarke – the Tower’s second and third ever female Yeoman Warders!

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=1c21cec0fd9b>



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very poorly, amongst whom we name: Deborah, Heather, Pat, Sue, Mark, Madeleine, Vivienne, Derek, Maria, Ann, Bridget, Peter, Freddie and baby Max.

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers all those who continue to be affected by the Coronavirus.

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.

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,

we pray for the people of Ukraine 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.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen

With best wishes and prayers, Cortland.



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