



# TYBURN TALK

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*A God who became so small  
could only be Love and Mercy*

*St. Therese of Lisieux*

+  
Christmas 2015

Dear Friends,

Twice a day, as our community comes to the conclusion of Lauds and Vespers, the Mother presiding sings: “Kyrie eleison”, to which the sisters respond “Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison”. Lord, have mercy... She then raises her hands to heaven and sings the Lord’s Prayer: “Our Father who art in heaven...” We are now on the threshold of the Year of Mercy proclaimed by Our Holy Father Pope Francis, and our prayer this Christmas is for each and every member of the human family to be touched and transformed by the Love of our God who comes to live among us.

This alone can heal our broken world.

The first word we wish to say to you this Christmas is “Thank you”.

Why? Because with our last newsletter we enclosed a poster advertising our Monastic Afternoons, and asked you to display them in your parishes. So many of you kindly did this that the results were immediately felt, as attendance at these afternoons tripled overnight. Wonderful! Our visitors were very glad that they saw the posters and found out about Tyburn and the Shrine of the Martyrs, with some coming back for retreats or even exploring their vocation. The second enclosure was a book of raffle tickets. So many people responded with such great generosity that the amount raised by raffle ticket sales this year exceeded £6,500. Thank you.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> October we held our Tyburn Fayre, and this was also a great success. Most importantly, the day was very enjoyable to all, and a number of people made their first visit to Tyburn, including the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Lady Christabel Flight. The Mayor said in her speech at the opening that she had often passed by Tyburn and wanted to come in, but only now had she done so! The new layout of the fayre this year meant that refreshments were served in a more prominent area, and people enjoyed relaxing over a cup of tea and homemade cake or sandwich. We had a few items which were too good to be sold on the stalls, such as a beautiful handmade quilt, so we introduced a mini-auction at the end of the day which may well become a feature of future Tyburn Fayres. We were very grateful this year to four local hotels who provided complimentary nights, dinners and afternoon teas, making an attractive array of runner-up prizes. Our own sisters had been preparing for the Fayre for months, and October was taken up with sorting and arranging the stalls, and finally baking cakes and biscuits. It was rewarding to see a good crowd, and we are very grateful to those who worked hard to display posters and publicise the Fayre in various ways.



Alongside this big event in our year, we have had many family joys: Sr. Bella received the habit in July, taking the name of Sr. M. Thomasina, and then Sr. Uchenna, who had arrived from Nigeria, became Sr. Mary Jude. Our two new novices were then joined by Sr. M. Ethelburga and Sr. M. Euphrasia, who had begun their formation in Nigeria, and Sr. Felistas who has now become Sr. M Eunice. These milestone events in the lives of our young sisters are a reminder to all of us of the grace we have received, and we rejoice at the end of the year for consecrated life, to see

vocations budding and blossoming. In addition, our “extended family” of Oblates has seen rapid growth this year, with 4 admissions to the Oblate novitiate, 2 professions of Oblates, and several candidates on the way.

Our Tyburn Association of Adoration has also grown this year, with men and women generously offering a night once a month, or even once a week or more, to be with the Lord in our Chapel, joining in the work of our community to pray unceasingly for the needs of the Church and the world. Regular meetings and get-togethers have strengthened the sense of community and purpose which already prevailed among our dedicated vigilants. However the area where they presently meet and rest between vigils is in very poor condition, and we are hoping to be able to carry out some renovation work soon. This is also the area where we welcome other groups who visit the Convent and Shrine.

So our old house continues to present its demands: Removing pipes for dampproofing works led to the discovery that the central heating system in the novitiate and retreat house wing has, at the age of 65 or thereabouts, announced its retirement. We now need to raise funds for a new system, which will be much more efficient in the long run, with different areas of the house controlled separately, and modern, energy efficient boilers. However as you can imagine, the required amount is very substantial. A number of vinyl floors need to be lifted during this work, and these are now in such condition that they may need to be replaced rather than re-stuck... and so it goes on..!

In addition to this we have, as a community, made a united decision to come to the aid of our Mission houses who are also in need of funds, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> January a Charity concert entitled “Light to the Nations” will be held at St. James Church, Spanish Place. Information about this can be found on our website [www.tyburnconvent.org.uk/concert](http://www.tyburnconvent.org.uk/concert). It has been made possible by the generosity of four professional soloists, and once again if you could help us to make this event known it would be much appreciated.

On 5<sup>th</sup> March, a charity auction is planned for the same cause, details of which will be found on our website by January. If you would like to donate any items of good quality that could serve the purpose of an auction we would be very grateful: Please contact Mother Prioress.

Another project has been that of taking to heart the words of St. Benedict, that “they are truly monks, who live by the labour of their own hands”. You might not believe that a veggie garden is possible in central London, but our garden sisters have proved otherwise, and from the small beginnings they made this year we have already harvested delicious beans, pumpkins, courgettes, maize and tomatoes as well as a variety of herbs. However, in gathering the harvest, we compete with our resident squirrel family, who have several advantages over us!



We have been amazed over the past year to see a rapid increase in the number of groups visiting our Martyr’s Crypt and showing great interest in the story it has to tell. Many have been touched also by the story of our Mother Foundress, and how providence led her to England from the French Montmartre – “Mount of Martyrs” to “England’s Calvary”. Now that we have easy access from the Crypt to our Mother’s tomb, many are seeking and finding consolation, praying close to our Mother’s mortal remains and leaving with her their pleas and petitions. If you would like to know more about Mother Marie-Adele, do let us know by means of the enclosed slip.

Finally we wish you all a Blessed Advent and Christmastide and a Happy New Year. Holy Mass on the Feast of the Holy Family will be offered for the intentions of all our friends and benefactors. May the peace of the Christ Child enter your hearts and your homes and remain with you throughout 2016.

The Tyburn Nuns.

Please pass Tyburn Talk on to a friend