

All-Embracing Forgiveness

St Nicholas' Church in Moreton, South Dorset, has seen destruction and resurrection. Its stained glass was blown out by a German bomb in 1940.

Between 1955 and 1985, the acclaimed artist Sir Laurence Whistler engraved replacement



panes for the 12 windows visible inside the church. Each represented an apostle.

A thirteenth window can only be seen from outside: inside the church it is blocked by a wall memorial.

In 1993, already 80 years old, Whistler engraved a pane to fit this window as a gift. It depicted Judas at the moment of his suicide, but with his face turned up towards the light. The thirty silver coins change into flowers as they drop. Whistler hoped that Judas, "totally despairing in his guilt, might still seek God's pity, just in time, or out of time."

Whistler noted that medieval churches often have "unholy figures

sculpted on the outside ... in contrast with the holy scenes inside." He saw church as a "place where the conflict of good and evil, life and death" should be felt sharply.

The challenging image divided opinions, however, and for two decades the PCC did not feel it could accept the gift. The window was displayed in the Dorset County Museum, and was gradually more accepted. The pane was finally installed last year and very recently dedicated by Bishop Nicholas at Evensong.

With this image of the all-embracing forgiveness of God, the windows of St Nicholas are once more complete.

Bishop's Letter

The Right Revd Dr Edward Condry
Bishop of Ramsbury

I went to a Primary School, and the child asked, "Do you pray?" I said, "Yes."

"What's it like?" I've thought a lot about that.

Prayer is like: tidying the room. Sometimes everything just gets on top of me, and feels like a mess. Prayer helps me sort it out, put it in perspective. It gets messed up again, of course. So it has to be repeated.

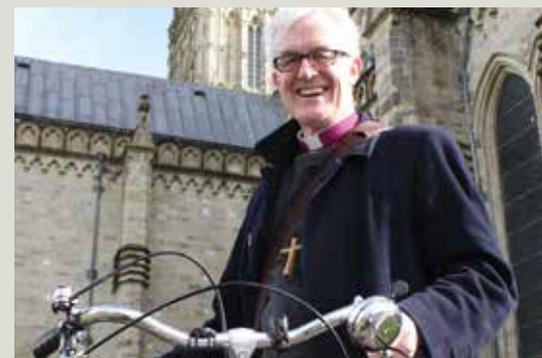
Prayer is like: the familiar made strange, different and wonderful. I walk the dogs up through the woods,

round the hill and home again. It takes 30 minutes. It is a familiar and often repeated walk. Each time I notice something different. Prayer is like that. When I pray, all the things that fill my life look different.

Prayer is like: sometimes it's like feeling instantaneously and happily drunk (but without the hangover). And if you don't think that's right, go to Acts 2.13. You can't summon up this feeling. It just happens unexpectedly, gloriously.

Prayer is all that is most important to us, put into words. We try to

mouth the deepest thoughts of our hearts, which are honest confessions of our doubts and fears, our anger, our sorrow, as well as our joy and thanksgiving. Always these words are inadequate and stumbling,



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but somehow you trust that God understands and accepts.

And sometimes, as Rowan Williams once wrote, prayer is like: a child's cry out of nightmare. It is a cry of terror at the condition of the world. Yet, like a child's shout, it is also a cry of trust and hope.

Megan's School Success

Megan Slark, a Sixth Form pupil at the Diocese's Sarum Academy in Salisbury, has won a place at the prestigious Universities Summer School.

The summer school is run by Eton College. It brings motivated and ambitious young people from state schools to an intensive residential course before their final school year.

Challenging the idea that pupils in non-selective schools in areas with the 11- plus are low achievers, Megan achieved eight A*s and As in her



GCSEs.

She said, "I'm looking forward to this really exciting opportunity."

Deputy Director of Sixth Form, Gareth Jones, was keen to praise Megan. "Megan is an exceptional pupil who has worked hard to deserve this opportunity. We are very proud of her."

Prayer The Key To Service

Rob Key was MP for Salisbury for 27 years until 2010. A political life has been followed by a 'retirement' serving the Church and voluntary sector. Rob is chair of the Diocesan House of Laity, a member of General Synod, and a trustee of the Trussell Trust, which runs foodbanks and helps long-term unemployed people back into work.

We only have a short time to interview him, as he's on his way to a Trussell Trust conference in



Birmingham.

Rob's first ministerial job was as Minister for Local government starting at the very end of Margaret Thatcher's premiership in 1990. "I was firstly responsible for the Poll Tax, then for replacing it with Council Tax after John Major became Prime Minister!

"In that job I spent much time in major cities. I was horrified at the levels of poverty and housing need. I brought in a capital funding system that brought new investment and better homes."

Christian faith sustained Rob in the rough and tumble of politics. "George Herbert's poem, Prayer (I) sums up the C of E, then and now", he says. The poem begins and ends '*Prayer the church's banquet ... something understood.*'

80 Years of Joyous Worship

When Peter Custard read a lesson at St Mary Magdalene's in Fifehead Magdalen on Easter Day, it marked the end of an era.

Peter joined the choir as a 5 year old boy in 1934, and has served the parish continuously for eight decades. As well as singing, he has been verger, churchwarden and lay worship leader. He has a particular love for the Book of Common Prayer.

Peter has always lived in the village and worked locally, firstly on the Fifehead Manor estate, and later in a factory.

What might have been hard work for others was a joy for this youthful pensioner, who still works hard in his lovely garden. "I can't imagine Sunday without going to church", he says.



Rob has worshipped at Salisbury Cathedral for most of his life. His father was Bishop of Sherborne, and he grew up in The Close. "Cathedral attendances are much larger now than in the 1950s.

"I am very optimistic for the future of the Church of England. There is a great thirst for spirituality. Our mission is to serve everyone, whether or not they attend services, and there is huge goodwill towards us. I admire Justin Welby's gifts and message of hope.

"I am always inspired by the Maundy Thursday Chrism Mass, when 400 clergy and lay ministers come together at the Cathedral, and count my blessings that we are so well served by them."