Holy-days

One of my favourite novels is Barbara Kingsolver’s *Poisonwood Bible*, a tale set in what was known then as the Congo in the early 1960s. The novel explores the life of a missionary family as they respond in their different ways to their new life in Africa. The zealous father accustomed to a seven day week is challenged by the pattern of life he encounters where he is living, which operates on a four day week cycle. Convinced that seven days is God’s pattern of work and rest he arrogantly fights against the local practice which grants him more frequent opportunities to rest. It serves as a lesson for us all to respect the contexts in which we find ourselves, especially when we are guests. It also reveals a human reluctance to have healthy patterns of work and rest.

11 July was the lesser festival of St Benedict of Nursia (70 miles from Rome) who died c.550. His ‘Rule’ remains the foundation for most monastic life and spirituality, and is the base of our Daily Offices – Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline being three of the Rule’s seven moments for prayer in the day. These were timed to coincide with the Roman state’s changing of the imperial guard as testament to the sovereignty of God in the life of Christians. Rather than recognising the empire in these moments, monks prayed and offered their allegiance to God. One of the things the Rule does is offer a daily rhythm of prayer, work and rest.

As we begin the holiday season, I was reminded in Junior Church that the word for holiday is actually ‘Holy day’. Before bank holidays were introduced, Sundays and religious festival days were the only days of rest – holy days. Holidays are rooted in the sabbath principle of resting from work, and reconnecting with the One who made us. We are not machines constructed to endlessly work, we are human beings made in the image of God. It is important and God’s gift that we regularly stop our activities and reconnect with ourselves, with God and the world around us – in the rhythm of our days, weeks and years.

> **God blessed the seventh day, and made it holy (hallowed it), because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.’** Gen 2.3
> ‘**Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy.’** Ex 20.8

To emphasise this point, Nicholas Allen wrote a delightful children’s story book, *Jesus’ Day Off*, in which the hard work of performing miracles, making up stories and spreading joy throughout the world begins to take its toll. When the miracles start to go wrong, Jesus is told to take the day off, relax and have some fun... and he does. At the end of his day off he worries that he didn’t get much done and talks to his Father about it. His Father helps him to see that where he had had fun, for example doing cartwheels in the desert, wonderful things had occurred, like fountains of water appearing in the sand. ‘You see when you’re feeling better yourself, you can only make others feel better too.’

As we enter a season of holidays I hope each of us can reconnect with our heavenly Father, find some rest and have some fun. Maybe we can also reset our daily
and weekly rhythms to allow for more space to invest in our feeling better and for sabbath to deepen its roots in our lives. I am not sure the world will reset itself to operate on a four day week, but research indicates that this work pattern is as productive as a five day week. Barbara Kingsolver’s Congo, it seems offers us deep wisdom.

Canon Karen Rooms
Acting Dean

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ONE OF the clergy always holds this phone. Do feel able to contact us if you need but please be aware we cannot receive texts.

07399 523 330
News from Leicester Cathedral

Dance in the Aisles

Come and dance in the aisles and learn ballroom dancing at St Nicholas Church for their Community Night this week!
On Wednesday 19 July. Lots of fun – drop in between 6.30pm and 8.30pm.

This week in the building...

Our contractors have been working under our Ascension window in the Great South Aisle to create the internal entrance to the Heritage and Learning Centre due to open next June.

*Leicester Cathedral Revealed* has been made possible thanks to National Lottery players.
Those who identify as UKME/GMH are invited to join our gathering on Saturday 9 September, at St Theodore’s Church, Leicester, LE4 7RE, from 10.00am–3.00pm. This is a chance to engage in the Living in Love and Faith conversation as UKME/GMH Anglicans with the Archdeacon of Oakham Alison Booker, who is a trained LLF facilitator. Please encourage all members of your churches who are UKME/GMH to attend, as this will be a good opportunity to network with others and explore what being UKME/GMH means too. Lunch is provided.

To sign up, please email dinta.chauhan@leicestercofe.org along with your dietary requirements.
Services this week

While the Cathedral is closed for building works, our services take place in St Martins House (Sunday mornings) and in St Nicholas' Church, Leicester (Monday to Friday). The Cathedral will also be Together with other churches on some Sunday afternoons.

All are welcome to our services. Services of Morning Prayer are also live-streamed.

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Leicestershire and Rutland Festival of Archaeology

Artefact handling drop-in

Saturday 22 July 2023
1.00–4.00pm

St Martin’s House Reception
7 Peacock Lane, LE1 5PZ

Mathew Morris, the ULAS archaeologist who found Richard III, will be at St Martin’s House with some of the finds from the recent archaeological dig at Leicester Cathedral.

Come and join us at this special Festival of Archaeology event.

All ages welcome!
I was born 27 January 1940 in a nursing home on the corner of Clarendon Park Road and Cross Road. There was a blizzard at the time and if my grandfather hadn’t persuaded Mr Butress to turn out with his taxi, I might have had to wait weeks before I could be born!

Actually, it was on the cards for me to be born at my grandfather’s as my mother was away on holiday! In 1939, with me on the way, my mother came up to her father in Howard Road. My parents lived in London and worked for Jerome’s Photographic Studios (there used to be one on Granby Street in Leicester). My grandfather said, “Look Kath, there’s going to be war so why don’t you stay here, Norman can pack up your home and follow here to Leicester”. They originally lived close to Heston Airport, now part of Heathrow. Mother came for a fortnight’s holiday and stopped eleven years!

I attended Stoneygate School, known as Rudd’s after the headmaster. After the war my father managed an old photographic studio in Newark-on-Trent and a year or two later opened his own.

My father and I used to go to St John the Baptist’s, Clarendon Park Road. At school one of the teachers said to my parents: “Martin talks so much he is either going to be a barrister or a parson…”

In 1951 we moved to Newark, where I attended the Magnus Grammar School. So, Newark is where I grew up — naah! I have never really grown up, just an older schoolboy! We all became involved with the local church, first at St. Peter’s, Farndon, where both mother and I were Confirmed. Later, I went to the magnificent Newark Parish Church.

On leaving school at eighteen, I went to work at Nottingham City Libraries leading to a post in their Commercial and Technical Reference Library. It was just as I decided that this was what I really wanted to do and had met a girl whom I thought was special, when the ‘dog collar act’ caught me by surprise.

I used to attend the assistant Bishop Maurice Gelsthorpe enquirers conferences at Bingham Rectory and aged twenty-one I was amazed to be told I should go to a Selection Conference. First, I was directed to St Luke’s Training House in Charlton, S-E London. There were seven of us there, where we would have a job to pay for our board and study in the evenings and weekends. I had a very interesting job at Sainsbury’s Personnel Department in Blackfriars, where I assisted the Deputy Manager.

As the Theological Colleges were full, I had a gap year in which I taught at a junior school in Dartford, Kent.

The next phase was a year at The
Bernard Gilpin society, attached to Durham University, followed by three years at the Bishops’ College, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire. Like many students, in order to keep financially solvent I worked in garages, on building sites, milk rounds, and at a Wholesale Grocers, where I learned to bone and roll a side of bacon. That has come in handy when cooking!

My first curacy was at Ripley, Derbyshire, and I was made deacon by Bishop Warren Hunt, Suffragan of Derby, on 24 September 1967. The following year I was ordained priest by Bishop Geoffrey Allen.

In 1968 I married Elaine Taylor from Dartford. I served a second very enjoyable curacy at St Mary’s, Ilkeston, where we took on the care of Holy Trinity who introduced me to the Shrine of Our lady of Walsingham. I have been an associate priest for many years now. Our son Joseph was born in 1974, shortly before I became Vicar of Chinley with Bugsworth, Northwest Derbyshire.

I returned to Leicester in 1983 to be the last actual Incumbent of St Michael’s, Scott Street, Knighton Fields. In 1984 – just as we were going on holiday – a letter on the mat came from Bishop Richard Rutt asking me to take on the parish of Thurcaston, which was my last incumbency from 1985 to 2005. Sadly, my wife Elaine died five months before our planned retirement to Birstall.

In addition to taking services in Birstall and Wanlip, I have served for several parishes in interregnum and also assisted the late Canon Chris Burch at St Peter’s, Braunstone. I have been on the Cathedral Chaplain team for a number of years and am still on the Diocesan Ministry of Deliverance Team.

After the official opening of a housing project in Derby, I went into the centre and met Joann. We have now been married for over thirteen years. I have one genetic grandchild Caoimhe (pr. ‘Keeva’) and umpteen step-ones with Jo’s daughter and two boys up the road in Birstall.

My interests remain planes, trains, automobiles and ships. I am Chaplain to the Leicester Senior Service Club on Loughborough Road.

I have met some people who might be described as the great and the good, but perhaps my greatest delight has been to know many ordinary priests and people with whom to share the story of life.
On Coronation Day, 6 July 1483, the King and Queen entered Westminster Abbey by the west door, and were escorted to a platform covered in red worsted which had been erected between the high altar and the choir. Richard stood on the platform by his throne (St Edward’s Chair) whilst the Archbishop of Canterbury formally presented him to the people and formally asked them to consent to his coronation. The request was greeted with traditional ‘King Richard, King Richard, King Richard, yea, yea, yea’.

Richard was then led to the altar followed by the Queen. He made his first offering, and prostrated himself while prayers were read over him. He was then seated and asked to swear that he would uphold the law, do justice, and support and defend the Church. The oath taken by King Richard in 1483 was in English. Therefore the people could understand what he was promising to do in his oath.

The King knelt before the seated Archbishop of Canterbury for his anointing, who loosened Richard’s upper garments and smeared the holy oil of St Thomas Becket on his hands, breast, in the middle of his back, on the shoulders and in the crook of his elbow, and finally on the crown of his head in the form of a cross.

Richard was then vested in his royal garments, the sword of state was girded on him, and the Archbishop crowned him with St Edward’s Crown. A ring was placed on the fourth finger of his right hand, and he was offered his sword on the altar, receiving it back again as a token that his power came from God. The sceptre was placed in his right hand and the orb in his left, and then he was blessed. After each bishop present had kissed him, Richard returned to his throne on the platform to be written in English. Therefore the people could understand what he was promising to do in his oath.

The Coronation of King Richard III (Part II)

Above: A modern stained glass window of Richard III and Queen Anne at Cardiff Castle.
Below: The post card shows images of Richard and Anne with the Arms of Richard above.
By artist David Hopkinson FSHA
for the formal pledging of fealty and homage.

Then, it was the Queen’s turn. Mass was sung by the Archbishop. The Bible used in the reading of the Gospel was carried to Richard and Anne for them to kiss. After the Creed they were led again to the altar where they made further offerings and on returning to their thrones kissed the Pax, a tablet bearing an image of Christ. They returned to the altar to make their confessions before receiving the Host and drinking the wine from St Edward’s Chalice.

During the final part of the ceremony Richard, Anne, and the assembled bishops and nobles walked to the altar before the Shrine of St Edward (behind the high altar where the Archbishop laid their crowns. The new king and queen were conducted to recesses where they changed the outer garments they had worn during the service, and they were dressed in purple robes of estate designed to emphasize their majesty. The Archbishop placed the Imperial Crown and the Queen’s crown on their heads. The procession reformed for the walk back to Westminster Hall where the King and Queen retired to their chambers to rest and break their fast.

The coronation banquet began at 4 o’clock. The King and Queen, and the Bishop of Durham who deputised for the elderly Archbishop of Canterbury, were seated at the high table. Each course was introduced by trumpeters. The King was served on a gold plate, the Queen on gilt, and the Bishop on silver. During the second course Sir Robert Dymock, the King’s Champion, rode into the hall and offered to fight anyone who denied Richard’s title. He was only met with shouts of King Richard. The champion was brought a cup of wine, he then left, keeping the cup as his fee.

One of the lost elements of the coronation ceremony today is the big procession to Westminster Hall the day before the coronation. The Coronation Feast also ceased in the Georgian period because of the enormous cost. Another element no longer performed is the Challenge from the King’s Champion, as above, when a gauntlet was thrown down challenging anyone who opposed the king.
Have you ever been to an Igbo pre-wedding ceremony called *iku-aka* – meaning “to knock on the door”? The groom, his father and elder male members of his family visit the bride-to-be’s home to tell her family that they have seen a ripe fruit which they would like to pluck – a woman of marriage age whom they would like to make a wife. It’s a significant event and the first time a groom meets the bride-to-be’s family, represented by her father or elder uncle with a few elder members of the family. Back in the day, it was a small quiet event. The girl in question may or may not have ever met the man. She may be invited into the reception room to meet the man coming for her hand in marriage and would have to give either a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the proposal. Her parents would also give a response and if both responses are positive, the traditional marriage list (what the groom would need to purchase for the bride’s family) and dowry will be agreed upon. The traditional marriage would take place either immediately or at a later planned date as suits the groom.

In today’s world, the *iku-aka* takes on different shapes and forms, depending on the groom’s family’s wealth status and choice although it is still usually a quiet event done as part of the traditional wedding, which over the years has become more extravagant. The elders sneak away into a room to do the needful and ensure tradition is not lost. On rare occasions, the *iku-aka* itself is not so quiet. I saw one recently that was quite upbeat. There was drumming as the groom entered the room surrounded by his family and friends. The groom was in his mid-twenties, tall and incredibly fit, his posture and confident strides boast his dedication to the gym. His white shirt fell to his knees, a beautiful contrast to his deep ebony skin. His shiny shoes smacked the floor as he danced towards the centre of the room with men in crispy white shirts paired with black shiny George – men’s wrappers tied around their waists. Aseobi ladies, the accompanying wives, and sisters adorned in sequin laces woven into different styles danced behind the men. It was a beautiful sight to behold and celebrated throughout the day, the beginning of a partnership and marriage.

God created marriages as a blessing. It helps if the individuals have good hearts, and are willing to be happy and to be there for others, loving and supporting each other. Everyone has a right to dream and to chase those dreams and with the right partner
on their side, the experiences along the way are more bearable or more enjoyed.

Life can feel empty without the right partner even when one is in a marriage. Good understanding between partners is almost as good as being in resonance with one’s chi – spirit-guardian. In Igbo mythology, being one with one’s chi means happiness, joy, prosperity, good mental well-being, a full life and so much more. There may be downs but one finds ways to turn lemons to lemonade when surrounded by the right energy and spirit.

There’s a popular Igbo saying that a good relationship could be as good as egusi – pumpkin seed – or as bad as onugbu – bitter leaf.

Well, I pray for more pumpkin seeds and use this opportunity to pray that God watches over unions. That he blesses your union, your children and their children’s union in Jesus’s name.

Amen.
WAYS YOU CAN HELP LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

ONLINE GIVING
Donate online here.

By TEXT
To donate £5, text PLATE to 70970
To donate £10, text PLATE to 70191

INTO OUR BANK ACCOUNT
Account Name: Leicester Cathedral Chapter
Account Number: 03807282 | Sort Code: 20-49-11

BY CHEQUE
Payable to: Leicester Cathedral Chapter
Address: St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane,
Leicester, LE1 5PZ

SAFEGUARDING

THE ACTING DEAN and Chapter of the Cathedral are wholly committed to the safety, well-being and protection of everyone having contact with our community.
We all share responsibility for Safeguarding.
If you have concerns about the welfare or behaviour of an adult, young person or child, please speak to one of the Residentiary Canons or to Linda Green or Kath Rowberry, our Safeguarding Co-ordinators.
The Residentiary Canons can be approached in person or contacted on 07399 523 330.
The Safeguarding Co-ordinators do not publish their contact details. Please speak to a verger if you wish to contact them. You do not need to explain the reason for your request.
All concerns will be responded to proportionately and with discretion.

All information is correct at the time of printing. If you have anything you would like included in this newsletter please get in contact with us.
Cathedral@LeicesterCofE.org | www.leicestercathedral.org