



**Passage Lenten reflections**

**Holy Week Wednesday to Saturday**

## Forty Years of The Passage a Lenten Journey Day 37 Holy Week Wednesday Passage 2016/17

As we moved into the new building a number of new initiatives were introduced or further developed to better serve those most in need. The major development was a new contract to provide a Housing Options Service from 1/10/2017 for Westminster City Council this will be described in more detail tomorrow.

In the past we had worked with many people who had become entrenched rough sleepers because their immigration status was unresolved - sometimes for many years. Because they had no right to work, we were unable to find them accommodation.

In the two previous years, as part of the Social Impact Bond (SIB) Project, we brought a number of long-term rough sleepers in off the street, in some cases by resolving outstanding immigration issues. The SIB worker, a qualified solicitor, is now also qualified to give immigration advice. A new project to end homelessness by resolving outstanding immigration issues began on 1 April 2015. Our Immigration Solicitor continues to take referrals of clients with a variety of immigration issues from staff at The Passage Resource Centre and within Westminster Outreach teams. The service includes full representation for clients at appeal hearings and judicial review of Home Office decisions. As a result, in 2016-2017:

3 clients were granted limited leave to remain.	1 client was granted discretionary leave to remain as a victim of trafficking (child sex abuse victim)	2 Upper Tribunal "Error of Law" hearings were won for a client whose asylum case is ongoing.
1 client (with a brain injury) successfully appealed his deportation.	1 client was granted leave to remain on human rights grounds after an appeal hearing.	1 successful judicial review was undertaken, and an injunction obtained to prevent removal of a client.
3 clients were granted indefinite leave to remain / settlement.	7 clients achieved European permanent residence status	2 clients won asylum support appeals for accommodation and support
2 clients were granted Refugee Status, one of them after an appeal in the immigration tribunal		

All clients who gained status have been assisted by other staff in moving off the streets and into mainstream accommodation.

This year marked the introduction of community liaison work, described in the annual report: -

"We are very conscious of our presence within the local community and the importance of working with local businesses and residents. This year we started a new initiative employing a Community Liaison Coordinator to work closely with local businesses funded by the Victoria Business Improvement District (VBID). The coordinator makes contacts with local businesses so that if they have concerns about a rough sleeper, they contact The Passage. The Coordinator also runs a course on homelessness awareness for staff at local business. He works closely with the street outreach teams and the Resource Centre to monitor issues arising in the neighbourhood and help resolve issues which might affect local business and residents."

**Today at The Passage** these initiatives continue and are vital in supporting those most in need.

In the Office of readings today we read the beginning of the reading from St Augustine

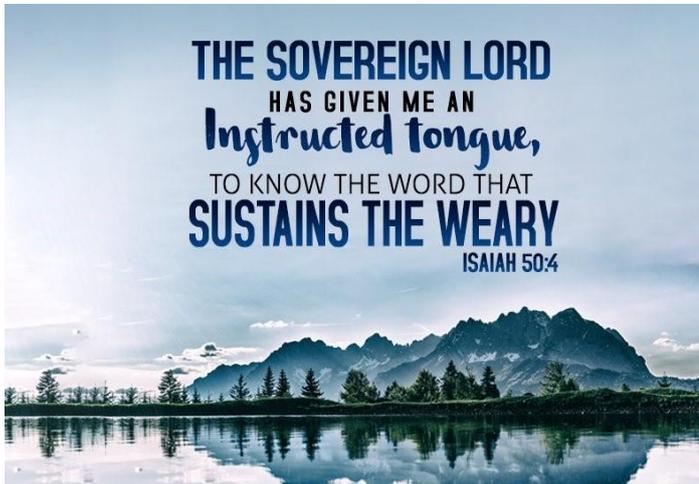
Dear brethren, the Lord has marked out for us the fullness of love that we ought to have for each other. He tells us: No one has greater love than the man who lays down his life for his friends. In these words, the Lord tells us what the perfect love we should have for one another involves. John, the evangelist who recorded them, draws the conclusion in one of his letters: As

Christ laid down his life for us, so we too ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. We should indeed love one another as he loved us, he who laid down his life for us.

As we draw closer to the passion and crucifixion of Jesus Christ we pray: -

Lord let us see the face of your son Jesus Christ in the poor people we encounter from day to day. Allow us to take inspiration from Isaiah that we can fulfil our mission to help those around us. Let us not be distracted by the temptations of material wealth.

Amen.



The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me; therefore, I have not been disgraced; therefore, I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.  
Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.

It is the Lord God who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?  
All of them will wear out like a garment;  
the moth will eat them up.



*Judas accepted 30 silvers in exchange of betraying Jesus.*  
**THE WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK IS ALSO CALLED SPY WEDNESDAY**  
MATTHEW 26:14-25 (HOLY WEDNESDAY)

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, and said, 'What will you give me if I betray him to you?' They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?' He said, 'Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him,

"The Teacher says my time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples." So, the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.' And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, 'Surely not I, Lord?' He answered, 'The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.' Judas, who betrayed him, said, 'Surely not I, Rabbi?' He replied, 'You have said so.'

## Forty Years of The Passage a Lenten Journey Day 38 Holy Week Thursday Passage 2017/18

Mick Clarke reported “The past year was challenging statutory funding continued to be cut while, at the same time, the number of people sleeping rough on the streets of England continued to rise. The Passage still, however, achieved some amazing outcomes, including 98% of Home for Good clients maintaining their tenancies, and supporting more than 100 people back into employment. We pay tribute to the skill, dedication and care of our staff and volunteers, and to their determination to find ways to help those most in need in our society; equally we pay tribute to the amazing courage of our clients in the way they deal with situations that most of us will never face.

The past year was also one of development: we increased the services we offer to meet our clients’ ever-evolving needs. We successfully completed the first year of our new Brighton Charity Link Project, which aims to map the charitable sector in the city, to identify who uses the services; to build relationships with and between services; and to develop shared ways of working to reduce the numbers of people who are rough sleeping in the city.

Our work on modern slavery marked the beginning of our move into working nationally.

Our Housing Options Team offers a prevention and relief service for those who are - or are at risk of becoming - homeless. The eight-strong team comprises a team manager, two general customer services advisers, two welfare customer service advisers, two enhanced specialist workers and a tenancy sustainment worker.

They aim to provide accommodation for people who meet the council’s criteria of eligibility and priority need; for those who don’t meet the criteria they provide much-needed advice and information, together with links to the private rented sector, so that individuals have more options into accommodation.”

**The Passage has a strong record, not only of getting people off the streets, but also of helping them into employment.**

To achieve that, we firmly believe that working in partnership achieves far more than working in isolation. To that end, we launched a partnership with The Goring Hotel, which has been a big supporter of The Passage for many years. Our new project, Hotel School, gives people affected by homelessness the opportunity to explore training and employment opportunities in the hospitality industry. We have run four ten-week courses during the year. Almost all finding employment or moving into apprenticeships.



A successful group graduate from the scheme

Our Destitution worker focuses on finding those being helped by our Immigration solicitor who have no recourse to public funds, accommodation options, usually through faith-based organisations or through hosting schemes.

Our Private Rented Scheme, commissioned by Westminster City Council, provides accommodation options through private landlords for clients who are sleeping on the streets or are in hostels.

Today begins the Easter Triduum with Holy Thursday when we mark the last supper. But first we return to Isaiah and the song of the servant.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the  
oppressed,  
to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint  
spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.  
They shall build up the ancient ruins,  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations.

Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,  
foreigners shall till your land and dress your  
vines;  
but you shall be called priests of the Lord,  
you shall be named ministers of our God;  
you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations,  
and in their riches you shall glory.  
Because their shame was double,  
and dishonour was proclaimed as their lot,  
therefore they shall possess a double portion;  
everlasting joy shall be theirs.

For I the Lord love justice,  
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant  
with them.  
Their descendants shall be known among the  
nations, and their offspring among the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge  
that they are a people whom the Lord has  
blessed.

**1 Corinthians 29** The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**John 13: 3-15** Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'



*I gave you an example  
that you also should  
do as I did unto you*

*John 13:15*

Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason, he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.'

Lord grant us humbleness of heart to serve you in our neighbour and to recognise our neighbour in the poor. Amen

## Forty Years of The Passage a Lenten Journey Day 39 Good Friday Passage 2018/19

We reported “In the current climate, the challenges of running a charity that seeks to both prevent street homelessness and help those who have ended up street homeless off those streets and back into society are considerable. A 165% increase in street homelessness since 2010, matched with a challenging funding environment, has resulted in a dramatic increase in demand for our services whilst at the same time many charities are competing for limited resources. Our Resource Centre supported 3,189 individuals, an increase of over 30% on the previous year.

It is therefore very pleasing to see the impressive results and impact the work of The Passage has had on so many people over the last year, helping so many move away from the streets and into accommodation and employment. We are particularly proud that our new service providing accommodation options in the private rented sector helped 91 clients find a new home and with our support, developed the skills needed to maintain their tenancies.

At The Passage we genuinely believe that we can end street homelessness for those who come to our door. We cannot do this on our own and are fortunate to work with many partners who, like us, are committed to meeting this goal.

The 2018/19 year marks the end of our current strategic period. We launched our new 3 Year Strategic Plan 'Ending Street Homelessness' on 1 April 2019, setting out our vision of a society where street homelessness has been ended and human dignity and respect is afforded to all those less fortunate than ourselves. The Passage must develop new services and partnerships to address the more complex needs of our clients, who look to us to guide them on their path back

into society. The economic environment continues to be extremely challenging and new and innovative funding models are needed more than ever if we are to have the financial resources to succeed.

In February 2019, we were deeply honoured that HRH The Duke of Cambridge became Royal Patron of The Passage. We look forward to continuing to work with His Royal Highness and are so grateful that he has chosen to support us in this special way.”



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visiting The Passage

Amongst new developments we reported: - ‘For many years, The Passage had been aware of the link between modern slavery and homelessness, with homeless people being targeted by criminals involved in modern slavery and those escaping modern slavery often ending up street homeless.

In 2018 we appointed an Anti-Slavery Co-Ordinator (thanks to funding by the London Housing Foundation) to raise awareness of this issue among the homelessness sector and statutory authorities. The Passage has since supported many victims of this appalling crime and is now carrying out training across the sector. We will also be producing a report with our initial findings and recommendations in June 2019, and our Chief Executive is a member of the newly appointed independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner’s Advisory Panel and a member of the Ministerial Round table on Modern Slavery and Homelessness.’

Today we mark Good Friday and Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross on Calvary. I do not propose read through St John's passion. At The Passage in a 'normal' year we mark Good Friday with an ecumenical procession with the cross along Victoria Street starting at Methodist Central Hall, down to the Westminster Cathedral piazza and then on to Westminster Abbey. There are prayers, hymns and readings at each stopping point. The cross is carried by a homeless person and there is an opportunity for those taking part to contribute financially to The Passage.



The Lord Mayor reads outside Methodist Central Hall



The procession moves down Victoria Street



Cardinal Vincent Nichols outside Westminster Cathedral



Collecting outside the Cathedral



The procession arrives at Westminster Abbey

This year there will be no procession due to the COVID restrictions. The service will take place in Methodist Central Hall at 12.00 noon and will include participants from many Churches. The Passage will be represented by Mick Clarke.

You are welcome to join us online. - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a60iEd1Gq3s>

Good Friday Service will also be available at <https://mchw.live>

Loving Father we pray for all those involved in the work of The Passage from many different faiths. We thank you for bringing together those of different Christian traditions on Good Friday. Bring us back safely together on Good Friday 2022 and help us to continue to serve others in the year ahead.

Amen

## Forty Years of The Passage a Lenten Journey Day 40 Holy Saturday

So today we complete our journey through the life of The Passage. The actual 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary was on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Although there is a period of pre pandemic operations till February 2020 we will look at some of our work during the pandemic. The pandemic has a feel of a long Holy Saturday as we await the resurrection.

In the early stages of the outbreak, we worked together with our partners to move hundreds of rough sleepers into emergency accommodation where they were able to self-isolate.

To ensure that these people did not go hungry, we also took on the responsibility of providing a food service to everyone who had been moved safely off the streets across Westminster; we made daily deliveries of more than 300 nutritious food parcels. Each parcel contained a packed breakfast, lunch, and snacks, as well as a hot cooked meal.

We ran this service every day without fail for 13 weeks. Our chefs, Claudette and Nour, together with colleagues from The Connection at St Martin's and an army of volunteers, prepared a total of 61,687 meals during this period.

We like the rest of the country hoped in the late summer than the worst was behind us. Good progress was made in helping those in temporary accommodation to find permanent homes. With the second lockdown in November, the service resumed.

We are now seeing new rough sleepers due to the economic crisis. We need to prevent people from sleeping out; even one night can have a devastating effect and make their recovery and resettlement much more difficult. Throughout the pandemic, we have moved many clients into temporary hotel accommodation, giving us a unique opportunity to address their needs and help find safe routes off the streets. No Night Out will further develop this model, so when a client first arrives at The Passage, we can respond quickly. Accommodation combined with other specialist support - medical, mental health, alcohol and substance misuse and benefits advice will give clients the best chance of ending their homelessness.

### From an ancient homily on Holy Saturday

Something strange is happening – there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and Hell trembles with fear. He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, He who is both God and the Son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the Cross, the weapon that had won him the victory. At the sight of him Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror, and cried out to everyone, 'My Lord be with you all.' Christ answered him: 'And with your spirit.' He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying: 'Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.'

For your sake I, your God, became your son; I, the Lord, took the form of a slave; I, whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth. For your sake, for the sake of man, I became like a man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden. Rise let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly Paradise. I will not restore you to that Paradise but will enthrone you in heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.

