

To Celebrate the Life of
Ernest James Alford
'Jim'

25th November 1928 - 3rd June 2023



St Boniface Church, Tooting
Friday 14th July 2023 at 12.00 noon

Celebrant: Father Shaju Varkey

DE MAGISTRO - THE TEACHER

Say, have you never
given a helping hand
to tender creatures
struggling to rise
from infant chrysalis
to man?

Have you never faced
the anxious innocent eyes,
the grimy outstretched hands,
the eager hearts,
begging for love, and
giving what they have?

Have you never felt
the edge of youthful strength,
the groping intellect, the nascent will
wild and sudden,
trying its powers
against the world.
Threatening to destroy
the thing it copies,
yet still loving
if allowed.

No? Then you have not received
the Call, next to priest;
which hears the Word,
'Go Teach...', and come
with My little ones
to My feet.

E. J. Alford



ENTRANCE MUSIC

I Know That My Redeemer Liveth from *Messiah*
Handel

ENTRANCE HYMN

Be Thou My Vision - 74

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, be Thou my true Word;
I ever with thee, and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my Breastplate, my Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Armour, and be Thou my Might;
Thou my soul's Shelter, and Thou my high Tow'r,
Raise Thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance, through all my days;
Thou and Thou only, the first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, when battle is done,
Grant heaven's joy to me, O bright heaven's sun;
Christ of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Words: Ancient Irish hymn;

trans. by Mary Byrne, 1905, and versified by Eleanor Hull, 1912

PENITENTIAL ACT

COLLECT

Almighty God, our Father,
we firmly believe that your Son died and rose to life.
We pray for our brother Jim, who has died in Christ.
Raise him at the last day
to share the glory of the risen Christ,
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.
Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Letter of St Paul to the Romans, Chapter 8: verses 31–35 and 37–39

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us. Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us. For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.
R: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

O The Love Of My Lord – 570

**Oh, the love of my Lord is the essence
Of all that I love here on earth.
All the beauty I see
He has given to me
And His giving is gentle as silence.**

**Every day, every hour, every moment
Have been blessed by the strength of His love.
At the turn of each tide,
He is there at my side,
And His touch is as gentle as silence.**

**There've been times when I've turned from his presence
And I've walked other paths, other ways,
But I've called on His name
In the dark of my shame
And His mercy was gentle as silence.**

SECOND READING

First letter of St John, Chapter 3: verses 1-2

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us. My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.

The Word of the Lord.
R: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia Alleluia!

**Come, you whom my Father has blessed,
says the Lord;
take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world.
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL READING

Matthew, Chapter 5: verses 1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

‘How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

R: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



HOMILY

BIDDING PRAYERS

At the end of each prayer, the reader says:

Lord, in your mercy.

R: Hear our prayer.

OFFERTORY HYMN

From Heaven You Came – 187

From heaven You came, helpless babe,
Entered our world, Your glory veiled;
Not to be served but to serve,
And give Your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow Him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,
My heavy load He chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours,' He said.
This is our God...

Come see His hands and His feet,
The scars that speak of sacrifice;
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered.
This is our God...

So let us learn how to serve,
And in our lives enthrone Him,
Each other's needs to prefer,
For it is Christ we're serving.
This is our God...

Graham Kendrick (b.1950)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord, receive the gifts we offer for the salvation of Jim.

May Christ be merciful in judging our brother Jim,
for he believed in Christ as his Lord and Saviour.

Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**May eternal light shine on them O Lord,
with all your saints for ever, for you are rich in mercy.
Give them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light
shine on them for ever, for you are rich in mercy.**

COMMUNION HYMN

Do It In Love For Me

**This is my body, broken for you,
Bringing you wholeness, making you free.**

**Take it and eat it.
And as you do, do it in love for Me.**

**This is my blood poured out for you,
Bringing forgiveness, making you free.**

**Take it and drink it,
And as you do, do it in love for Me.**

**Back to my Father soon I shall go.
Do not forget me, then you will see
I am still with you, and you will know
You're very close to me.**

**Filled with my Spirit, how you will grow.
You are my branches, I am the tree.
If you are faithful, others will know
You are alive in me.**

**Love one another, I have loved you
And I have shown you how to be free.
Serve one another, and when you do,
Do it in love for me.**

Jimmy Owens (b.1930)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord God, your Son Jesus Christ gave us the sacrament of his body and blood
To guide us on our pilgrim way to your kingdom.
May our brother Jim, who shared in the Eucharist,
Come to the banquet of Life Christ has prepared for us.
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

EULOGY

FINAL COMMENDATION

In Paradisum:

May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs receive you at your arrival and lead you to the holy city Jerusalem. May choirs of angels receive you and with Lazarus, once a poor man, may you have eternal rest.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Hail To You, Saint Boniface

Hail to you, Saint Boniface,
Our own west country's pride,
We too would love that faith you taught,
The faith for which you died.

Obedient to your Order,
You left your native land,
To preach to men in Germany,
And help them understand...

*Pray for us, Saint Boniface
Our own west countrys' pride,
We too would love the faith you taught,
The faith for which you died.*

Opposed by pagan Saxons,
You felled their sacred oak,
And on the spot a chapel built,
To hallow faithful folk.

Pray for us...

When you became archbishop,
You made men true to Rome,
So bringing them Christ's Unity,
And Europe as their own...

Pray for us...

We need your help, our Patron,
We too must understand,
Love, Hope and Faith in Christ our lord,
Go ever hand in hand.

Pray for us...

Words by Jim Alford

Music by Bernard Fairhall

EXIT MUSIC

Hallelujah Chorus from *Messiah*
Handel

Jim was interested in the relationship between religion and science and how they complement each other. He admired the work of Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest and scientist, so we include one of his poetic prayers here.

Jim's poem speaks to the youth and Teilhard's to the dying:

Prayer for the Grace to Age Well

'When the signs of age begin to mark my body (and still more when they touch
my mind);
when the ill that is to diminish me or carry me off strikes from without or is born
within me;
when the painful moment comes in which I suddenly awaken to the fact that I
am ill or growing old;
and above all at that last moment when I feel I am losing hold of myself and am
absolutely passive within the hands of the great unknown forces that have
formed me;
in all those dark moments, O God, grant that I may understand that it is you
(provided only my faith is strong enough) who are parting the fibres of my
being in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my substance and bear me
away within yourself.'

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ





Thank you everyone who has kindly attended today. After the burial at Lambeth Cemetery, Blackshaw Road SW17 0BY, all are most welcome to join us across the road in The Long Room, 130 Mitcham Road, from 3.00 pm to raise a glass in thanksgiving for Jim's life.

If you would like to make a donation in Jim's memory supporting Helen's charity that provides scholarships for students from developing countries, these are the details:

Name: Adjuvantes Onlus – Fondo di Solidarietà Educativa ETS

Address: Largo Angelicum, 1 - 00184 Rome (Italy)

IBAN code: IT78W0329601601000067369971

Swift/BIC code: FIBKITMM

Name of the bank: FIDEURAM – Filiale 001

Address of the bank: Via Montebello 18

Postcode/area code of the bank: 20121

Town and country of the bank: Milano, Italy