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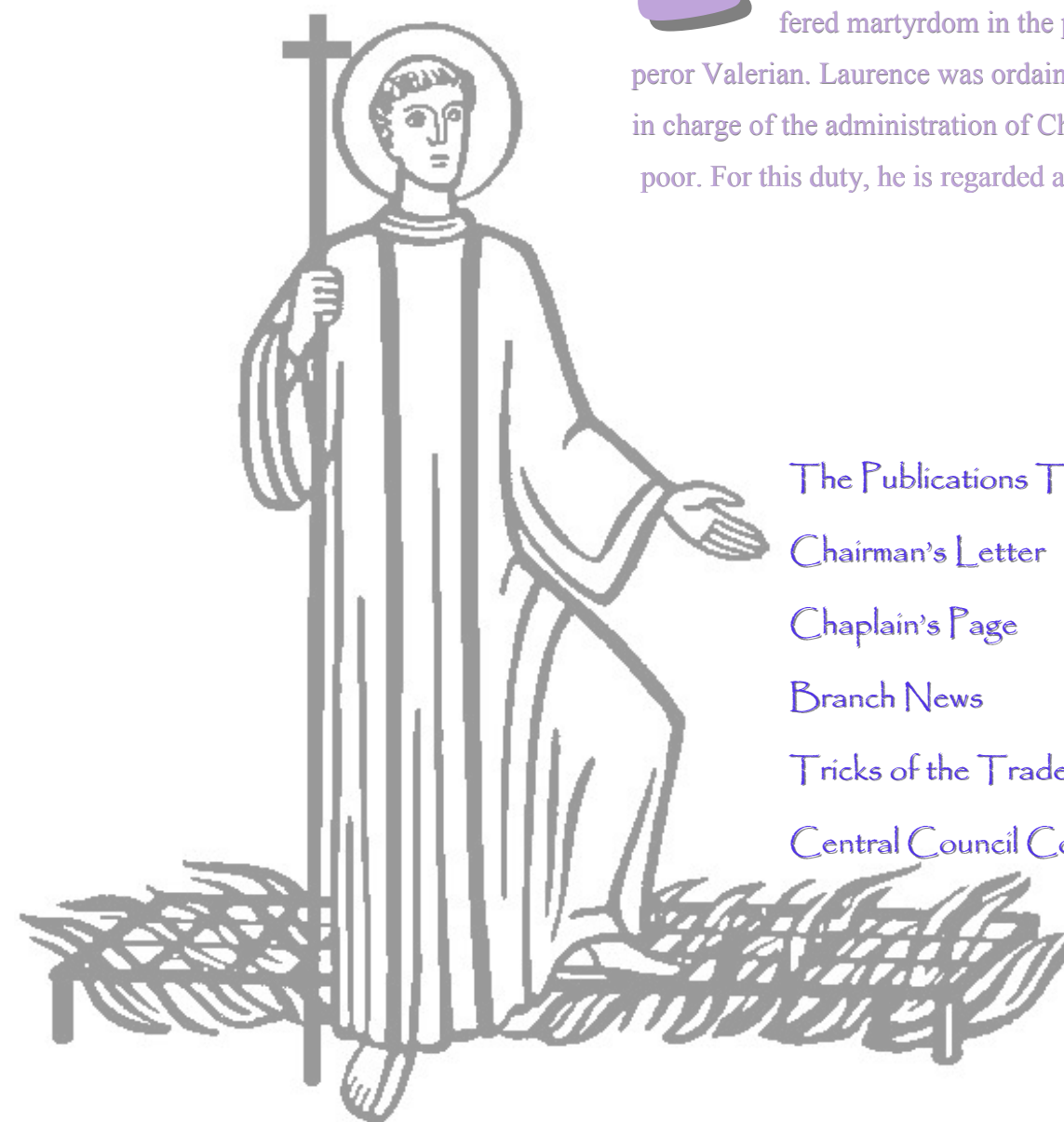
# The Virger

Summer 2010

Issue 267

## St. Laurence of

**L**aurence was one of seven deacons at Rome who suffered martyrdom in the persecution under the Emperor Valerian. Laurence was ordained a deacon and was placed in charge of the administration of Church goods and care for the poor. For this duty, he is regarded as one of the first archivists



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The Official Guild of Vergers magazine





## Did you know?

### Saint Laurence of Rome

Laurence was one of seven deacons at Rome who suffered martyrdom in the persecution under the Emperor Valerian. Laurence was ordained a deacon and was placed in charge of the administration of Church goods and care for the poor. For this duty, he is regarded as one of the first archivists and treasurers of the Church. Legend has it that while facing his examiners and ordered to give up the treasures of the Church, he presented the poor, the crippled, the blind and the suffering, and said that these were the true treasures of the Church. One account records him declaring to the prefect, *"The Church is truly rich, far richer than your emperor."* This act of defiance led directly to his martyrdom. His martyrdom had a great impact on the Church, and later stories, such as his being put to death on a gridiron, enhanced the memory of the event.

During his torture Laurence cried out

*"This side's done, turn me over and have a bite."*

This is the legend often quoted explaining why Laurence is the Patron Saint of Comedians, butchers and roasters.

Front cover courtesy of:

[www.familyfeastandferia.files.wordpress.com](http://www.familyfeastandferia.files.wordpress.com)



## From the Publications Team

Welcome to the Summer 2010 issue of the Guild of Vergers Magazine. As you can see we are still experimenting on the design and layout. Please let Marek or myself know what you think and of any ideas you might have for the next issue.

If you have any articles for the magazine or would like to become a member of the publications team please contact the Communications Officer for more details.

**Communication Officer and Chairman of the Publications Team - Amanda Berry**

**Magazine Editor: Amanda Berry**

**Sub-Editor: Marek Barden**

If you would like to include Branch news, articles, book reviews or any other information you feel our readers would find of interest please send to the editor

Amanda Berry  
70B The Close  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire  
SP1 2EN  
berryberry50@hotmail.com  
The\_virger\_magazine@yahoo.co.uk

The Website has a members only section, with extra information, pictures and soon past issues of the Virger magazine, just for you. To access this area send an email to the communications officer with your name and Branch and you will be sent your login and password details and information on how to set up your own space on the Guild Forum.

### Deadline for Autumn issue:

**18th August 2010**

For more information on The Guild of Vergers and for past issues of the 'Virger' Magazine please consult our Website:

[Cofegv.org.uk](http://Cofegv.org.uk)



I would rather be a door keeper in the house of our Lord,  
than to dwell in the tents of the

## Ungodly'

The Guild seeks to make effective the ministry of Vergers  
through the following key objectives, by :

*Psalm 84*

Promoting the spiritual nature of the Vergers' Vocation  
through Christian Fellowship and spiritual guidance for all its  
Members;

Encouraging the advancement of knowledge by education,  
through maintaining standards of good practice, and by  
equipping Members for Ministry as vergers in all its aspects,  
through the provision of advice, training, resources, and by  
organizing and promoting training courses and conferences;

Providing the means and opportunity for communication and  
discussion of ideas and proposals of common interest to  
Members;

Providing support and encouragement to the Membership in  
all aspects of their duties whatever they may be and wherever  
performed;

Advising, upon request, and making recommendations as to  
terms of employment and welfare of any Member;

Recording the gamut of work undertaken by Vergers; in  
addition noting each Member's training, experience and  
qualifications.

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### New Catalogue for 2010 is out now!

The Guild shop has Guild branded articles to add a little something to every Verger's uniform, whether a Guild fleece, designed to help the Verger as they tackle the Medieval heating or a Guild gown badge to spice up your official Verger robes! The shop has something for you.

For more information on the shop's products, to order a catalogue or to place an order contact the shop manager:

The Shop Manager

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Or email direct:

[verger@leedsparishchurch.com](mailto:verger@leedsparishchurch.com)

Or via the Guild Website:

[www.cofegv.org.uk](http://www.cofegv.org.uk)



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### Forthcoming Events



#### 2010

Thursday 9th September—**Canterbury Province Festival**

Eton & Windsor (Oxford Branch), See Application form in this issue for more details

#### 2011

DTBC—York Province Festival—Leeds Parish Church (South & West Yorkshire Branch)

Tuesday 18th October — **St. John's College, Cambridge**

#### 2012

Tuesday 8th May—York Province Festival—St. Nicholas' Cathedral, Newcastle

DTBC—Canterbury Province Festival—Canterbury Cathedral (80th Anniversary of the Guild)

#### Overseas

7th—10th October 2010—**National VGEC Conference—Washington D.C**



### Chairman's Letter—June 2010



I write this in that strange time between the Day of Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, a period "in the old days" known as the Octave of Pentecost. The present calendar keeps the Easter Season for 40 days (to mirror Lent) from Easter Day to Ascension Day, and then 10 more days of Ascension tide take us to the 50th day after the resurrection – Pentecost (pentecoste = Greek for fiftieth). Overnight "ordinary-time" begins, frontals, falls and vestments turn to green, lectionaries and hymns no longer tell the Easter story, glory and ceremony of Easter seem a long time ago! However the very next Sunday the ordinariness is interrupted by the Feast of the Holy Trinity – Trinity Sunday.

Here in Canterbury the feast is kept with great solemnity, marked with a special order of service, incense at the principal Eucharist (a treat reserved for major festivals), and copes at evensong – the same privileges as on the day of Pentecost, Easter or Christmas. This is because Canterbury's most famous saint, Thomas Becket, later canonized as St. Thomas of Canterbury, is credited with having introduced Trinity Sunday into the western calendar on the first Sunday after Pentecost. Although an established festival, it was not universally observed on the Sunday after Pentecost. However, this day was special to Thomas, as it was the day of his consecration. Early in his archiepiscopate he petitioned the Pope to be allowed to keep the feast on this Sunday every year, and eventually this became the norm through the western church. Another example of the church in England leading the way, and others following .... Fifty years after his martyrdom, the chapel in Canterbury Cathedral to which his body was finally "translated" (formally moved with great ceremony) is also dedicated to The Trinity.

At the National AGM in June this year we said a big and heartfelt "thank you" to Michael Golby, and his daughter Louise, for their huge dedication to the Guild through Mike's meticulous editorship and Louise's skillful typesetting and publishing, in producing The Virger magazine for many years, as well as their meticulous work in producing certificates, porch notices, and other items in our "corporate image" to a very high standard, which have been a huge help in promoting the Guild, increasing our profile, and raising standards in our printed material. The work is demanding and time-consuming, producing four editions each year plus the Conference Supplement, on time and on budget, and has dominated their lives for longer than we care to admit! Holidays and other commitments have had to fit around Virger publishing deadlines, not helped by having to chase forgetful national officers for their contributions (sorry - Mike!); a fact not lost on the new Editor (sorry – Amanda!!). They received our warmest thanks and gratitude for a job done well.

**"it's only when the wheels fall off that anybody notices the virgers rushing to put them back on!"**

We also bid our farewells to Jeanne Scott as General Secretary, a post she has held for the past 8 years. Jeanne's dedication to the Guild (as both Branch Officer and National Officer), as with other hard-working officers, is often done quietly and un-noticed, but is essential in keeping The Guild in good order. One of my clergy colleagues once thanked the virgers for "keeping the wheels turning" – to which another colleague remarked that it's only when the wheels fall off that anybody notices the virgers rushing to put them back on! Jeanne became General Secretary in a period when our wheels were decidedly wobbly, following the resignation of one secretary, followed by a period with a caretaker in post who held the fort until formal elections could take place some months later. Maintaining our records and archive, answering queries, registering new members and sending out our "welcome packs", servicing the various committees, and producing the annual papers for the AGM.... the list is endless. Jeanne – we salute you, and wish you a long and happy retirement from National Office, but hope that you will continue to enjoy your work in the Oxford Branch. I hope that by the time you read this, we will have a new Training Registrar in place, to assist John Shearer with the administration of the Training Course and Conference. Look out for details on our website.

Members will be sad to hear that our faithful and hard-working Conference Secretary – Richard Falla, is currently unwell; his duties before and at the Conference have been kindly taken on by others for this year. Richard – we wish you well, and our prayers are with you for a speedy recovery.

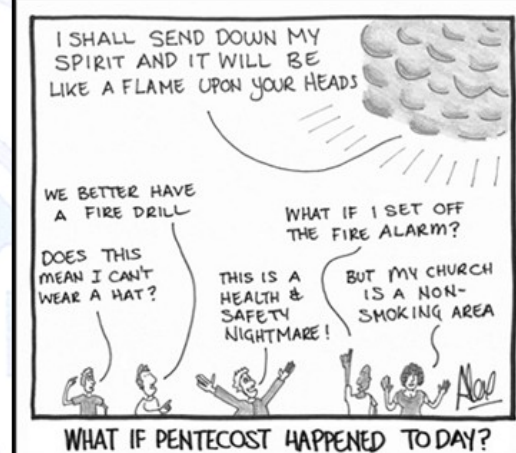
Since I last wrote to you I have been to Peterborough Cathedral, where we had a marvelous time at the enthronement of the new bishop, followed shortly after by the York Province Festival in Manchester on 4th May, where I was pleased to see so many of you enjoying the carefully constructed day, where fellowship, liturgy and good food and company all made for a brilliant mixture. You will find a fuller report elsewhere in the magazine.

We hope you are enjoying the second edition of the new-look Virger magazine! Thank you for your feedback from the March edition; your comments have been overwhelmingly positive (we are delighted to hear!) and the comments and suggestions for alterations have been very helpful.

With very best wishes,  
**Chris Crooks,**  
National Chairman.  
June 2010.

### CAKE OR DEATH

by alex baker





## Chaplain's Page

Dear Friends,

Greetings!

When I wrote my last letter in Lent I mentioned that in the early days of Christianity some people actually withdrew into the desert to lead a solitary and hard life in the hope that it would bring them closer to God. I have just returned from a study tour in which I explored a number of the desert monasteries, many of which date back to the fourth century. What an experience it was!

The monasteries are all in the desert – tion outside the monastic precincts. Most of the monasteries had community. Coptic Christianity is vibrant: programme to cope with the large tact with the monks. Some of the sites the Holy Family in Egypt, while others wrote. Entering the monasteries, even peace and the presence of God and at ing the curtains which proclaimed that monastery – it began at 4.00am and chanted, some accompanied with cymbals and even though there was coming and going, the whole service offered with reverence and joy. The language used was Coptic – very similar to Greek, Arabic and in deference to English visitors, one of the lessons was read in English. I arrived at about 5.30am and although there for three and a half hours I really didn't notice the passage of time.



a vast wasteland of sand and rocks with very little vegetation. Inside there is always a well producing clean, fresh water. vated gardens producing fruit and vegetables for the com- the monasteries are full and there is a massive building number of pilgrims who want to come and have some con- are on the pilgrimage route associated with the sojourn of are the ancient sites where the desert fathers lived and when they were full of pilgrims, there was a great feeling of every turn there were humble people kissing the icons, kiss- 'Christ is Risen'. I was blessed in sharing the Liturgy at one ended at 9.00am! Many of the psalms and prayers were

Holiday time is almost upon us and I hope you all have the opportunity to visit fresh places, to refresh our bodies, minds and spir- its and to relax and enrich our spiritual lives, learning more about God, about the Church and about other Christian groups.

Life for us all is so uncertain and we have to grasp opportunities as they come – or as the hymn says 'Redeem thy mis-spent time that's past and live each day as if thy last'. For myself, I am enjoying the experience of having a little more freedom to travel and observe and enjoy new scenes and new ways of worship. One young bishop, who has set up a new monastery/community near Luxor wants it to be a place of inspiration, and he calls it 'Anaphora' meaning 'to lift up or inspire'. He told us that he sees his task as a bishop to 'lift people up and inspire them in their own Christian vocation'. I would like this to be the aim of each of us – to encourage one another so that we lift the visitors to our cathedrals and churches and inspire them to learn more about the faith which we hold so dear. Faith is something to be 'caught' and Paul suggests that we should live our lives so that those we meet will want to experience the love that we have both for God and for each other.

With every blessing  
Canon Maureen



If you know of someone for whom prayers would be of benefit or someone who has been prayed for and has recovered/ shown improvement, please inform the National Welfare Officer or National Chaplain.

Somerset & Avon: **Peter Martin, Ian Millard.**

Oxford: **Don Mitchener, John Bayliss, Margaret Morris, Jean Ebdon.**

Devon & Cornwall: **Alyn Heath.**

Salisbury: **Babs Taylor.**

Rochester: **Victor Warren.**

Guildford & Portsmouth: **David Lee.**

Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: **Jim Wooldridge.**

And everyone not specifically mentioned who needs love, counseling and the grace of Our Lord.

## Guild Gazette

Meredith Debenham

Has been appointed Head Verger of Worcester Cathedral from 1st June she is to be formally admitted to her new role at the Cathedral Eucharist on Community Day Sunday 13th June I have congratulated her and the branch wish her well in this new role.

From  
Margaret Burston  
Area Leader  
G H & W Branch

## Tricks of the Trade



Many Thanks to  
Carl Burrows  
for sharing his

trick of the trade:

When filling oil-filled candles it is a good idea to float a tiny piece of cork in the oil - makes it much easier to see the level of oil and saves overflow spills! Brilliant for those of us who are a bit bleary eyed in the mornings

Don't you just hate spending hours scrapping candle wax of prickett stands?

Well my tip is to use a wallpaper/ paint stripper heat gun. They melt the wax within seconds and you can just wipe the wax away with a piece of paper towel. The only health and safety advice I can give is BE CAREFUL both the wax and heat gun are hot! But it does save a lot of time.

Hope this helps Amanda

## MAREK'S LEMON DRIZZLE CAKE

### INGREDIENTS

For the Cake:

200 g of Butter, softened,  
plus extra to grease  
250 g of Caster Sugar  
4 Eggs, lightly beaten  
350 g of Self Raising  
Flour  
120 ml of Milk  
The Juice and grated Zest  
of 8 Lemons



For the Syrup:

8 tablespoons of Icing Sugar, sieved  
100 ml of Lemon Juice

### METHOD

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Grease two 2lb loaf tins and line with baking parchment.

Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.

Gradually add the lightly beaten eggs, then add the milk, lemon juice and zest and mix to a soft dropping consistency.

Spoon the mixture into the two greased and lined loaf tins and bake for approximately 45 minutes until golden brown and springy to the touch.

Mix the sieved icing sugar and the lemon juice into a smooth syrup and spoon over the cakes as soon as they come out of the oven and leave them in the tins to cool.

Once cooled, turn the cakes out of their tins and enjoy. These cakes will keep for at least a week if stored in an airtight container.



Lemon Drizzle Cake is a favourite of James Armstrong of Carlisle. Hope you enjoy!



HELPTHEAGED WE WILL

Age Concern and Help the Aged have joined forces to become **Age UK** – “so that we can be here for everyone in later life”

Age UK has a vision of a world in which older people flourish. We aim to improve later life for everyone through our information and advice, campaigns, products, training and research. A world in which older people flourish is a world in which older people will:

- \* Be equal citizens with equal rights
  - \* Have enough money for a secure and decent life, and have access as consumers to the products and services they need at a price they can afford
  - \* Have access to the healthcare and social care they need
  - \* Have the opportunity to live healthier longer lives and to enjoy a sense of well-being
  - \* Live in homes and neighbourhoods that are safe and comfortable and which enable them to lead fulfilling lives
  - \* Have opportunities to participate and contribute as volunteers, active citizens, good neighbours, family members, and workers
  - \* Enjoy the benefits of longer life, wherever they are in the world.
- Growing older doesn't come with a manual, so if you need information or advice on anything from health to housing, call the free national information line on **0800 169 6565**. It's open 365 days a year from 8am to 7pm.



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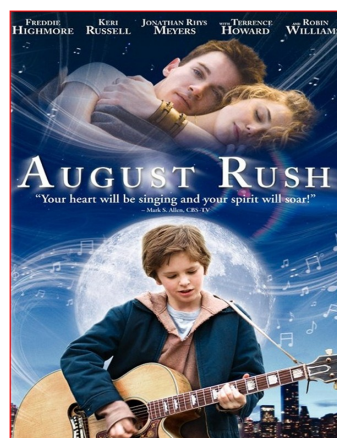
## Film review



## August Rush

**T**his film is about a young boy called August Rush. The story goes There's music in the wind and sky. Can you hear it? And there's hope. Can you feel it? The boy called August Rush can. The music draws mysteriously him penniless and alone to New York City in a quest to find – somehow, someway – the parents separated from him years earlier. And along the way he may also find the musical genius hidden within him.

This is must see film.



BE WARNED HAVE A BOX OF TISSUES AT THE READY.

Picture courtesy of :

<http://elcatalogo.files.wordpress.com/2009/05/august-rush.jpg>

# Badges!

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### The Guild Training Course

At the recommendation of the General Synod, the Central Council of the Guild formulated a course, to cover the work and ministry of the Verger. The Course is formulated in two stages. First is the *Foundation Unit*, this consists of sixteen assignments, covering preparation for worship, care of the building, records and archives, care of the churchyard, and care for the people of God. If successful, the Guilds Foundation certificate is awarded. The second stage is the remaining three units:-

*Pastor Unit* covering the individual's personal development, their relationship with people and God, care for others and resources.

*History Unit* covering the history of church building, architecture, the history of worship, and the purpose of a congregation.

*Administration Unit* covering communication, forms and registrars, the structures of the Church of England, and the role and importance of people in the life of the church

If you are interested in learning more about the Course, please contact the Training officer.

## VGEC - Vergers in America

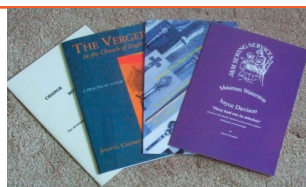


**T**he Vergers' Guild of the Episcopal Church (VGEC) will gather for its 2010 annual conference and Eucharist on Thursday October 7th through Sunday October 10th at National Cathedral in Washington, DC. This will be the 22nd year that the Guild will come together for fellowship, training, business, and worship and we will be hosted and coordinated this year by Cathedral Head Verger Duke DuTeil and his wonderful staff and volunteers. I'm pleased to say there is quite a large contingent of

CEGV Vergers going to venture across the pond for the USA National conference this year, so watch this space for the report, wish us luck!

V-Happenings is a new service from the Episcopal Guild that is a free periodic email news service that we use to keep our membership and other interested

**A** range of books by our very own overseas liaison officer John Campbell are available to purchase through the Guild shop or directly from John (see the Central Council contacts list, page 14). Including the new 'History of J & M Sewing', of which all proceeds go to charity and the 'verger in the Church of England' now in re-print and can be obtained through the Kevin Mayhew website: [www.kevinmayhew.com](http://www.kevinmayhew.com)



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## Canterbury Province Festival

Eton & Windsor – Thursday 9th September 2010

By kind permission of the Provost and Fellows of Eton College, and the Dean and Canons of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle

A day to experience history to its fullest with a taste of the King's College of Our Lady of Eton beside Windsor – founded by King Henry VI in 1440 – still maintaining etiquettes and traditions of bygone ages in a modern day culture and continuing to produce a variety of high profile individuals for positions of importance over a wide spectrum. And to complete the day's proceedings, attendance at the Chapel of St George, Windsor Castle, for a service of Choral Evensong – to soak in some of the atmosphere in this place steeped in history and of knights of old and present, a place having served many generations of its peoples since its foundation as a college by King Edward III, in 1348.

A warm welcome waits you from your hosts for this Festival – the Oxford Branch.

### Programme

from 9.30am	Registration and refreshments – Lower School, Eton College
10.45am	Robe (in Lower School) for welcome
11.00am	Welcome by The Provost and others
11.15am	Eucharist in the Main Chapel – Celebrant, The Lord Bishop of Lincoln, John Saxbee-Visitor of Eton
12.30pm	Group photograph, thereafter, change and make way to The Waterman's Arms for lunch
1.00pm	Lunch, a sit-down affair
2.30pm/3.00	Tours, as indicated
5.00pm	Must be seated by, in St George's Chapel, Windsor, for Evensong
5.15pm	Choral Evensong
6.00pm	Depart

### Travel and Accommodation

'We are delighted to be associated with this Festival and it is our wish that you have an enjoyable and memorable (extended) stay in this Royal Borough. Let our friendly and experienced staff assist you to this end by providing you with information regarding accommodation, travel and places to see and things to do.

Accessibility by road, rail and air (Heathrow Airport is only a 15 minute drive away) is straightforward – details on this and all other aspects relevant to your visit and stay are available by contacting us on 01753 743909 or [www.windsor.org.uk](http://www.windsor.org.uk), quoting the unique code allocated to this event, GV0910.

We wish you a happy and rewarding Festival, and welcome!

**The Royal Windsor Information Centre.**



Application page

One copy per person, please (photocopies accepted)

Full day’s event <b>including</b> lunch	-	£20.00
Full day’s event <b>excluding</b> lunch	-	£ 7.50

Cheques to be made payable to ‘CEGV, Oxford Branch – Festival’ and sent, with this form, to Miss Jeanne Scott, Administrator, 309 Desborough Avenue, High Wycombe, Bucks HP11 2TH

A receipt will be issued as confirmation, together with other relevant information

Menu (for lunch at The Waterman’s Arms, Brocas Street, Eton (a 10 minute walk)

Indicate choice (please circle)

Starter:	Vegetable soup <i>or</i>
	Prawn cocktail
Main:	Chicken in sauce <i>or</i>
	Beef Casserole <i>or</i>
	Spinach lasagne <i>or</i>
	all with a selection of potatoes and mixed salad
Dessert:	Eton mess – strawberries and cream <i>or</i>
	Spotted dick and custard <i>or</i>
	Fruit salad and cream

to welcome Michael Golby and his wife, and the meeting was preceded with an excellent buffet and convivial chat.

In March we were able to meet again, this time for an Annual lunch, which replaced our annual dinner! It was a full house as regards numbers, and our venue was at the pleasant Squires Holt restaurant on the Hog’s Back near Guildford.

After an excellent meal, where we were all able to sit at the same table, we were able to convene to the conservatory for coffee and mints and an informal meeting, we also officially welcomed the new verger at Guildford Cathedral, Paul Williamson.

As always our members were pleased to catch up with each other, and much convivial conversation was to be heard before we parted for our various long and short journeys home.

A warm “Welcome to your new home” to Valerie and Bill Groves formerly Deans verger at Guildford Cathedral, who have decided to down size!

Their move is just about 100 yards from their previous home, so no fear of feeling like strangers, or getting to know the neighbours!!

Every happiness in your new abode!!  
**Elaine King**  
**Chief Scribe.**

Tom retires then starts work again!

On the 12<sup>th</sup> May I was privileged to be at the licensing Eucharist of our own Tom Cameron as Curate to the church of St Bartholomew the Less. The Archdeacon of London conducted the ceremony. This beautiful little church dates back to 15<sup>th</sup> century and stands in the hospital grounds as the parish church of Barts. The hospital is its own parish.



The church was packed and attended by several vergers and notably by the Dean of St Paul’s Cathedral and our own Canon Maureen. Tom has been working as hospital Chaplain for some time, but this licensing confirms this role. Chaplains from other faiths took

part in the service. The Jewish Rabbi read the Epistle while the Roman Catholic read the Gospel.

The very next day I was in St Paul’s Cathedral for the Ascension Day Eucharist. This was Tom’s last service before retiring from the cathedral after a memorable 23 years. During the service Canon Lucy Winkett paid a warm tribute to Tom from the pulpit.

As with any celebration connected with Tom, it always ends with a party. This day was no exception as we repaired to the Cockpit pub opposite the cathedral to ‘make whoopee’ as Tom was surrounded by all his friends to wish him well in this next chapter of his eventful life.

**From Stephen Haude**  
**London Branch Correspondent**



Canterbury and East Kent Branch

Canterbury and East Kent Branch had their AGM at St. Saviours Church, Folkestone on 20<sup>th</sup> March and before things started, we were given a short talk on Mother Harriet Monsell by Rosemary Ballard (Our Area Rep) and Daughter of George Ballard the Virger of the Cathedral. Mother Monsell spent her last half dozen years of her life at St. Saviours having founded a nunnery and I think the sister served some seventy five years altogether. We then had our Eucharist, the celebrant was our Chaplain Canon Alan Edwards and after this all eighteen of us trooped upstairs to the beautiful upstairs room made from the West end of the church, with a nice kitchen and toilets on the ground floor more meeting rooms, cloak and vestry. Our repast was bring and share, we all fed well, tea and coffee and fruit juice was also enjoyed.

Julian Thorn our Chairman got us underway and delivered his report, then our secretary Jim Boughton, Bryan Webb our treasurer and Rosemary Ballard gave reports on what has happened. Vice-Chair Paul Hocky thanked

Julian. We then proceeded to select Julian as Chair, Bryan as Treasurer, and John Broughton as Secretary and here the Chair asked for help with this, as much more has now developed in the secretaries’ job, and Jim will carry on till someone is found to take over completely this very vital job. Thank you John for doing this, it is continuous hard work, organising trips and ‘Do’s’ Before I close I’m sure everyone in the Branch will endorse a very big thank you to Robert Brown, for many moons our secretary, who retired after many months of service to our Branch and I also want to thank the retired editor of the Virger Mike Golby, and his wife Betty and all his family for many years he was editor, as it affected his whole family with deadlines, print dates and so on, so thank you to all the Golby family.

**From Cherry Johnstone**  
**Correspondent**

Somerset and Avon Branch

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April saw members of the branch attend a social gathering at St.-Mary’s, Shirehampton, Bristol. where our hosts Doreen and James Bull laid on a ‘film show’ of their visit to The Holy Land, interesting slides and commentary supplied by James, if you had never had the experience of visiting The Holy Land it certainly made you think that perhaps one day you would. Afterwards a wonderful spread of home cooking was laid on by Canon Christine Froude. It was certainly a lovely evening combining both meeting and social get-together. Our next outing will hopefully see us travelling to Yeovil for much of the same.

For my part: Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April at All Saints Church, Wraxall (my Church) saw The Right Reverend Peter Price – Bishop of Bath & Wells presiding over our Deanery Confirmation Service at which 13 candidates were to be confirmed. One of those being: Mr Howard Cooper (of this branch) who in my last letter was admitted into the Guild during a Eucharistic Service in February, (after our Branch AGM), I had the privilege of being Howards sponsor.

Until next time  
God Bless

**Jean Cobb**  
**Secretary**  
**Somerset & Avon Branch**



important that those of faith (whatever faith) should share their faith with others, as this would be of mutual benefit to everyone. E.g. Mr Straw objected to MP's Christmas cards saying Season's Greetings and not Christmas Greetings. They disagreed strongly on some points but said different opinions should be respected. At the end a group of children put questions to them. One 13 year old girl – "I'm getting confirmed, What is the next stage after confirmation?" The Archbishop immediately replied "The rest of your life", which was greeted with applause. A very interesting session which at times was very serious but also quite humorous too.

**From Anne Woodward  
Blackburn Branch  
Correspondent**

### Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester Branch

Our year began with the Annual General Meeting and after business we had a raffle for the local Children's Hospice. In April we went to Holland House for our Quiet Day which was led by our Chaplain, Canon Graham Lyall. The gardens were as beautiful as ever and although it was not as warm as we would have liked we still managed to walk around and admire them. The food of course, was delicious so members and friends who managed to attend had a very relaxing time.

Our Chairman Tony Day has arranged a barbecue for us in June. Tony and Jean have held one for us ever since he was elected three years ago and they are most enjoyable. Naturally we are hoping for a warm evening as an added bonus.

In July we have arranged a trip on the Gloucester /Warwickshire railway. Our Pastoral Officer, Jim Wooldridge, has been a volunteer for many years and so was very helpful in providing information about the day. After the trip we are having evensong at Bedford Church.

We have booked a coach for the Festival at Eton and Windsor so we are looking forward to the events which have been planned.

Our year finishes with the Christmas Dinner which will be at Holland House again (by popular demand!) The team there make the surroundings so festive and again of course the food is

really tasty.

**From Sue Lyall Correspondent  
Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester Branch**

### St Albans Branch

St Albans Diocesan Guild of Vergers eventually held its AGM at the end of January having been snowed out of the earlier date. All the officers of the Branch were duly elected to serve another term. Despite the weather we had a very full turnout of members.

Our first event this year was a service of Lenten Devotions held on March 8<sup>th</sup> at St Saviours Church, St Albans in the Lady Chapel. As last year's service was so successful we decided to hold it again. The service was led by our Branch Chaplain Revd Canon Peter Palmer. It was a service of reflections using hymns as prayers with a reflection on the gospel parable, the prodigal son, written by Delia Smith and read by Canon Peter who thought that Delia had done as good a job as he could. After the service members again had time to chat over refreshments provided by Nonita Palmer.



At our AGM this year, one of our members Janet Lindsay announced she was celebrating 25 years as a verger at St Andrews Church in Bedford in March. So on March 7<sup>th</sup> the church had a celebration for this. Another member Gareth Burrows who has taken over from Janet as verger (Janet has become Verger Emeritus) invited branch members to the church service and celebration. 3 branch members plus our area leader Mike Golby and his wife were able to attend. Mike brought with him the Millennium Verge for Janet to process in with at the service. This was all without Janet's knowledge and so she was really surprised and overwhelmed when people turned up

to robe and process in with her. After the service there were speeches by Janet's first and current Vicars and the curate read out messages from past curates and other well-wishers who could not be at the celebration including an Ode to Janet as a Verger from one of them. Janet was presented by the church with an engraved Silver Salver and flowers. There was also a special cake to cut for all those present to partake.

Our next full branch event was Corporate Communion. This was also held at St Saviours Church St Albans in the Lady Chapel on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April. We had around 25 people which included members and guests. All members



were invited to robe and so we had an impressive procession at the beginning of the service. The procession was led in this year by me as one of the younger members of the Branch using the Verge given to Frank Lane on his retirement from St Albans Cathedral. At the service Frank's wife Lynda was inducted as an Associate Member. After the service we had refreshments provided by my mum and Nonita Palmer. The date of this service was also my Dad's birthday so, being forewarned, Nonita provided a cake with a candle as a surprise and everyone had a slice.

Our next event will be the annual Alban Supper held in June at All Saints Church Leighton Buzzard. This year we shall have a talk about the stained glass windows of the church as there are some fine examples

**Mark Russell  
Branch Correspondent**

### Chichester Guildford and Portsmouth Branch

The inclement weather during January put pay to our annual gathering for the verger's dinner, it was thought that with the weather being so desperate we would wait until the Spring.

The AGM in February went ahead as arranged and we met at St Bartholomew's church in Haslemere, once again at the kind invitation of Carol Skeates.

Martin Taylor from Hampton Court, volunteered to become our Secretary and also to take on the role of Area Leader, the remaining committee who agreed to stand for another year, supported him. We were pleased

R.I.P.

### RICHARD EBDON St. Mary's Almondsbury 1 January 2007 – March 2010.

Richard volunteered to assist the Verger in 2006, and was appointed Assistant Verger to that effect.

It was on the retirement of the Verger in December 2006 that he was appointed Verger. During his short ministry at St. Mary's he showed his skill at maintenance tasks that helped the Churchwardens several times. He was skilled with the Paint Brush as well as the Screw-driver and Hammer.

On locating some rotting timbers in the churchyard he managed to identify them with help as the old church bier. On receiving the permission of the Vicar and Churchwardens to try to rebuild the bier he managed to persuade craftsmen he knew, people, and companies to raise funds to have the Church Bier renovated and rebuilt. It now stands in church and is used on occasions at funerals. It is a memorial to Richards hard work.

Richard also had strong appreciation of the Prayer Book Services, Classical Music especially the sacred music of Bach. He will be greatly missed for his work for Christian Aid and The Royal British Legion.

There were times in his life when it was hard and not good or easy, but now he is resting in Peace. May he do so for all eternity

**From Trevor Llewellyn  
Somerset & Avon Branch**

### STAFFORD GEORGE BELL 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1920 – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2010

The Funeral took place on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at Lady St Mary's, Wareham, Dorset.

Sadly, only a handful of the Branch Members were able to attend.

Stafford became a Verger at St Mary's nine years ago, and became a member of the Salisbury Branch Guild of Vergers not long after. Stafford always had a smile on his face and very enthusiastic and passionate in his role. Nothing was too much trouble for him and he would spend many hours in St Mary's making sure that all was in place.

His fellow members of the Guild will sorely miss him.

**Babs Taylor  
Salisbury Branch Chairman**

**An obituary will be written in more detail by one of his fellow Vergers from St Mary's.**

### RICHARD EBDON St. Mary's Almondsbury 1 January 2007 – March 2010. & GRAHAM DAWES St.-Margaret's Church, Queen Charlton Friday 16th April 2010

For several months now two of our colleagues of The Somerset & Avon Branch have been regularly prayed for in the Virger Magazine, rather sadly both have now died.

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April a Memorial Service was held at St.-Mary's Church, Almondsbury, followed by, the Interment of Ashes of Richard Ebdon. Several members of the branch attended Richards Service and were present when his Ashes were laid to rest in the Garden of Rest within the Churchyard. Richards' early life began in the Merchant Navy, he was married and had two children, a boy and a girl, when unfortunately his wife died very young leaving him to bring up his children by himself. Richard moved to Almondsbury and eventually became Assistant Verger and then Verger in 2006 upon the retirement of the then Verger.

On Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April a Funeral Service was held at Graham Dawes. Graham was a Branch Life Member. He was a lovely man and proud of his association with the Guild of Vergers, he always had a story to tell at any meeting or get-together, a lot of fun to be with. The Vergers present lined the pathway leading to the Church as Graham entered and left, his Church, after the Service. There were as many people outside listening to the Service as there were inside, a true testament to the respect that many held for him.

Both Richard and Graham will be greatly missed and all of their fellow members send their heartfelt condolences and prayers to family and friends of both men. May they both now rest in peace.

On a happier note it was nice to see Ian Millard back amongst us as he himself has been very poorly of late and was looking very well.

**Jean Cobb  
Secretary  
Somerset & Avon Branch**

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## Branch News

### The York Province Festival

#### 4th MAY 2010 – MANCHESTER

On a sunny but cool Tuesday, 79 delegates assembled in Manchester Cathedral for the Northern Area Festival. After a cup of coffee and a chance to greet other members, we received an official welcome from Rev. Canon Andrew Shanks and Margaret Scott, Chair of the local Branch. This was followed by time to look round the cathedral before walking the short distance to the Visitors Centre where we were given a very nice lunch in both modern and ancient surroundings. Those that ventured onto the lower floor sat by the arches of the ancient bridge that links Exchange Walk with the cathedral and which is in the process of being rediscovered. The rubble under the arches is gradually being cleared away so that the bridge can be seen once again.

After lunch we had a Communion Service and Jeffrey Makinson, the sub organist, put the organ through its paces in the concluding voluntary. One new member attending her first meeting remarked how good it was to take Communion together. We then split into two groups to have a look at the cathedral and Chetham's School nearby. The outstanding feature of the cathedral for me was its stained glass as so much of it is recent (20<sup>th</sup> C), bearing in mind most of the building is 15<sup>th</sup> century. There are several striking windows, especially the Flame window in the northeast corner commemorating the Second World War and the IRA bomb in 1996. Informative signs throughout the church and a good write up in the guide helped us to understand the background to each window and other points of interest as we walked round. The paintings by Ghislaine Howard, depicting the Stations of the Cross (on loan to the cathedral), provoked comment (not all favourable) with their modern portrayal!



The visit to Chetham's School, was of particular interest.

The buildings, many dating back to the 1400s, are the most complete late me-

dieval residential complex to have survived in the northwest of England. In 1421 the then Rector of the church Thomas de la Warre, Lord Manchester, obtained a licence from King Henry V to refound the church as a collegiate foundation, with a Warden eight fellows, four clerks and six lay choristers. He permitted his baronial home to be made over into the buildings we see today. The buildings had varied uses between this time and 1653, when Humphrey Chetham, a rich local merchant, became interested in the site and wanted to establish a school and library. He died before the purchase was made, but the Executors of his will carried out his wishes and the buildings were restored and used as a hospital and school for forty poor boys and a library established for their use. These buildings and more recent buildings surrounding the site became a co-educational music school in 1969. The library is absolutely unique and it was a privilege to be able to see it in 2010 so closely resembling how scholars would have seen it some 350 years ago. The Reading Room has seen many eminent literary figures over the years and fortunately for those visiting later on, became available to look round. (see picture).



Some members found time to go on the Manchester Wheel and visit nearby Harvey Nicholls, Selfridges and the Arndale Centre, for some retail therapy!

After that it was back to the cathedral for drinks and the service of Choral Evensong, with members robing and processing. The singing of the small choir under the baton of Christopher Stokes, was exemplary, including a moving setting of the Verger's Prayer, originally sung in St. Paul's cathedral and requested as part of our service. Rev. Canon Gilly Myers acted as precentor.

Following the service there was the usual photographic session after which members said their farewells and dispersed.

Our thanks are due to all who organised and took part in the day, at the cathedral, the Visitors centre and at Chetham's. The Librarian's remarks about the intransigence of English Heritage must have struck a chord with many delegates!

by Richard Babington,  
Chairman of York Branch.

### London goes to Manchester!

Tom Cameron, Denise Mead, Irene Money and myself were in Manchester Cathedral on 4<sup>th</sup> May to celebrate the York Province Festival. Training Officer John Shearer from Bristol who remains a London member also joined us.

This lovely cathedral dates back to 1215 and has undergone a huge amount of restoration and preservation over the centuries. We received a lovely warm welcome from the Manchester Branch. The day began with the Eucharist followed by a toothsome lunch.

The day concluded with Choral Evensong with robed processions and the anthem 'The Virgers Prayer' beautifully rendered by the cathedral choir.

After the big line-up for the obligatory official photograph we made our departures. But not before we had taken our 'London mob' photo with National Chaplain, Canon Maureen Palmer. Denise, Irene and myself shared the same train home to Euston where we had a jolly good laugh together. It was a really lovely day



Stephen Haude  
London Branch  
Correspondent

### Manchester, Liverpool & Blackburn Branch

February 15<sup>th</sup> 2010, Blackburn Cathedral. This was the Branch's postponed AGM. It should have taken place on January 11 but as we all know it was rather inclement weather then. In fact, Blackburn Cathedral had been closed and they had had to cancel their Epiphany Celebrations. We arrived at 9.40am and were met by the Dean's Virger. We were shown down to the Chesters Room where we were to have our meeting. This is set out as a Conference Room and it was just big enough to hold us all. We were expecting 21 members and the Secretary put out the Minutes of the last meeting together with copies of the Secretary's Report and Treasurer's Report. Other people started to arrive and we all adjourned to the Crypt Café for coffee and biscuits. The Dean came to have a word with us all individually.

Next on the Agenda was the Business Meeting. We had a special meeting on 8 March at Manchester Cathedral to finalise the details of the York Province Festival taking place on 4 May 2010 at Manchester Cathedral. The obligatory Group Photo is to be taken by Neil Provost, Organist at Christ Church, Timperley who is also a semi-professional photographer.

Our Easter Eucharist was on 20 April at Liverpool Cathedral. We are due to visit Wrea Green on the 5 July and Holy Trinity, Blackpool on 16 September to see all their alterations and have been invited by the vicar. On 29 November we have our Christmas Lunch and Eucharist at Liverpool Cathedral.

At 12.30 we robed and processed to one of the Chapels for Eucharist celebrated by the Dean. I read the lesson and after the obligatory photo, we adjourned to the refectory for lunch. The Dean said Grace and mentioned we should make sure we had our five-a-day! Quite an unusual Grace. We were served by two young men and the food was wonderful. I could hardly move after as I had eaten so much! We had a look round the shop which had opened specially for us and after saying our goodbyes we set off home.

Quite a full year and plenty to look forward to.

From: Freda M. Murphy  
Assistant Secretary  
Manchester & Blackburn Branch



### Leicester Branch

Spring 2010 with the Leicester Branch

To begin our spring meetings and activities thirty members and friends met at St Crispin's Church hall, Braunstone for a very tasty supper of chicken with white wine sauce. With choice of starters and deserts, followed by tea and coffee during which we held our raffle with lots of nice prizes, which raised £46 for Branch funds.

We would like to thank our Branch Chairman Mr. Jack Lippitt for hosting our evening of food and fellowship.

On Monday April 12<sup>th</sup>, we met at St. Peter's Church, Belgrave in the city of Leicester and the parish of the Resurrection. We celebrated a Communion Service with nice Easter hymns presided over by the Team Vicar the Rev'd Stephen Burnham. Sixteen members and friends attended including two possible new members. We welcomed them and hope they will continue to enjoy our fellowship and fun. The service followed by light refreshments and a chin wag. Very sadly this lovely 13<sup>th</sup> Century Church is having to close soon as with a lot of other churches in this area through lack of congregation and funds to keep them up.

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May. We met at All Saints Church, Asfordby near Melton Mowbray.

There were eleven members and we had a Holy Communion Service Order One Common Worship and presided over the Rev'd Jeffery Hopewell from Old Dalby. We sang some nice hymns and the first reading was very amiably done by Pauline Haynes from Barrow on Soar. We prayed for members who were unable to attend through ill health.

After the service we had our usual tasty refreshments and chin wag and our Secretary thanked the Priest, Organist and the ladies who prepared the refreshments. Also our host for the evening Mavis More.

Four of our members attended the York Province Festival at Manchester Cathedral on 4<sup>th</sup> May and reported back that they had a lovely time.

Our next meetings are 12<sup>th</sup> July at Launde Abbey 6pm followed by evening prayer in the Chapel which will be led by the Warden Rev'd Tim Blewett and then on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August Leicester Cathedral at 7:30pm in which we are encouraging members to wear robes.

From Marjorie Thomas (Dip GV)  
Correspondent Leicester Branch



### Blackburn Branch

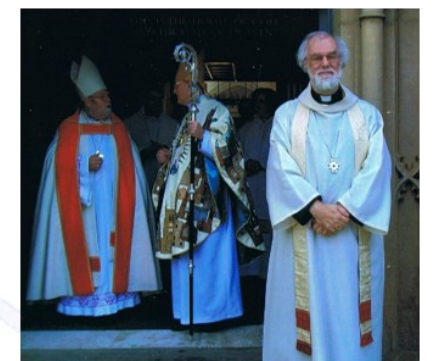
His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams spent several days in our Diocese. He visited schools, met church school heads and faith leaders. He also went to Myerscough College to meet farmers and the rural community. He visited county Hall, Preston, to meet the City Executors and Mayors from the County and the Clergy at Preston Minster.

On the Saturday he ended his tour by preaching at a special service in the Cathedral Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Blackburn. The Nave and transepts were full and the choir stalls overflowing. The team of Virgers and the Canon Sacrist had planned and rehearsed meticulously so everything went smoothly. Pam Derbyshire and I had seats in the Nave. The Lord Lieutenant and Lady Shuttleworth, the High Sheriff of Lancashire, the Rt Hon Jack Straw,

the Mayor and Mayoress of Blackburn and the Bishop of Blackburn's wife headed the congregation. The Dean welcomed everyone and Bishop Nicholas wore the Diocesan chasuble, on which are depicted 120 Diocesan churches. It was embroidered for Bishop Nicholas to wear in 1996 when the former Archbishop of Canterbury came to Blackburn Cathedral to celebrate the 1400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a church on the site.

The service was led by the Bishop supported by his suffragan Bishops of Burnley and Lancaster. The Archbishop's sermon was taken from the Gospel of the day – where Jesus told his disciples to "Make disciples of all nations" – not go and recruit numbers to increase the congregation, but to make companions of all, so we live life fully in the company of Jesus from day to day.

When the service ended the Ramsey cross and lights led the procession of Area Deans, College of Canons, Residential Canons, Archdeacons of Blackburn and Lancaster, the Dean, The Bishops of Burnley and Lancaster, the Processional cross of Canterbury, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Bishop of Blackburn and Bishops Chaplains down the Nave to the West doors. Where I was waiting with camera poised to get quick permission from the Archdeacon to ask the Archbishop for a photograph!



Unfortunately, minus his cope and mitre. He was rather hot in the Lancashire sunshine! But no-one else got one except the press as he nipped down the back stairs to the crypt so didn't wait to greet anyone as there was a question and answers session immediately afterwards with the Archbishop and Mr Straw, chaired by Bishop Nicholas with the Dean leading the questions.

They both stressed that it was