

NO PLACE LIKE ROME ... 8th December, the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception**, is celebrated across Italy with a day off, special masses, parades, often extravagant feasts and live music. During the day the Pope presides over a special ceremony nearby at the Spanish Steps. **Christmas markets** appear across Italy in **December** until **6th January**, including famous ones in **Trento, Bolzano** and **Venice**. **Piazza Navona** is host in **Rome**. Visitors can meet Babbo Natale (Father Christmas), see nativity scenes and browse for Christmas gifts, crafts and food in a festive atmosphere. On **31st** catch the **WE RUN ROME** 10km marathon which takes in some of the city's spectacular sights. www.werunrome2015.com **BUON ANNO!**



Our parish lunches continue through the festive season after the 10.30 service on 6th December and 3rd January. Everyone welcome bring a contribution. More help is always welcome too - contact Jo Trippa.

***** A MESSAGE FROM Marcus Moore *****
Bibliophile, bookworm or book lover, if you would like to share your love of books then do come and join the **All Saints' Book Club**. No subscription, one book to read and discover a month and one meeting. Interested? Contact Marcus Moore; telephone +33 06 71085002 or email marcus.moore@mail.com

Prayer for wholeness and healing is offered on the last Sunday of each month during the 10.30 service and on the first Wednesday at the 12.45 Eucharist. Up-to-date details about Choral evensong, Alternative Worship (with contemporary worship music, preaching and prayer ministry) and other services and events can be found on our open **Facebook page** (All Saints', Rome) or on the **NEW LOOK web site** www.allsaintsrome.org



Comfort, comfort now my people

Speak of peace - so says your God.

Comfort those who sit in darkness, burdened by a heavy load.

To Jerusalem proclaim, God shall take away your shame.

Now get ready to recover, guilt and suffering are over.

Hear the herald proclamation in the desert far and near, calling all to true repentance, telling that the Lord is near.

Oh, that warning to obey! For your God prepare a way.

Let the valleys rise to greet him and the hills bow down to meet him. Straighten out what has been crooked, make the roughest places plain.

Let your hearts be true and humble, live as fits God's holy reign. Soon the glory of the Lord shall on earth be spread abroad.

Human flesh shall surely see it, God is ready to decree it.

This hymn by **Johannes Olearius** (1611-1684) paraphrases of Isaiah 40:1-5. It was translated into English by **Catherine Wenkworth** (1829-1878) who had connections with All Saints'. She campaigned for higher education for women and was an expert linguist, translating nearly 400 German hymns into English. This hymn captures the excitement of Advent, preparing for something of immense importance and heeding the warning cries of repentance.



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... in the heart of Rome, with Rome at its heart ...



... 'Let manger, star and angel choir un hinge us from our sleep and sorrow ... (Jaroslav Vajda)

WELCOME to the newsletter of **ALL SAINTS', ROME** for December and January, the season of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and a new year dawning. 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it' (John 1:5)



An Advent wreath made by the children of All Saints'

INSIDE THIS ISSUE **Kevin Murray** on 'Mother Goose' - earliest memories of the delicious highlights of an Australian Christmas ... the baptism and confirmation service ... plus **Adamo il Giardiniera**

Former Archbishop of Canterbury, **Dr. Rowan Williams**, wrote in 2010: 'Christmas is one of the great European exports, loved even in non-Christian contexts. It isn't difficult to see why. A long journey through a land under military occupation; a difficult birth in improvised accommodation. Alongside these harsh realities the skies tore open, blazing angelic voices summoning a random assortment to go and worship in an outhouse; or a mysterious constellation in the heavens, triggering a pilgrimage by oriental gurus to kneel where farm labourers have knelt - something is happening that breaks boundaries and crosses frontiers ... something which draws strangers together - the hymn writer's 'desire of all nations'. The Christmas story outrageously suggests we put our hand in the clutch of a baby. It is a story of defenceless love touching all, not giving up on the human heart's capacity for goodness and faith, however deeply buried. This baby is where the power of the Creator is completely present. We're loved - if only we could just stop and see it.'

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Email news, views, events, articles to the church office or leave hard copy for forwarding

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE PEWS



Australian born artist and parishioner **Kevin Murray** has lived and worked in Rome for more than 50 years. He recalls for the newsletter some childhood memories of Christmas in Australia.

'In December 1937, just 3 years old, my parents left me with grandparents in rural Cowra while they went up to Melbourne with friends. They had taken me to the Tivoli theatre in Sidney to see the pantomime, Mother Goose. I was deeply impressed - a man dressed as a goose strutting about on a stage, randomly laying eggs! What magic! The sudden terrifying appearance of the devil, flashing his shiny red coat, was heralded by a frightening drum roll. His maniacal cackle and the decapitation of Mother Goose sent horrified shrieks through the young audience - but we loved every bit of it!

In my grandparents back garden was a lovely white goose, tethered to the peach tree. Grandfather took me every morning to feed the bird, as big as me. Christmas morning arrived! I was woken to bright summer sunlight. As I lay alone in a double bed in a pleasant room painted pale grey the double doors burst open. Aunt Ella rushed in, her arms full of presents which she cast on to my bed - a brightly coloured beach ball, red, cream and green, a long red net stocking filled with untold magical goodies - my very first memory of Christmas!

My grandfather took me by the hand and led me down the wooden back steps to the lovely white goose in the shade of the peach tree. In his other hand he carried an axe. He grabbed its pale red legs and laid its neck on a wooden block. Chop! Was this the pantomime again? The headless goose spread its wide white wings and came flying towards me. I sped down the path to the dunny, wrenched the door open, rushed in and slammed it shut just in time

as the goose crashed against it, beating its wings. Grandmother took charge after that! She plucked and cleaned it. With its innards she made what is my first taste memory - brown soup rich in white specks of barley. The goose was aromatically stuffed with thyme and roasted. A large Christmas pud, hiding a thruppence or a silver sixpence stood steaming on the table. Cries of delight when we found a coin added to the magical thrill of that first Christmas memory.

That night grandfather said; 'Kevin, want to see the fairies?' Taking a shovel he led me down the wooden steps into the night garden. A midnight blue sky spangled with the bright stars of the Milky Way. 'Watch!' he ordered as he scraped the ground. Bright pale green specks of light appeared, twinkling and gleaming on the dark earth. 'The fairies!' he declared. Unhesitatingly I was converted to the cult of the fairies! My very first Christmas memories!



Part of a whole series of oils done by Kevin when he played the part in Nanni Moretti's film, **HABEMUS PAPEM**



All Saints' Day, 1st November. We celebrated our patronal festival on a beautiful day, warm enough to enjoy post-service refreshments in the church garden - photo below left. We welcomed our Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, Robert Innes, on his first visit. Fr. Jonathan baptised two candidates and Bishop Robert confirmed a happy group of confirmands. It was a delight to have Fr. Austin Rios and congregation of St. Paul's within the Walls worship with us.

The church was a hive of holy activity, every corner occupied with worshippers, small children in the soft corner, Sunday school in another - the atmosphere was truly joyful. A splendid lunch followed in the crypt (below left.) Thanks as usual to the immense amount of hard work by Jo Trippa and Jane Casale and helpers. (Photos of the day below and left - those of children used with parental permission.)



GARDENING ROMA



Plant of the month - Poinsettia

Here it is in all its Christmas glory, named after the first US ambassador to Mexico where it can be found as a rather large leggy shrub. The locals call it Cuetlaxochitl. For Christmas entertainment you might like to try to pronounce or spell it! A member of the euphorbia family, it has a white sap which is very irritant to the eyes - beware!

Mine always flop/die you say - well here are tips to keep the scarlet bracts in full splendour to Easter: Only soak the roots when the surface of the compost is dry but before the leaves have gone floppy. Even if they have, try a tepid water soak. **Drain well!**

Buy your Poinsettia as soon as it arrives in the shop, supermarket conditions are not ideal. They like plenty of light but remove from the window sill at night to avoid cold air. In general consign to the compost heap after Easter - it is tricky to keep them going.

Tip of the month - Treat yourself to a Christmas Cactus - what a tough plant! Bye for now! **Adamo il giardiniere**

