



Bishop Richard and Fr Steffan after Fr Steffan's Institution and Induction on 27th June (see PAGE 6)

In this Summer 2021 *St Peter's Review* ...

Page	Story	Page	Story
3	The Patron Saint of Failure - explored by Fr Steffan	10	Keeping Our Young People Safe: Anthea asks: What Role for Church?
6	Father Steffan's Induction Service	14	FAB and MAP: What's going on?
8	Church is always a safe place - James Macintyre	16	Dates for your diary

	Vicar		Crypt Hire
	Fr Steffan Mathias		To discuss your needs and to check the availability of The Crypt please contact Angela Newby Email: crypt@stpeters-streatham.org Telephone: 07554 216 414 (number for crypt hire only)
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	Telephone: 020 8769 2922		Please contact the Director of Music (see Director of Music in left column for details) or speak to him after Parish Mass at 10.30am or Evensong at 6.30pm
	Email: frsteffan@stpeters-streatham.org		Servers
	Churchwardens		To enquire about joining, come along to the Parish Mass on Sunday at 10.30am and speak to a churchwarden.
	Josephine Dapaah		1st and 100th Streatham Brownie Packs
	Email: j_dapaah@hotmail.com		If you would like to find out more about Brownies at St Peter's, please send an e-mail to 1stbrownies@stpeters-streatham.org and 100thbrownies@stpeters-streatham.org
	Simon Launchbury		1st Streatham Guide Company
	3 Dodbrooke Road, London SE27 0PF Telephone: 020 8761 1214 Email: simon@dodbrooke3.plus.com		For more information, contact Sophie Woolf on Telephone: 07947 501901 or email: stpetersguidesstreatham@hotmail.co.uk
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	See Simon Launchbury above		Disabled Access and Hearing
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			By email to: bulletin@stpeters-streatham.org before Thursday.
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			David Chapman by Sunday 26th September 2021
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Patron Saint of Failure - St Aloysius Gonzaga

by Fr Steffan



A few years ago, I was asked to preach at a secondary school, to about 1000 teenagers. The brief was simple: talk to them about succeeding. I racked my brains for how to talk to these kids about succeeding, knowing they were already under immense pressure: both the academic pressure to succeed in school, but the pressures of being a teenager, pressures of social media, body image, and all the things that teenagers are put through.

A week before, 21 June, was the feast of St Aloysius Gonzaga, the patron saint of young people. It struck me, reading about him that day, that Aloysius became patron saint of young people not because he was a success, but because he was a failure. And this is what made him such a powerful saint 500 years later.

Aloysius was born 1568, in Lombardy, modern day northern Italy, to a wealthy aristocratic family. As the eldest child, Aloysius was expected inherit the family title, run the family army, and lead his family in amassing power, land, and wealth. He was the medieval equivalent of the Eton school, Bullingdon club, aristocratic family: his whole life was directed towards success.

At the age of five – yes, five – he was sent to military school to train to be a soldier. Over the next few years, he

saw two of his brothers murdered in petty squabbles and machismo duels. And then, aged eight, he was sent to the court of Grand Duke Francesco I de Medici to be a page boy and receive further education. If military school had opened his eyes to violence, the court of the Medici, with its excess wealth and luxury as peasants on the street starved, opened Aloysius eyes to the greed and corruption of his day.



Aloysius turned to books to escape and came across tales of monks living in India serving the poor. Something in Aloysius heart stirred. He returned home and told his parents he wanted

(Continued on page 4)

*Picture: St Aloysius
Gonzaga as a young man
(artist anonymous)*

(Continued from page 3)

to become a monk and serve the poor.

They weren't happy. But Aloysius insisted. Beaten down, they eventually found a compromise: they secured him a seat as a Bishop (Bishops holding rather more wealth, power, and patronage than they do today). If Aloysius really wanted to go into the church, he could do it in a way that served the family.

But Aloysius refused. He wore his parents down, and in 1585 he moved to Rome to begin his training with the Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits, an order who sought to shape their lives as closely to Jesus as they could.

Within a few years, by 1591, a plague broke out. And the young Aloysius, rather than retreat to the safety of the family home, volunteered to staff the hospices where the sick and dying

were taken. He would go out begging for money and food to support the dying. He would collect the sick from the street and carry them on his back to the hospice. He would care for, nurse, and wash those suffering immense pain. He acknowledged to his spiritual director that the work was physically repulsive, but he could not stop doing what he felt Jesus was asking him to do.

While his superiors tried to discourage him from his service as the plague was affecting mainly the young, Aloysius – used to being stubborn – persisted. In the end, a compromise was reached, and he persuaded them to allow him to work in a hospital for those not with the plague. It was here, a few days before his 23rd birthday, that a sick man misidentified as not having the plague, infected Aloysius. He grew



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sick over the coming days, and over the weeks that followed grew worse. And then, 21st June 1591, aged 23 Aloysius succumbed to the plague and died.

Aloysius was not a success in any worldly manner. In fact, one could go further and say he was a failure – in the eyes of his family, his peers, of society. But in his short life, Aloysius chose not war, greed, power, but to serve, tend, and care for the most sick and vulnerable in his community. In Aloysius we clearly see the great contradiction between success and failure in the eyes of the world and success and failure in the eyes of God.

What does this mean for us? Well, I would have said a couple of years ago that none of will be expected to serve during a plague. But over the last two years, that is what so many have done. We have lost count of the doctors, nurses, carers, hospital staff, who have given their life serving covid patients. What, I think, Aloysius teaches us is that we don't worship a God of success, but a God of authenticity. God does not call us to be successful, but instead to be authentic and faithful in following the footsteps of Jesus. It's not always an easy pill to swallow – the world tells us so much of how we are meant to be, how many friends we are to have, what kind of relationships, families, jobs, homes – and it can be hard to drown these out. But true freedom, which we find in Jesus, can release us from those bonds, to live the lives God is calling us to live in our places and situations, to find a way of life

that is authentic to our Christian faith, authentic to who we are at our heart, authentic to our relationships and communities. And that is real success.



St Aloysius Gonzaga

*Artist: Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (February 8, 1591 – December 22, 1666), better known as Guercino:
Italian Baroque painter active in Rome and Bologna.
Source: Wikipedia*

Would you like to learn how to do a live stream? See page 13.



Fr Steffan becomes our Vicar

Fr Steffan Mathias was made Vicar of St Peter's on 27th June, 2021 in an Institution and Induction Service by The Right Reverend Dr Richard Cheetham, Bishop of Kingston and The Venerable Simon Gates, Archdeacon of Lambeth.

The service, starting at 3pm included the following music selected by Fr Steffan and performed by the Adult and Youth Choirs (separately), under the direction of acting Director of Music, David Chapman.

- *God be in my head and in my understanding* - Herbert Howells
- *Missa O quam gloriosum* - Tomás Luis de Victoria
- *O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands* - Benjamin Britten

The service was conducted under covid restrictions with a restricted number of attendees socially distanced and wearing face masks. A stream of the service was available live online for those who could not attend in person. The stream can be viewed [here](#).

Clergy in attendance, in addition to Richard, Bishop of Kingston and Simon our Archdeacon, were Fr Robin Ward, principal of St Stephen's House, Oxford, patron of St Peter's and Mother Helen Harknett acting as Deacon.

The Institution and Induction service is in a number of parts:

The patron, Fr Robin Ward, presented Fr Steffan to the Bishop asking for him to be admitted to the cure of souls as Vicar of our Parish.

The Bishop then lead the declaration of assent and the oaths, the reaffirmation of ordination vows for Fr Steffan and the commission of the people of God challenging the parishioners and asking for their commitment.

To conclude this section, Fr Steffan knelt before the Bishop as the Bishop read the Deed of Institution:

“Receive this cure of souls, which is both mine and yours, in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit.”



Fr Steffan kneels before Bishop Richard to receive the cure of souls of the parish.

The Induction then began with the Bishop delivering the Mandate of Induction:

“Now that we have duly and canonically collated our well-beloved in Christ, Steffan, into the cure of souls of this living, we hereby empower and require you, Archdeacon, to induct him into the real, actual and corporeal possession of this church and benefice.”

The Archdeacon then lead Fr Steffan to three symbolic places of the church: the main entrance door, to ring the church bell, and to take his place in his stall.

Fr Steffan then lead Intercessions which were followed by a welcome from the Churchwardens, Simon Launchbury and Jo Dapaah.

After the service, a tea was enjoyed by the attendees in the church grounds of scones, cream and jam with rum punch.

Fr Steffan thanked all of those that had helped prepare the service including choir, readers, servers, churchwardens, and those providing refreshments.



The Venerable Simon Gates, places Fr Steffan's hand on the door of the church and reads "By virtue of this mandate, I do induct you into the real, actual, and corporeal possession of this church and benefice."



The churchwardens welcome Fr Steffan on behalf of the parish.



Members of the Youth Choir sing during the service



Church is always a safe place

by James Macintyre



Photograph: James Macintyre

It was a passing comment made during the first refreshments since lockdown after the 10.30 Mass on Trinity 2 on 13 June, along the lines of: 'Church is always a safe place.'

I've been reflecting since on this important truth, a truth you can rely on as you look ahead to Sundays after a testing week; a truth you can rely on if you feel nervous ahead of performing some role such as

reading, altar serving or leading intercessions. For no matter how much self-doubt you may occasionally feel, Our Lord is with us at the House of God, and it is God – not us – who is in control. Before the powerful remark over coffee and sherry in the Crypt, Fr Steffan had preached on the parable of the mustard seed, beginning with the question 'Do you like to be in control?' He went on to demonstrate how the parable shows how only God is in control of the Kingdom of Heaven.

As ever with the Christian faith, there are several layers to the meaning of a concept like Church. It is at once a building infused with decades or - in the case of St Peter's - centuries of prayer; and the global Body of Christ.

Everyone has their own Church story. For me, Church has always been a special sanctuary to find shelter from the world, and worship. I wasn't raised in the faith; instead, after my parents parted ways in our west London home, I gravitated to south London where my late paternal grandmother, Margaret, took me under her wing. As I stayed with her more and more in my teens, her health began to falter and sometimes her then vicar, with whom I still meet, would visit. They would go into the dining room and light a candle. I would stay away while

something mysterious was happening. At first I didn't have a clue what was going on. Now of course I know that Fr David was delivering the Sacrament. Margaret took me to Church when she could and very slowly I began to learn when to stand and what to say and do. I'm still learning.

At 18, before Margaret died, I was baptised by Fr David at that church, another St Peter's, in Clapham. Coming to the faith for me, then, was not a flash of light, nor a vision or a clear message from God. It was a gradual familiarisation with Church. I admire people now who have had a lifetime of liturgy ingrained into them. I believe it makes them better people, and I can think of people here at St Peter's Streatham to whom this very much applies. As Fr Steffan said earlier this year during his series of three sermons on why we come to Mass, it changes us.

Since that baptism, I've had the privilege of visiting churches overseas, including in the Holy Land, some of which, like St Anne's in the Old City of Jerusalem by the Pools of Bethesda, even atheist historians accept Christ was present. On the Continent of Europe, like many of us, I've been lucky enough to have spent vacations wandering around Cathedrals and Catholic Churches, comforted by the rock solid familiarity of the rhythm of the Mass, even if I can't always understand what is being said!

And back home, I've returned occasionally to St Peter's Clapham, as I did on the evening of Trinity 2 after years away, and other churches across London. But now I feel I've come home.

What is home? It was a question posed by an Irish colleague living in



St Peter's, Clapham

London at Christian Aid during weekly staff prayers on Monday 14 June. Personally, I've been reflecting on how home is Church.

I'm relatively new to St Peter's Streatham, having begun attending just before the lockdown in around spring 2020. And as I prepare to take a sabbatical from the wonderful employer that is Christian Aid, and see where God leads within that time, I want to thank everyone at this Church, especially Fr Steffan, for giving me such a healthy, functional and beautiful home. I hope to attend as much as possible over the year, God willing, and will serve on the PCC, of which I am so privileged to be a part. And I know that this fine Church at the top of the hill will always be there, and always be a safe place.

Some words from T. S. Eliot have been coming to mind recently:

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*





Keeping Our Young People Safe: What Role for Church?

by Anthea Eastoe



Two weeks ago, I heard the air ambulance go over and wondered what was happening locally. It transpired that seventeen-year-old Denardo Samuels-Brooks was stabbed to death in a residential Streatham street at 4.15pm on a sunny afternoon. As usual when I hear of a young life lost, I think of my own teenage son and feel sad for the family and cross for the waste of life then, like the news reports and society, I move on. This time though, this murder has stayed with me. Maybe it's the proximity. Maybe it's because he was the same age as our boy? How could this happen on an ordinary sunny day in an unremarkable street? How have we got to a place where this type of crime is seemingly so routine that we forget about the brutality in less time than it takes the street cleaners to wipe away the traces of the young person's blood from the pavement? The same week a 14-year-old was killed in another part of London in an unrelated incident and there were several serious knife attacks. Four young men have been charged with Denardo's murder – they are 17, 18 & 19. So, five young lives changed forever by this single act, not to mention all those caught in the wake.

A few days after I saw a tweet from St. Leonard's primary school remembering Denardo from his time with them. Staring back at me from

the screen was a photograph of a, maybe, ten-year-old Denardo – smiling, friendly open face with the chubbiness of childhood. The tribute from the current Head Teacher mentions among other things Denardo's vulnerability, the gentle and sensitive side to his character, his genuine remorse when he made mistakes and his impressive knowledge of the Bible.

The mention of the Bible made me ponder what role the Church (both here at St. Peter's and beyond) has in the huge job we as a society have to keep our children safe; to help develop emotionally intelligent, healthy and empathetic adults; to make sure that our young people's potential isn't snuffed out before they have had a chance to live. To nurture and support the vulnerable.

What can we do? How do we translate the messages and prayers we hear on a Sunday about love, empathy, kindness and hope to actions that can make a difference to young people in our communities? I don't have the answers – I guess I'm thinking out loud (and conflating issues!).

A gorgeous woman I know quotes a verse from 1 John Chapter 3 often:

'Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.'

Denardo Samuels-Brooks



Parish churches are in the heart of communities – St. Peter's is a five-minute walk from a secondary school and several primary schools. We are stewards of a precious resource that, like many churches, stands empty for a lot of the week. Could we love in truth and action? Could we be a safe, welcoming space? A space where young people can come to be with peers, to be fed (in the widest sense of the word), to have fun, to do homework, to chat to a grown up with no agenda?

Could we be a place that sees young people's vulnerabilities and fears, perhaps about the risk of violence, and works with them to work through them?

Experts in serious youth violence say that the after-school period is a particular point of concern – could we be of service at that point in the day?

Of course, I am NOT saying that this brutal murder and others like it wouldn't have happened just because a church was open but I do think that

the church has more of a part to play in the wider job of supporting children and young people in our communities. We should be saying more and doing more.



In July 2019, Synod unanimously backed a call to act on serious youth violence. After a debate led by the Rev Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (pictured), now Archdeacon of Croydon (then a priest in Angell Town, Brixton), members of the Church of England's national

(Continued on page 12)



(Continued from page 11)

assembly voted by 315 to zero in support of a motion calling on the church's national bodies, dioceses and education boards to take practical steps both to help prevent violence and to support those affected. Dr. Mallett urged parishes to consider opening their doors after school hours as safe havens for young people in hotspot areas for serious violence. She also highlighted the unique spiritual dimension churches can bring through

prayer and pastoral support for communities affected. The Coronavirus pandemic may well have drawn attention away from this commitment for now but my hope is that, as a semblance of normality returns, the church revisits this commitment to act. Also, in the coming months, as St. Peter's looks at its medium to long term plans for mission and outreach, I hope we can look at what we can do for our young people to love in truth and action.

Church Garden

Are you interested in joining a group to meet up once a month to maintain our church garden.

If so, please speak to Angela Newby or ask the Churchwardens or Fr Steffan.



GIVING TO ST PETER'S

There is a grave impact on the income of St Peter's caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please help by giving regularly to St Peter's by standing order, or you can make a one-off donation to St Peter's via bank transfer via text or cheque. All of the details are on the St Peter's website.

Click on the Giving and Donations button below to find out more.

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Would you like to learn how to do a live stream?

We are looking for people to help with the live streaming for Parish Mass

Aged 14 and up



Training and Learning

Aptitude

Our Streaming Engineers will provide training.

A reasonable understanding of a PC is required:

Subjects include PC connectivity, software for Streaming, understanding the flow of a service.

Connecting microphones, a camera and a WIFI dongle and preferably using your own PC which you could use for the task (the church has microphones, camera and a WIFI dongle but not a spare PC).

The Streaming Engineers have all learnt a lot since they started in 2020.

Availability

Understanding a Service

Availability to setup the equipment at least 45 minutes before the 10.30am Parish Mass and to be ready to start the live stream at about 10.25am.

Knowing what comes next: readings, choir etc.
Setting up opening and closing credits for each service.

Contact

Contact Fr Steffan or our Streaming Engineers:
David Chapman, Richard Brooks, Jo Dapaah, Ania Musat.



New Committee Structure

As one of his first acts after becoming Vicar of St Peter's, Fr Steffan has set-up a new framework of sub-committees for the PCC:

Subcommittees

Finance and Building

Simon Launchbury
Fr Steffan
David Chapman
Anthea Eastoe
Winston Trotman
Mary Newbrook
Catherine Chapman (co-opted as Planned Giving)

Building Grants and Heritage

David Chapman
Fr Steffan
Anthea Eastoe
Winston Trotman
Angela Newby

Ministry

James Macintyre
Fr Steffan
Jo Hutton
Sheila Launchbury
Maureen Downs

Mission Action Plan

Fr Steffan
Angela Newby
Sharon Thomas
Sheila Launchbury
Duncan Eastoe
Poss. Mary Newbrook

Events

Angela Newby
Jo Hutton
Caroline Johns
Mihaela Musat
Maureen Downs

Dates of upcoming meetings are on page 16

Fr Steffan commented: *“As these committees start work, there will be opportunities for the wider congregation to get involved as we develop our next steps together here at St Peter's.”*



Each of the sub-Committees report into the Parochial Church Council, and each would normally meet 3 or 4 times a year.

As an example of the work of the sub-committees, the **Finance and Building Sub-Committee** met, by Zoom call, on Monday 5th July and reviewed the following:



Appointment of chair (Winston Trotman and secretary (David Chapman)

Review of responsibility and a standard agenda for meetings.

Finance

- Financial status from the Treasurer including an update on income from Crypt and Church hire.
- Consideration about giving - any special communications needed whilst some have not returned to church on a weekly basis.
- Preliminary discussion regarding the formalisation of a Policy for use of our financial reserves.

Buildings

Review of our major projects:

- Church Lighting - replacing existing lights with LEDs
- Works to the high level fibreboard in the church roof.
- External works to the North and South belfry towers.
- Project to install a new Church Served into the disused SW porch.
- Organ works

Review of other items of church maintenance.



Dates for your diary

COMMITTEE DATES

Day	Date	Time	Meeting Group	Venue
Wednesday	July 14	7.30 pm	Building and Heritage	Parish Room
Tuesday	July 20	7.30pm	Standing Committee	Vicarage
Wednesday	July 28	7.30pm	PCC	Parish Room
Tuesday	August 24	7.30pm	Mission and Action Plan	Vicarage
Tuesday	August 31	7.30pm	Ministry	Vicarage
Tuesday	September 28	7.30pm	Mission and Action Plan	Parish Room

Copy deadline for the Autumn

St Peter's Review

Sunday 26th September 2021

SERVICES AND EVENTS

The usual pattern for services is:

Sunday Said Mass 8.00am

Sunday Parish Mass 10.30am

Sunday Choral Evensong and Benediction 6.30pm

(there will be no Choral Evensong and Benediction between 25th July and 5th September inclusive during the choir's break).

Wednesday Said Mass 12noon

For more info, contact Father Steffan

on 020 8769 2922

or frsteffan@stpeters-streatham.org

Online Services:

For access to the services on Facebook, you don't need a Facebook account - they are public.

The address is: www.facebook.com/StPetersSW16

Sunday services are also published onto our public Youtube channel within 24 hours of the service.

Our Youtube Channel address is: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS95nOFHXGfCX-LBo1n-Qw>

