

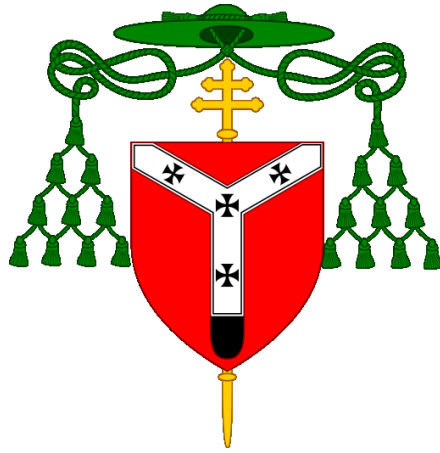
SAINT PAUL'S HAREFIELD

A Monthly Miscellany



Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 8:31-35



St Paul's Harefield

His eminence John Carmel, Cardinal Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster, has this day canonically erected the above parish of Harefield, and dedicated it to Saint Paul, Apostle of the nations.

5th April 1967

Parish Priest: Father James Mulligan

2 Merle Avenue, Harefield

UB9 6DG

07809 398171 01895 822365

Email: harefield@rcdow.org.uk

Mass daily at 9.15am ... Sunday Vigil Mass: Saturday 6.30pm

Sunday Masses: ... 9.00am and 11.00am

Holy Hour Monday: ... 9.45am - 10.45am

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: ... Friday 8.30am, Saturday 8.30am

Rosary each weekday morning after Mass

Confessions: 6.00pm Saturday – or indeed any time that a priest is available

Online Morning Prayer: 8.00am

Online Night Prayer: 9.00pm

Please note: St Paul's church is live-streamed 24 hours per day

SAINT PAUL'S HAREFIELD WELCOMES YOU

We extend a special welcome to those who are single, thinking of marriage, married, divorced, widowed, well-heeled or down at heel or down and out.

We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers or bored teenagers.

We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or Maria Callas or Roy Orbison - or just mime (lip synch) or hum quietly to yourself.

You're welcome here if you're 'just browsing,' just woken up or just got out of bed the wrong side or just got out of prison. Whether a high flyer or a plodder.

You'll fit in here if you are a classical music aficionado or a punk rocker. You're welcome whether you are a cool dude or not, if you are an Elvis fan, a Johnny Cash fan, a Heavy Metal fan or (God forbid) a fan of Barclay James Harvest.

We don't care if you're more Christian than Pope Francis or Saint Mother Teresa, or haven't been to church since Christmas twenty-five years ago.

We extend a special welcome to those who have come only to scoff.

We welcome keep-fit mums, golf widows, football dads, joggers, bikers, starving artists, tree-huggers, line dancers, latte sippers, vegetarians, vegans, bumper sticker philosophers, existentialists, logical positivists and junk-food eaters.

We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted.

We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like 'organised religion' or have anger management issues.

We offer a welcome to those who believe in the Loch Ness Monster.

We welcome those who are tattooed, pierced, both or neither.

We offer a special welcome to those who took the wrong turning and wound up at Saint Paul's by mistake.

We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, day-dreamers, doubters ... and you.

A Warm Welcome to you from Saint Paul's Harefield

SAINT PAUL'S HAREFIELD

A Monthly Miscellany

March 2024

The entire month of March except the very last day falls during the liturgical season of Lent which is represented by the liturgical color violet or purple — a symbol of penance, mortification and the sorrow of a contrite heart. All saint days that are usually Memorials are shifted to Optional Memorials during the season of Lent. The last day of the month is the beginning of the Easter season.

The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of March 2024

For the new martyrs: We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm. (See also <https://www.usccb.org/prayers/popes-monthly-intentions-2024>)

Feasts for March 2024

3. THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, *Sunday*
4. Casimir of Poland, *Opt. Mem.*
7. Perpetua and Felicity, *Opt. Mem.*
8. John of God, *Opt. Mem.*
9. Frances of Rome, *Opt. Mem.*
10. FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, *Sunday*
17. FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT, *Sunday*
18. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Opt. Mem.*
19. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF MARY, *Solemnity*
23. Turibius of Mogrovejo, *Opt. Mem.*
24. PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION, *Holy Week*
25. Monday of Holy Week, *Holy Week*
26. Tuesday of Holy Week, *Holy Week*
27. Wednesday of Holy Week, *Holy Week*
28. Holy Thursday, *Triduum*
29. Good Friday of the Lord's Passion, *Triduum*
30. Holy Saturday, *Triduum*
31. EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD,

On being an honest dissident: The death of Alexei Navalny



Courage, conviction, clarity ... Christ. "I am a believer," Navalny said, "and that helps me a lot in my activities, because everything becomes much, much easier."

What does it take to be an honest dissident?

First, it requires courage — almost *incomprehensible* courage.

In 1933, a young German Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer penned “The Church and the Jewish Questions,” an essay serving as a sharp rejoinder against the the Nazi’s “Civil Service Reconstruction Law” which ousted all Jews (except for very narrow exceptions) from holding office or serving as civil servants. During the “honeymoon period” of Adolf Hitler’s first hundred days as Chancellor and at great risk to himself, Bonhoeffer caustically criticized the inhumanity of the Third Reich, “We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice,” Bonhoeffer insisted, “we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself.”

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, a Russian soldier arrested for criticizing Joseph Stalin in a private letter, discovered the rot of Soviet ideology and the brokenness inherent in all humanity during his eight years in the Siberian Gulag. In Solzhenitsyn's novel, *The First Circle*, a Russian Ministry official Innokenty Volodin, teetering on the precipice of a phone call that could lead to arrest, torture, and prison, asks, "If one is forever cautious, can one remain a human being?"

Second, it requires *unwavering* conviction.

During the draconian Nazi occupation of Poland in 1941, Karol Wojtyla (the future St. John Paul II) participated in the clandestine Rhapsodic Theater in which the young Poles produced captivating plays and epic poems thick with Polish culture and infused with rich Catholicism. As George Weigel records it, "Karol Wojtyla deliberately chose the power of resistance through culture, through the power of the word, in the conviction that the 'word' (and in Christian terms, the Word) is that on which the world turns."

Dietrich von Hildebrand, a Catholic philosopher and outspoken critic of the Nazi regime was reviled enough by Hitler's Nazi henchman to be dubbed "Hitler's Enemy Number One." After years of articulating a profoundly thoughtful (and faithful) Catholic philosophy in opposition to National Socialism, an older and revered priest approached Hildebrand to ask, "Do you know that God has granted you a rare *sensus supernaturalis* (sense for the supernatural)? And do you realize clearly the responsibility that such a gift entails?"

And, finally, it requires *illuminating* clarity.

In speaking about his charge as a Prince of the Church in the crucible of Communist oppression, Hungarian Cardinal József Mindszenty affirmed, "I wish to be the conscience of my people. As the appointed guardian, I knock upon the doors of your souls. Contrary to the errors that are now springing up, I proclaim to my people and my nation the eternal truths. I want to resurrect the sanctified tradition of our people."

And Dietrich von Hildebrand worried that his friends and fellow countrymen risked being warped by their fears, their appetites, and their wishful thinking. "[I had to] shed new light," he said, "on the absolute impossibility of any kind of compromise with National Socialism. For it is

unbelievable how vulnerable our human nature is to falling into illusions and to growing numb in our indignation over injustice which we come to accept. Here, as in so many others in life, we must be like the conductor of an orchestra, in continually renewing the call to alertness. The moment one lets up, people fall asleep, or at least become indifferent.”

Inside Vladimir Putin’s Russia, Alexei Navalny was an honest dissident. A Russian lawyer and activist, Navalny tenaciously confronted a vicious autocrat formed by KGB ruthlessness and a system that had devolved to a kleptocratic gangster state. He spread his anti-corruption message clearly and fearlessly across town squares and social media channels. Navalny gave speeches and wrote tracts, organized protests and ran for office. And, in return, he was brutalized. Slandered and persecuted, arrested and prosecuted, imprisoned and tortured. Navalny was poisoned with a nerve agent and sprayed in a Zelyonka attack. After imprisonment on trumped-up fraud charges, he faced further charges which simply heaped on decades of prison time. Recently transferred to a hellish Siberian prison, with increasingly patchy contact with family and representatives, Navalny would die under suspicious circumstances on February 16, 2024. He was 47 years old. Navalny knew the cost of being an honest dissident.

Several years before, in 2021, Alexei Navalny returned from safety in Germany to continue his campaign against Putin’s corruption in Russia. He could have stayed abroad. He could have trumpeted his cause from grand capitals of the Western world. He could have been courageous, yet comfortable. Instead, he came home. To his Motherland. To his people. To his duty. In doing so, Alexei Navalny was immediately arrested. In the closing statement of his 2021 trial, Navalny confessed,

[Now] I am a believer, and that helps me a lot in my activities, because everything becomes much, much easier. I think about things less. There are fewer dilemmas in my life, because there is a book in which, in general, it is more or less clearly written what action to take in every situation. It’s not always easy to follow this book, of course, but I am actually trying. And so, as I said, it’s easier for me, probably, than for many others, to engage in politics. ...

It is said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied ...” I’ve always thought that this particular commandment is more or less an instruction to activity. And so, while

certainly not really enjoying the place where I am, I have no regrets about coming back, or about what I'm doing. It's fine, because I did the right thing. On the contrary, I feel a real kind of satisfaction. Because at some difficult moment I did as required by the instructions, and did not betray the commandment.

What does it take to be an honest dissident? Incomprehensible courage, yes. Unwavering conviction, of course. Illuminating clarity, to be sure.

But there is something else we, as Catholics, must not forget. There is something known to the Saints and Martyrs, stalwarts and seekers, and, yes, to honest dissidents. It is the firm knowledge that the Source of your joy is Jesus Christ. It comforts and inspires, it soothes and emboldens, and it explains just why we fight.

As St. Paul so joyfully wrote from the darkest of prisons:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!

Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

(Phil 4: 4-8)

For once you know Christ, *you* begin to change. And when *you* begin to change, you may — inch by inch — change the broken world for the better. And that's what it takes to be an honest dissident.

Alexie Navalny, Requiescat in Pace.

This is the simplest and easiest way to pray without ceasing



If you thought praying without ceasing was difficult, you should try praying this prayer and discover how easy it is to never stop praying.

St. Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians challenges Christians to “Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Over the centuries there have been a variety of reactions to this challenge, such as the *Liturgy of the Hours* and the *Jesus Prayer*.

However, there is an even easier way to pray without ceasing that barely requires any memorization and does not need any prayer book.

The invocation of the holy name of Jesus is the simplest way of praying always. When the holy name is repeated often by a humbly attentive heart, the prayer is not lost by heaping up empty phrases, but holds fast to the word and “brings forth fruit with patience.” This prayer is possible “at all times” because it is not one occupation among others but the only occupation: that of loving God, which animates and transfigures every action in Christ Jesus.

CCC 2668

All you need to do is say the name “Jesus” with prayer and love. No complicated formula prayers and no prayer books to worry about. Try praying Jesus’ name throughout the rest of today and see what happens!

Smiling Argentine nun on the road to canonization



Sister Cecilia, a Carmelite of Santa Fe in Argentina, captivated the world in 2016 with her infectious smile while suffering from cancer.

In 2016 social media was ablaze with the pictures of a smiling nun, with the caption that the nun was near the moment of death. While the picture was not taken at the moment of her death, it was a picture of a joyous and smiling nun who embraced her suffering. Sister Cecilia, a Carmelite of Santa Fe in Argentina, was suffering from lung cancer in 2016 and died on June 23 at the age of 43.



Despite her illness, she did not lose her joy, which was sustained by the support of her numerous family members, who remained close by. Joyful nieces and nephews congregated in the gardens outside the hospital where she was admitted for some weeks, sending her messages and helium balloons to distract and entertain her from the window.

Those who saw her spoke of her face as showing peace and joy — as someone awaiting the encounter with the One to whom she had given her life, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the road to canonization

According to the Catholic News Agency, “The archbishop of Santa Fe de la Vera Cruz in Argentina, Sergio Fenoy, signed the edict that begins the process prior to the opening of the cause of canonization of Sister Cecilia María of the Holy Face.”

This is the very beginning stages of her cause for canonization and will include an in-depth study of her life, to determine if she lived a life of heroic virtue.

Once that has been established, her cause will move to Rome, where they will consider her case and decide if she should be declared venerable.

At the moment, she is referred to as a Servant of God.



Church unity: Pope Francis faces three difficult situations



Francis is dealing with the aftershocks of "Fiducia supplicans," a serious Syro-Malabar liturgical conflict, and growing tensions regarding the "German Synod."

In recent months, Pope Francis has had to deal with three difficult situations that threaten the unity of the Church. Here we break them down for you.

The consequences of "Fiducia supplicans"

While *Fiducia supplicans* was well received in some dioceses — notably in Germany, Belgium and Switzerland — it provoked a pointed response from Africa. But, as a Vatican source closely involved in the matter tells us, "The outcry is not only on the African continent, but also in half of Europe, and a large part of Latin America."

Congolese Cardinal Fridolin Abongo, with the Pope's ok, explained that the text could not be applied in Africa. This brings to mind the situation among the Anglicans, where the Archbishop of Canterbury no longer speaks for the whole Anglican Communion on certain issues, and is particularly at odds with African Anglicans.

As well, this declaration has caused tensions in matters of ecumenism. Many Christian confessions, especially in the Orthodox world, have expressed to Rome their consternation.

The conclusion of the Synod on Synodality next October should provide an opportunity to return to this episode.

The Syro-Malabar liturgical revolt



His beatitude Raphael Thattil, the new leader of the Syro-Malabar Church in the archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly

In a message sent at the beginning of December, Pope Francis gave Christmas 2023 as an ultimatum to 400 priests of the Syro-Malabar Church in India, who refuse to comply with a liturgical reform voted by their church's synod decades ago.

The synod had agreed to a partial return to a traditional liturgy in order to recover their Eastern roots, including the priest facing the "liturgical east" and away from the congregation.

The rebellious clerics, who defend a more modern version of the liturgy, obeyed the Pope on Christmas Day to avoid excommunication, but the situation is far from over.

They continue to strongly contest the reform, and now openly oppose the new head of the small Eastern Church, Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, whose election was approved by the Pope in January. Archbishop Thattil succeeds Cardinal George Alencherry, whose resignation was seen as an admission of failure in the face of this

liturgical crisis. Thattil's mission is to impose the reform voted by the Synod and restore unity to this Church, which counts over 4 million faithful in India.

German obstinacy



Bishop Georg Bätzing at a German Synodal Way press conference in 2021

Since the launch of its “synodal path” in 2019, the Catholic Church in Germany and its reform agenda have been causing growing concern in Rome. Despite several admonitions from the Pope and the Roman Curia, in February the bishops’ conference was preparing to vote on the statutes of a “synodal committee,” an organization designed to integrate lay people into the governance structures of the German Church.

A year earlier, the Holy See had explicitly asked the Germans not to move in this direction. This time, three high-ranking officials of the Roman Curia sent a letter to the interested parties *in extremis*, calling for the vote to be canceled. The vote was therefore removed from the agenda, but there is no indication that the synod committee project will be abandoned.

“I am impressed by the patience with which the Pope and the Roman dicasteries are trying to keep in touch with the German bishops and maintain unity and communion,” commented Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna Christoph Schönborn, responding to *Communio* magazine. The Austrian also asked his neighbors to reconsider their synod council project, which he described as a problem “from the point of view of the unity of the faith.”

“Refusing to give in would be *obstinatio* — a clear sign of a schism that no one can want,” he insists.

New parents rally town to restore and reactivate local church



Jean-Louis and Marie-Lorraine decided to spruce up their village church, which had fallen into disrepair. They plan to have their yet-unborn child baptized there in March.

Sometimes all it takes is a good idea and a few people of good will to get something done. Jean-Louis and his wife Marie-Lorraine have provided just that. This couple in their thirties had been living in the village of [Messein](#) (in northeastern France) for two years when they decided to take the destiny of the small-town church of Sts. Peter and Paul into their own hands.

The church was a sight to behold: with humidity penetrating on all sides, its walls were decrepit, its benches moldy, the steeple full of pigeon droppings... Neglected, the church had hardly been used at all anymore except to host the occasional funeral Mass when a village local passed away.

Jean-Louis and Marie-Lorraine are both practicing Catholics. He's a civil servant, and she's a nurse. They live just a few yards from the building and decided in early January to restore it to its former glory.



Jean-Louis and Marie-Lorraine

The young couple are preparing to welcome their first child in February. The idea of baptizing him in March in the renovated church soon came to them. “Seeing God’s house so neglected seemed really sad,” the couple told Aletheia. “We decided to go and see the parish priest and the mayor and ask them for permission to take care of some minor maintenance work ourselves.” (The mayor’s permission was required because in France all churches built before 1905 belong to the government.)

Moisture, the main enemy

The initiative was immediately encouraged by both the pastor and the mayor. “Seeing local residents mobilize for a project like this is rare enough to be appreciated,” says the commune’s mayor, Daniel Lagrange. “The church hasn’t been in use for a good 10 years, and we don’t have many churchgoers anymore. It’s a good thing that some people want to get involved, and I’m delighted about that. We’re going to try to turn a dying church back into a living place,” he explains. The local government is financing all the materials needed to renovate the interior: paint, plaster, cleaning products...

In the end, it took more than just a lick of paint to bring the church back to life. “We started by removing four cubic yards of pigeon droppings from the bell tower. The walls need to be repainted, and we have a carpenter working on the pews to make them usable again,” explains Jean-Louis.



A number of villagers, mostly retired, have been helping out since the work began. Others are friends of the couple, like Farid, a plasterer, who is taking care of repairing the walls. “The wooden ceiling structure is also in a sorry state, so we’re going to have to treat it for worms first,” he continues. “We don’t know much about it. We’re not craftsmen for the most part, but with a bit of good will, we can do something good,” says Jean-Louis.



Bringing the church back to life

“I’m in awe,” says Fr. Gérard Nduwimana, the parish priest at Visitation Parish. “I think it shows a great spirit of hope to want to bring this church back to life.” On May 11, a Mass will be celebrated to mark the completion of the work.



As for the mayor of Messein, he wants to organize an open house after the [baptism](#) of the newborn child, scheduled for March 9. “I’m also thinking about other uses that might be compatible,” he says, “such as concerts with musical instruments or choirs.”



Jean-Louis and Marie-Lorraine are also looking to the future. “We have the keys now, so we’re going to try to open the church more often. The idea would already be to allow the return of early Masses. For the moment, we’re concentrating on the work, but we’re going to find a way to really bring this church back to life.”

Art is utterly useless. That's why you desperately need it.



John Touhey -

A fascinating conversation between two noted writers helps us understand why looking at art is a vital human experience.

In the autumn of 1940, an 18-year-old named Marcel was walking with his dog, Robot, outside a French village when he spotted a fallen tree. Beneath the tree's exposed roots was a hole that led into a cave. Marcel entered it with three of his friends.

The young men were stunned to discover paintings of strange animals inside the cave – including images of prehistoric deer with enormous antlers, bison, and an extinct species of woolly rhinoceros. The figures all possessed a primitive, magnetic beauty.

Lascaux cave was later determined to be at least 17,000 years old. Older cave paintings and figures carved from mammoth tusks also exist, dating back 40,000 to 65,000 years. It seems that for most of humankind's existence we have created and cherished art.

What is art?

We might start by asking, what is meant by the word *art*? Author Patrick Bringley has a straightforward answer, proposing that art is “something that is better than it has any right to be.” For 10 years, he worked as a guard at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, an experience he shared in his acclaimed book, *All the Beauty in the World*.

Bringley spoke at a New York Encounter panel on February 17 titled “What beauty can do to the soul.” The former museum guard recalled being surrounded by objects made with “more care and skill and diligence ... than we would have any right to reasonably expect.”



Patrick Bringley and J.F. Martel speak at the New York Encounter.
Courtesy New York Encounter

In need of the useless

It is the very uselessness of art that makes it so necessary, added J.F. Martel, lecturer, host of the Weird Studies podcast, and author of *Reclaiming Art in the Age of Artifice*. Martel said that art “pulls us out of the pragmatism that would insist that everything we do has to have a use.”

This sense of art as something that transcends the pragmatic can be traced all the way back to caves like Lascaux and the even more spectacular Chauvet Cave in the same region “... where you find ancient artworks that were apparently made for no one to see because they’re in such deep and difficultly accessed recesses of the cave.”

Using physical materials like hair, bones, and minerals that had previously been utilized as survival tools, the first artists repurposed them. They took “something that has a very clear causal function” and gave it a “new function.” Our ancient ancestors needed stone tools in order to survive; not so, carvings and cave paintings. These early artworks brought something new into the world in response to a human thirst not for possession, but contemplation and communion.

Something “fundamental”

What then is the purpose of art? For Bringley, art exists for its own sake. It is an encounter with something “fundamental.” Looking at something truly beautiful gives one a feeling akin to “a bird fluttering in your chest.”

As a guard at the Met, he saw countless visitors have this experience while standing in front of paintings:

I would see someone approach a picture and they clearly felt that the thing was beautiful. And you could almost feel them being sort of infused with this thing...



Objective beauty

Furthering the point, Martel brought up the philosopher Immanuel Kant:

(Kant) said that the experience of beauty is paradoxically probably the most subjective experience (...), but it manifests itself as an objective fact. You experience beauty as something that's outside of you, something that's utterly other.

A work of art “elicits from us a kind of evangelizing response. We want to tell other people about it.” Martel gave the example of going to see a beautiful film by yourself. When you leave the theater “you’ve got to tell someone about it” so that they can also experience this film “that’s there, that’s waiting for people.”

Like the poet and artist William Blake, Martel proposed that “beauty is the quality of things seen for what they really are.” He explained:

If we could see without the veil of utilitarianism, of habit, of reflex — if we could just see the world as it is — perhaps it would all strike us as being sublimely beautiful. Maybe art is just a matter of framing little bits of the world and polishing them a bit so that the beauty that was inherently there can be available to others.

Looking at art

Bringely said museum visitors may benefit from becoming “more naïve” when looking at works of art. Setting aside all the information gleaned about an artwork from textbooks, etc., he suggests having “an element of passivity in yourself and later you can then bring your intelligent mind to the process.”

He added: “Give this thing the space to operate on me, to sort of work on me. It’s a never-ending process.”

PAINTING OF THE MONTH



***Paysage de Provence* ... Nicolas de Staël**

Nicolas De Staël was born Nicolai Vladimirovitch Staël von Holstein into a high-ranking military family in the tsar's court in St Petersburg –then called Petrograd – forced into exile during the 1917 revolution when he was just three years old. His parents died shortly afterwards and De Staël and his two sisters were sent to be raised by a Russian couple in Belgium. After studying art in Brussels, De Staël travelled around the south of [France](#), Spain and Morocco where he met his partner, Jeannine, a married artist with a young son who he persuaded to run away with him. After enlisting with the Foreign Legion in 1939 he was demobilised less than a year later and returned to Nice, then Paris. The couple lived in extreme poverty, burning furniture to keep warm in winter, as De Staël struggled to make a living. During this period, the couple lived on the paintings Jeannine sold, but in 1946, she died weak and malnourished after terminating a pregnancy that had threatened her life.



Within three months, the widowed De Staël had met and married his second wife, Françoise Chapouton, and moved his family to the south of France, but less than five years and three children later he was madly in love again, with Jeanne Polge, a married mother-of-two. By now enjoying success exhibiting and selling paintings, De Staël packed his wife and family back to Paris and settled in an apartment in Antibes to be near Jeanne. When she refused to leave her husband or see him, Staël furiously completed his last work, a massive 3.5 metre by 6 metre canvas called *Le Concert* (Le Grand Concert: L'Orchestre), in three days, then ended his life.

“The myth of his troubled personality and tragic end has been to the detriment of De Staël’s work. It has prevented people seeing the beauty of his oeuvre and viewing it as a celebration of existence,” Fabrice Hergott, director of the Museum of Modern Art in Paris said at a preview this week. “The aim of this exhibition is to show what a great, original and atypical painter De Staël was.”

In a brief visit to Paris shortly before his death, De Staël told a friend: “I am lost ... perhaps I have painted enough.”

Gustave de Staël, the youngest of the artist’s four children born a year before his death, said the suicide was “a spur of the moment act” and that his mother always said if there had been someone with him at the time he would not have ended his life.

“If you look at his last works they are full of life. I don’t see sadness or melancholy in them.

“He had spent the summer and winter alone at his atelier in Antibes, he was exhausted and I think he’d had enough of this solitary tête-à-tête he’d been having with himself. In the end he had no hobbies or other interests; he was always working and he sought solitude so he could give the maximum of himself to his paintings.

“Maybe he felt he had wrung himself out as far as painting was concerned and had nothing more to give. I believe he could have continued to show us so much more especially in his use of colour, but it was not to be.”

This month the painting is selected by Fr Jim

THE POWER OF THE SPOKEN OR WRITTEN WORD

*Something I have listened to, read,
appreciated and remembered*

In Memoriam, [Ring out, wild bells] Alfred, Lord Tennyson

**Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.**

**Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.**

**Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.**

**Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.**

**Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.**

**Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.**

**Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.**

**Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.**



Alfred, Lord Tennyson

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

HOLY HOWLERS

Typos, misprints, inadvertent double entendre and all manner of infelicitous error published in church notices, bulletins and newsletters

The seminar this morning:
'Jesus Walks on the Water.'

The seminar this afternoon:
'Searching for Jesus.'

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

We are delighted to announce that the youth group has raised almost £500 for drug abuse.



Suddenly, Father Schober was not sure whether he really should have bought the new crucifix at Ikea.