THE CATHEDRAL AND METROPOLITICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, CANTERBURY

Memorial Service

Martyrdom of Thomas of Canterbury

29\textsuperscript{th} December 2023

5.30pm
Welcome to Canterbury Cathedral for this Service

Livestreaming

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By attending you agree to be seen in this way.
If you have any concerns please speak to a member of the clergy.

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Statement on the Celebration of Advent and Christmas in the Midst of the War

November 10, 2023

Each year during the sacred seasons of Advent and Christmastide, our Christian communities throughout the Holy Land take great delight in their preparations for the commemoration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In addition to attendance in religious services, these celebrations have normally involved participation in numerous public festivities and the large-scale display of brightly lit and expensive decorations as a means of expressing our joy at the approach and arrival of the Feast of the Nativity.

But these are not normal times. Since the start of the War, there has been an atmosphere of sadness and pain. Thousands of innocent civilians, including women and children, have died or suffered serious injuries. Many more grieve over the loss of their homes, their loved ones, or the uncertain fate of those dear to them. Throughout the region, even more have lost their work and are suffering from serious economic challenges. Yet despite our repeated calls for a humanitarian ceasefire and a de-escalation of violence, the war continues.

Therefore, We, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, call upon our congregations to stand strong with those facing such afflictions by this year foregoing any unnecessarily festive activities. We likewise encourage our priests and the faithful to focus more on the spiritual meaning of Christmas in their pastoral activities and liturgical celebrations during this period, with all the focus directed at holding in our thoughts our brothers and sisters affected by this war and its consequences, and with fervent prayers for a just and lasting peace for our beloved Holy Land.

Moreover, during this season of giving, we also invite the faithful to advocate, pray, and contribute generously as they are able for the relief of the victims of this war and for those in dire need, as well as to encourage others to join them in this mission of mercy.

In these ways, we believe, we will be standing in support of those continuing to suffer—just as Christ did with us in his Incarnation, in order that all of God’s children might receive the hope of a New Jerusalem in the presence of the Almighty, where “death shall be no more, neither mourning, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

—The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem
The Preacher

The preacher at this service is the Right Reverend Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford.

Born in Iran, Bishop Guli was just 13 when, in the wake of the Iranian Revolution, she and her family were forced to leave the country following an assassination attempt on her parents, and the murder of her older brother, Bahram, by Iranian government agents in 1980. Bahram is one of the martyrs remembered in the Cathedral’s Book of Modern Day Martyrs in our Corona Chapel, where candles will be lit at this service.

Bishop Guli has served as Bishop of Chelmsford since April 2021, and prior to that served as the first Bishop of Loughborough in the Diocese of Leicester. In January 2021, Bishop Guli was also appointed as the lead Bishop for Housing for the Church of England and she has served as a member of the Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords since November 2021. Bishop Guli is currently Vice-President of the Conference of European Churches, Vice Chair of the Board of the Church Army, and a contributor to BBC Radio 4s Thought for the Day. She is also the author of ‘Cries for a Lost Homeland: Reflections on Jesus’ sayings from the cross’.
ORDER OF SERVICE

*Stand as the choir enters*

**Introit**

*Choir*  
*Opem nobis, O Thoma, porrige. Rege stantes, jacentes erige, mores, actus et vitam corrige, et in pacis nos viam dirigite.*

*Grant us help, O Thomas. Rule those who stand, raise up those who are brought low, correct our morals, deeds and lives, and guide us into the way of peace.*

*Music: Giovanni da Palestrina (c.1525-8–1594)*

**Welcome and Introduction**  
*The Dean*

**Responses**

*Precentor*  
*Deus in adjutorium meum intende.*

*Choir*  
*Domine ad adjuvandum me festina.*

*Precentor*  
*Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto,*

*Choir*  

*O God, come to my aid.*

*O Lord, make haste to help me.*

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia.*

*Sit*
Antiphon

Choir  Summo sacerdotio Thomas sublimatus est in virum alium subito mutatus.

When raised to the highest priestly office, Thomas was suddenly transformed into another man.

Psalm 2

Quare fremuerunt gentes, et populi meditati sunt inania?

Why do the heathen so furiously rage together : and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

Astiterunt reges terræ, et principes convenerunt in unum adversus Dominum, et adversus Christum ejus.

The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together : against the Lord, and against his Anointed:

Dirumpamus vincula eorum, et projiciamus a nobis jugum ipsorum.

Let us break their bonds asunder : and cast away their cords from us.

Qui habitat in cælis irridebit eos, et Dominus subsannabit eos.

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn : the Lord shall have them in derision.

Tunc loquetur ad eos in ira sua, et in furore suo conturbabit eos.

Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath : and vex them in his sore displeasure:

Ego autem constitutus sum rex ab eo super Sion, montem sanctum ejus, prædicans præceptum ejus.

Yet have I set my King : upon my holy hill of Sion.

Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu; ego hodie genui te.

I will preach the law : whereof the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Postula a me, et dabo tibi gentes hæreditatem tuam, et possessionem tuam terminos terræ.

Desire of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance : and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Reges eos in virga ferrea, et tamquam vas figuli confringes eos.

Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron : and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Et nunc, reges, intelligite; erudimini, qui judicatis terram.

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings : be learned, ye that are judges of the earth.

Servite Domino in timore, et exsultate ei cum tremore.

Serve the Lord in fear : and rejoice unto him with reverence.

Apprehendite disciplinam, nequando irascatur Dominus, et pereatis de via justa.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the right way : if his wrath be kindled, (yea but a little) blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Cum exarserit in brevi ira ejus, beati omnes qui confidunt in eo.

Stand

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost;


As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.
The antiphon is repeated
Sit

First Lesson  Ecclesiasticus 2.1-11  Read by The Archdeacon

My child, when you come to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for testing.
Set your heart right and be steadfast,
and do not be impetuous in time of calamity.
Cling to him and do not depart,
so that your last days may be prosperous.
Accept whatever befalls you,
and in times of humiliation be patient.
For gold is tested in the fire,
and those found acceptable, in the furnace of humiliation.
Trust in him, and he will help you;
make your ways straight, and hope in him.
You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy;
do not stray, or else you may fall.
You who fear the Lord, trust in him,
and your reward will not be lost.
You who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.
Consider the generations of old and see:
has anyone trusted in the Lord and been disappointed?
Or has anyone persevered in the fear of the Lord and been forsaken?
Or has anyone called upon him and been neglected?
For the Lord is compassionate and merciful;
he forgives sins and saves in time of distress.

Reading  A reading from T.S. Eliot’s ‘Murder in the Cathedral’:

Thomas reflects on his vocation.
**Please stand**

**Antiphon**

*Choir*  Qui vult venire post me, abneget semet ipsum, et tollat crucem suam, et sequatur me.

*Whoever desires to come after me, let them deny themselves, and let them take up their cross and follow me.*

**Magnificat**


Francisco Guerrero (1528-99), Magnificat octavi toni

*The Antiphon is repeated*
Please sit

Second Lesson  1 Peter 4.12-19

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ’s sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief-maker. Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name.

For the time has come for judgement to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And

‘If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?’

Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God’s will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

Reading  A reading from T.S. Eliot’s ‘Murder in the Cathedral’:

Thomas commands that the doors be unbarred, despite the urgent warnings of the monks.

The doors burst open

Silence is kept
During the Nunc Dimittis the ministers move to the Martyrdom to lay red roses at the site of Thomas’s murder and the cense the Altar of the Swordspoint.

Please stand as the choir sings

Antiphon

Choir  Salva nos, Domine, vigilantes, custodi nos dormientes: ut vigilemus cum Christo, et requiescamus in pace.

Save us, O Lord, while waking, and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep may rest in peace.

Nunc Dimittis

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace:

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: According to thy word.

Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum

For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation,

Quod parasti ante faciem omnium populum:

Which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;

Lumen ad revelationem gentium, et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;


As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611), Nunc dimittis tertii toni

The Antiphon is repeated

Sit or kneel

Prayers for the Departed  The Dean

Eternal God, our maker and redeemer, grant our Brother Thomas and all the faithful departed the sure benefits of your Son’s saving passion and glorious resurrection: that, in the last day, when you gather up all things in Christ, we may with them enjoy the fullness of your promises; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.
Father in heaven,
we thank you because you made us in your own image
and gave us gifts in mind, body and spirit.
We thank you now for Thomas.
As we honour his memory,
make us more aware that you are the one
from whom comes every perfect gift,
including the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Almighty God,
we come before you, the supreme judge,
and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant,
and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect;
we give you thanks for giving us an unshakeable kingdom
and we worship you in reverence and awe,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

**Libera Me, Domine**

During which the ministers return from the Martyrdom bringing the light from the candles round the site of Thomas’s death.

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna
in die illa tremenda
quando coeli movendi sunt et terra
dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.

Tremens factus sum ego et timeo,
dum discussio venerit atque ventura ira.

Dies irae, dies illa,
calamitatis et miseriae,
dies magna et amara valde.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Deliver me, O Lord,
from eternal death,
on that fearful day
when the heavens are moved and the Earth when you will come to judge the world through fire.

I am made to tremble, and I fear,
when the desolation shall come,
and also the coming wrath.

That day, the day of wrath, calamity, and misery,
that terrible and exceedingly bitter day.

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them.

*Music: Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)*

**Sermon**

The Right Reverend Dr Guli Francis Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford
Please stand to sing

During the singing of this hymn the ministers process through the Trinity Chapel to the Chapel of Saints and Martyrs of Our Own Time, taking with them the lights brought from the Martyrdom.

In our day of thanksgiving one psalm let us offer
For the saints who before us have found their reward;
When the shadow of death fell upon them, we sorrowed,
But now we rejoice that they rest in the Lord.

In the morning of life, and at noon, and at even,
He called them away from our worship below;
But not till his love, at the font and the altar,
Had girt them with grace for the way they should go.

These stones that have echoed their praises are holy,
And dear is the ground where their feet have once trod;
Yet here they confessed they were strangers and pilgrims,
And still they were seeking the city of God.

Sing praise then, for all who here sought and here found Him,
Whose journey is ended, whose perils are past:
They believed in the Light; and its glory is round them,
Where the clouds of earth’s sorrows are lifted at last.

Words: William Draper (1855-1933)          Tune: ST CATHERINE’S COURT

Sit or kneel

Prayers

The Dean

Almighty God,
by whose grace and power your holy martyrs
triumphed over suffering and were faithful unto death:
strengthen us with your grace,
that we may endure reproach and persecution
and faithfully bear witness to the name
of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen
God our redeemer, 
whose Church was strengthened by the blood of your martyrs, 
so bind us, in life and death, to Christ’s sacrifice 
that our lives, broken and offered with his, 
may carry his death and proclaim his resurrection in the world; 
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

As we join our prayers with the Church Universal in commemoration of 
all the Holy Martyrs, so we say, each in our own language, the prayer 
that Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**
**hallowed be thy name;**
**thy kingdom come;**
**thy will be done;**
**on earth as it is in heaven.**
**Give us this day our daily bread.**
**And forgive us our trespasses,**
**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**
**And lead us not into temptation;**
**but deliver us from evil.**
**For thine is the kingdom,**
**the power and the glory,**
**for ever and ever.**
**Amen.**

**Notre Père...**
**Vater Unser...**
**Onze Vader...**
**Padre Nuestro...**
**Ojcze Nasz...**
**Baba Yetu...**
**E to matou Matua...**
**Ein Tad...**

*The Amnesty Candle is lit in solidarity with all who are oppressed and treated unjustly. The candle is lit by a member of the cathedral family who is a refugee.*

**Lux aeterna**

**Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,**
**cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,**
**quia pius es.**

**Let perpetual light shine upon them,**
**O Lord, with your saints for ever,**
**for you are merciful.**

**Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,**
**et lux perpetua luceat eis.**

**Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,**
**and let perpetual light shine upon them.**

*Music: Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)*

*During the singing of Lux Aeterna, the ministers return to the Quire*
The Commission of the People of God

 Extracts from a letter from Pope Francis July 2023 beginning his 'Commission of New Martyrs-Witnesses of the Faith’, read by Canon Anthony Charlton, Parish Priest of St Thomas’s Roman Catholic Church, Canterbury.

 Martyrs in the Church are witnesses of the hope that comes from faith in Christ and incites to true charity. Hope keeps alive the deep conviction that good is stronger than evil, because God in Christ conquered sin and death. Indeed, martyrs have accompanied the life of the Church in every age, and flourish as “ripe and excellent fruits of the Lord's vineyard” even today. As I have said many times, martyrs “are more numerous in our time than in the first centuries”: they are bishops, priests, consecrated men and women, lay people and families, who in the different countries of the world, with the gift of their lives, have offered the supreme proof of charity.

 It is therefore a matter of continuing historical research in order to gather the testimonies of life, up to the shedding of blood, of these sisters and brothers of ours, so that their memory can stand as a treasure cherished by the Christian community. The research will concern not only the Catholic Church, but will extend to all Christian denominations. Even in our times, in which we are witnessing a change of epoch, Christians continue to show, in contexts of great risk, the vitality of Baptism that unites us. A not insignificant number, indeed, are those who, despite being aware of the dangers they face, manifest their faith or participate in the Sunday Eucharist. Others are killed in the effort to assist in charity the lives of the poor, in caring for those rejected by society, in cherishing and promoting the gift of peace and the power of forgiveness. Still others are silent victims, as individuals or in groups, of the upheavals of history. To all of them we owe a great debt and we cannot forget them.

 Stand

 Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe.
 Blessed be God for ever.
 Your light shines on us and all peoples shall see your glory.
 Blessed be God for ever.
 You gave us Jesus to be the light of the world;
 he makes our darkness to be light.
 Blessed be God for ever
 Through the Holy Spirit your love burns within us, bearing witness to your truth.
 Blessed be God for ever.
 As we bear your light, may our lips never cease to sing your praise.
 Blessed be God for ever.
 Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 Blessed be God for ever.
 Father, this Christmastide, we have sung your praise with shepherds and angels: may Christ be born in our hearts today.
 Praise to Christ our light.
 We have heard of the joy of your holy martyrs in paradise; help us, like them, to trust your word.
 Praise to Christ our light.
 We have greeted Jesus, the light of the world; may we be filled with the light of your love.
 Praise to Christ our light.
Remain standing to sing the hymn during which a collection for the work of the cathedral will be taken.

If you would prefer to give by text-message, or use the QR code

➢ To give £5 – text SERVICE to 70560
➢ To give £10 – text SERVICE to 70580

*In addition to any text donation, you will incur your standard network message charge.

Christ is the King! O friends rejoice; brothers and sisters with one voice tell all the world he is your choice. Alleluia.

2O magnify the Lord, and raise anthems of joy and holy praise for Christ’s brave saints of ancient days. Alleluia.

3They with a faith for ever new followed the King, and round him drew thousands of faithful hearts and true. Alleluia.

4O Christian women, Christian men, all the world over, seek again the Way disciples followed then. Alleluia.

5Christ through all ages is the same: place the same hope in his great name, with the same faith his word proclaim. Alleluia.

6Let love’s unconquerable might your scattered companies unite in service to the Lord of light. Alleluia.

7So shall God’s will on earth be done, new lamps be lit, new tasks begun, and the whole church at last be one. Alleluia.

Words: George K A Bell (1883-1958)  
Tune: VULPIUS  
AM 486

**Blessing**  
The Archbishop

God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, to know the hope to which he has called you. Amen.

God, who has shown you a pattern of holy living and holy dying in the lives of Thomas and all the saints, bring you to share their glorious inheritance. Amen.

God, who calls you no longer strangers but fellow citizens with the saints, set your hearts and minds on things above, where Christ is seated at God’s right hand. Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

**Organ Voluntary**
Please remain standing while the choir and clergy depart

After the service the cathedral will remain open for half an hour to enable worshippers to go to the sites around the cathedral that were visited by the ministers during the service: The Martyrdom (where Thomas was murdered), the Trinity Chapel (where his shrine stood until 1538), and the Chapel of Saints and Martyrs of Our Own Time. Candles can be lit in each place.

The Feast of the Epiphany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epiphany is on <strong>Saturday 6th January</strong> and we will have two special services on that day:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Said Holy Communion – 12.30pm in the Crypt</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sung Eucharist – 5.30pm in the Quire</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are very welcome at these services</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Epiphany Carol Service**

Do join us for our Epiphany Carol Service on **Sunday 7th January at 5.30pm** as we hear again to story of the coming of the Wise Men, and of Jesus’s Baptism and the beginning of his earthly ministry.

**Usual Pattern of Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.30am</td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00am</td>
<td>Holy Communion</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15am</td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
<td>Saturday &amp; Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00am</td>
<td>Sung Eucharist</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30pm</td>
<td>Holy Communion</td>
<td>Wednesday &amp; Feast Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.30pm</td>
<td>Choral Evensong</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>