



# GREAT ST BARTHOLOMEW

1123

RAHERE  
FOUNDS THE  
PRIORY &  
HOSPITAL



THE TOMB OF PRIOR RAHERE

900 years is a lot of history.

The Priory of St Bartholomew was founded by Rahere, who is thought to have been the court jester of Henry I, to minister to the sick of the City of London - and his dream of a hospital and a place of worship dedicated to St Bartholomew survives to this day.

C. 1180

THE VIRGIN  
MARY  
APPEARS  
TO CANON  
HUBERT



MADONNA & CHILD BY ALFREDO ROLEVA IN THE LADY CHAPEL

The parish has seen almost a millennium of history. The Peasants' Revolt and the execution of William Wallace took place right outside; the reformation saw two-thirds of the church pulled down and Catholics and Protestants burned outside; the Lady Chapel saw a visitation of the Virgin Mary (the only one recorded in London!) and the apprenticeship of Benjamin Franklin (after the Lady Chapel had been sold off as commercial premises).

1381

PEASANTS'  
REVOLT IS  
PUT DOWN  
OUTSIDE  
SMITHFIELD



After the Reformation the two surviving churches of the Priory were made the parish churches of Smithfield - a role they maintain to this day: the City of London's oldest extant church, St Bartholomew the Great maintains close links with the City and its livery companies; the only church to be physically located within an NHS hospital, St Bartholomew the Less is an oasis of calm for patients, staff, and visitors. Both have become centres for the arts - not least the music in both and the modern art in the Great. But most importantly they draw people to the worship of God and the service of humanity.

TO THE NEXT 900 YEARS!



HENRY VIII GATE AT BARTS HOSPITAL

1539

PRIORY &  
HOSPITAL  
DISSOLVED  
BY KING  
HENRY VIII



1724

BEN  
FRANKLIN  
TRAINS AS  
A PRINTER  
HERE



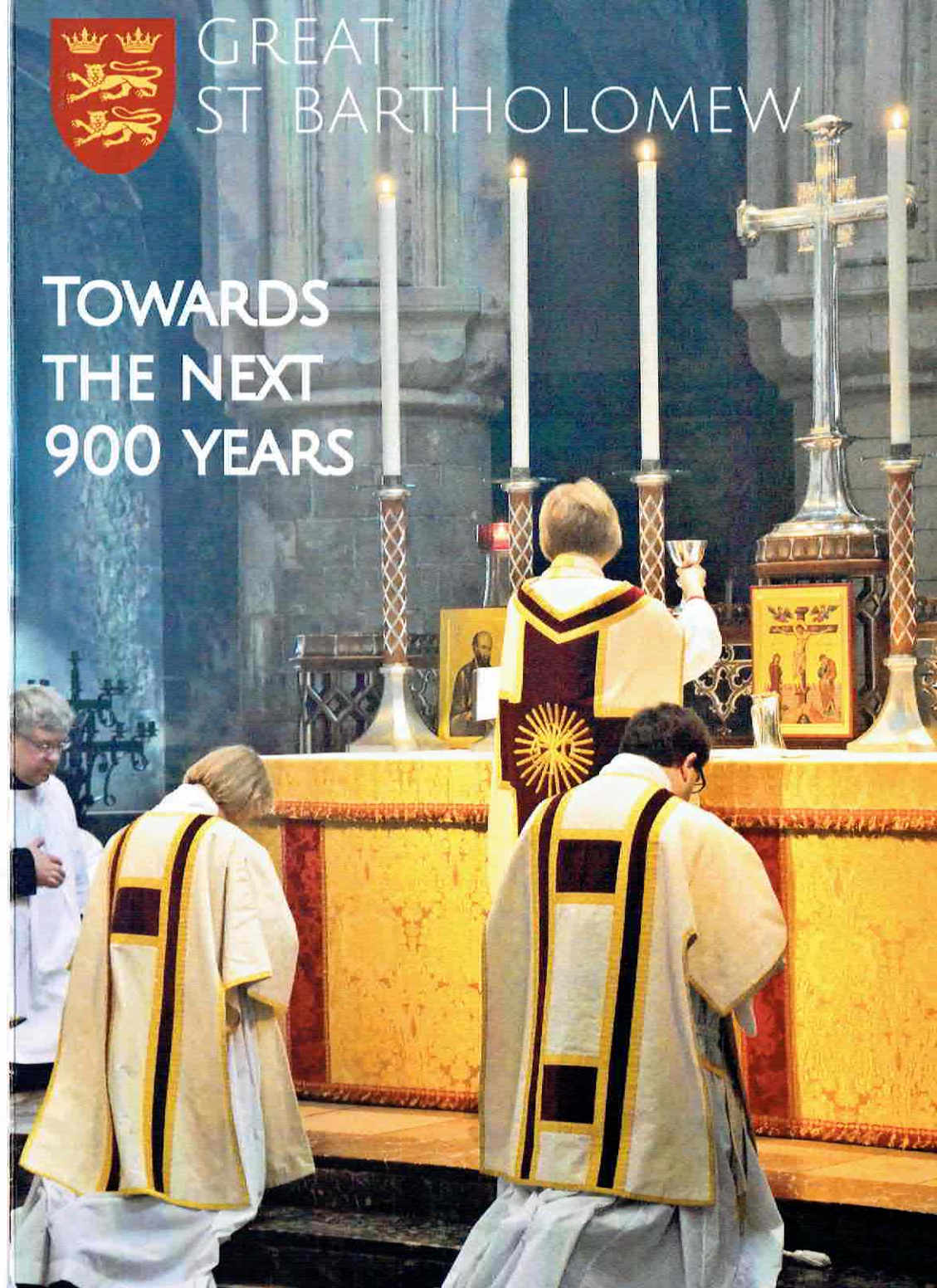
2006

DAMIEN  
HIRST'S  
SCULPTURE  
OF OUR  
PATRON



# GREAT ST BARTHOLOMEW

## TOWARDS THE NEXT 900 YEARS



# Millennials shun modern liturgy for 'bells and smells'

THE TIMES  
Jan 5, 2019

Twentysomethings are flocking to Anglo-Catholic services for traditional worship with not a tambourine in sight, **Tim Wyatt** writes

Almost everything about services at St Bartholomew the Great church is old-fashioned. Purple-robed choristers process through clouds of pungent incense. The priest, the Rev Marcus Walker, brandishes an ornate golden King James Bible above his head before reading from the 1611 text. The liturgy is a mixture of 16th-century prose and sung Latin. The medieval priory church, which sits a stone's throw from the central London hospital of the same name, was founded in 1123.

However, the congregation watching on at a recent service were younger than most would expect; at least a quarter were under 35. They had come to observe a handful of men and women, mostly in their late twenties, be baptised into the Anglican faith. Afterwards the millennials gathered inside the stone cloisters to explain why the archaic drama of traditional worship still appealed.

Several said they relished the connection to past generations of believers through reciting the Book of Common Prayer, which English Christians have been using since 1549. Others valued the beauty and history of the choral music and Shakespearean liturgy. They were not simply "young fogies", they insisted. Three of the group had separately found their way to St Bartholomew's after becoming friendly with Walker on Twitter.

For years most of those longing for revival within the church have placed their hopes in the energetic evangelical wing exemplified by megachurches such as Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB)

SOPHY



I found St Bart's last year when I moved to London after university and was feeling lost in a big city. I wandered in by accident at the Easter Vigil, and was moved by the beauty of the liturgy and choir, and by how the service managed to be both welcoming and holy. As I got to know

the community, I came particularly to appreciate everyone's friendliness, especially as (unusually) there were lots of people my own age. I also particularly value the quality of the teaching at St Bart's. The sermons are funny and engaging, and I always learn something new about the historical context and interpretation of the passage in question, and leave church with something concrete to think about and put into practice.

I reflected recently that St Bart's the Great has featured in my life one way or another for seventy years. It began when I was a young doctor at Barts Hospital, and developed when Joyce, my wife, said she would like to be confirmed. It was a joy to come together at communion. Worship at St Bart's with the lovely choral music certainly helped with life's troubles.

Joyce suddenly became ill with a stroke that prevented her from speaking, and made it impossible to walk. **We were shattered and felt without hope; then Fr Martin Freeman stepped in and brought us communion to our home.** I have no doubt that Joyce benefitted from these visits I know she appreciated them very much.

When Joyce died she had a memorable funeral at The Less conducted by the Rector Marcus Walker. Joyce had attended St Bart's The Less when she was a student nurse so there was a rounding up of our lives in these two most wonderful churches.



JIM

ANTHONY & JORDANNA

When we began to plan our wedding, it was important to us to be married in a CofE church – particularly a church that was inclusive – we are a mixed raced couple and wanted a church that would welcome our wonderfully eclectic mix of family and friends. We were stunned at the beauty and history of the church, and were welcomed with open arms into the congregation. **Father Marcus didn't just marry us, he performed a beautiful service that embodied everything about love and marriage that we had grown up to believe in.** He made an effort over the course of nearly a year to get to know us, learn about our families, and support us through the marriage planning process. We couldn't have asked for a better union.



St Bartholomew the Great grows on you. I attended occasional services from 2006 when visiting London on holiday from Singapore. I wanted a 'traditional' style of service but with a liberal ethos, and was impressed from the outset. **The preaching is challenging, the choral offering impressive, and the typical congregation diverse,** all set against the magnificent backdrop of a 900-year old building.



MARY ANNE

On returning to the UK in 2012 I became a regular member of the congregation, and a volunteer sidesman a few years later: it is a great way to get to know people and assist in the parish in a small but practical way. Welcoming hundreds of new visitors and returning friends at services and open days is particularly satisfying. Just as importantly, St Bart's has become a source of fellowship on a personal level. It is a place of quiet reflection, comfort and community, and – possibly a rarity in the City – a genuine 'parish church'.

WHAT DO OUR 3 CHILDREN LIKE ABOUT COMING TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY?

LEXI SAYS: 'I like the fact that it has become so interactive, and we get good hymns, and to help set up Communion. I think it is important that all the children have something to do in the service'.

TAY THINKS: 'What I like is being involved. I did the hymn numbers on Sunday, and lit the candles, and sometimes get to take the collection. **It feels like the service is for us children, and not aimed at the adults** and playing slow long hymns. This is really important because I find it much easier to remember the sermon/service afterwards when I have been involved in it'.

AND BRECK HAS THIS TO ADD: 'I like the sermons where all the children get involved and do something, that leads into learning about Jesus. Two weeks ago I was blindfolded and guided round the church which was fun! **(Parents: and he was talking about it for the rest of the day!)** I also like ringing the bells whenever I can, helping set up Communion, and doing readings, which I have just started to do and would definitely like to do more of.'

LEXI, TAY, & BRECK



JOHN

Since I first started coming here, from the time that they did those art exhibitions, I found that there was a lot of welcoming. **You just felt that you were a part of something,** not just a constant loner. The help and understanding that I have had... I think that, all in all, you've all been a great uplift for a person who's trying to get on.

