

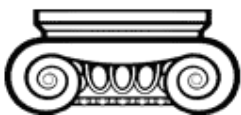
# **THE BLESSING OF THE RIVER THAMES**



**LED BY THE CLERGY AND CONGREGATIONS  
OF ST MAGNUS THE MARTYR AND SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL**

**SUNDAY 12 JANUARY 2025  
THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST  
12.30PM**

# ST MAGNUS THE MARTYR



Early records show the title as being 'Ecclesia St. Magni Civitatis London juxta pedem, vel as pedem Ponti London' – viz. 'The Church of St. Magnus at the foot of London Bridge'. It is recorded in a confirmation of a grant made by William the Conqueror to Westminster Abbey in 1067. A

church, made of stone, was standing here at the time of the grant. It was pulled down and a new larger one built in 1234 on a new plot of land.

After the Reformation, patronage alternated between the Abbey of Bermondsey and the Abbot and Convent of Westminster. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century patronage passed to the Bishop of London, Edmund Grindall, who appointed Miles Coverdale to the parish in 1563. At which time the churchwardens were ordered to break, or cause to be broken in two parts, all the altar stones in the church.

The medieval church was repaired in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and completely rebuilt after the Great Fire of London in 1666 by Christopher Wren. One of the Tables of Benefactions in the lobby at the West end of the church records the close escape the church had in 1640 during the 'late terrible Fire on London Bridge'. The Table also records the provision for a sermon to be preached on every twelfth day of February to commemorate its preservation. Strype, who extended John Stow's Survey of London (1598) to 1720, writes: 'On the east side near the Bridge is St. Magnus' Church, seated in the Corner, going into Thames Street. It was destroyed by the Fire of London, since which it is rebuilt with Freestone and a Tower Steeple, all of a curious workmanship to which Church is united the Parish of St. Margaret New Fish Street, that church not being rebuilt.'

In the great holocaust of 1666 the church was the second one to perish, the first being St. Margaret, New Fish Street. Today's church although much altered internally was the work of Wren. In the Bodleian Library, Oxford, are 'The Bills 10 of the Parochial Churches', and 'The Ledger of the Parochial Churches' being the manuscripts of Wren's accounts for the rebuilding of the churches of the City of London after the Great Fire of 1666. The accounts for the rebuilding of St. Magnus show that it cost £9,580.

In 1782 in an attempt to reduce the noise of the many iron-rimmed carts working in nearby Billingsgate, the windows in the North wall were altered to their present round form. In 1924–1925 Martin Travers restored the interior when the 'unsightly changes' made in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century were removed. The box pews were replaced by those currently in use and the three-decker pulpit with its 'rectory pew' dismantled revealing the elegant pulpit of Wren. This pulpit was so greatly admired that two copies were made, one of which was, until the Blitz of 1940–1941, in the Parish Church of St. Lawrence Jewry. After World War II, 1939–1945, new stained glass windows were commissioned and placed in the church, by Laurence King.

[stmagnusmartyr.org.uk](http://stmagnusmartyr.org.uk)

# THE BLESSING OF THE RIVER THAMES

---

*Fr Philip Warner, Cardinal Rector, St Magnus the Martyr, welcomes the congregation.*

*Then, The Very Rev'd Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark, introduces the celebration.*

## THE GATHERING

---

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**All Amen.**

The Lord be with you,

**All and also with you.**

## THE OPENING SENTENCES

---

The LORD will take us from the nations:

**All and gather us from all countries.**

He will sprinkle clean water upon us:

**All and purify us from all uncleanness.**

A new heart will he give us:

**All a new spirit will he put within us.**

He shall be our God,

**All and we shall be his people.**

*based on Ezekiel 36.24-28*

## THE FIRST READING

---

### **Jeremiah 17.1-8**

*Read by a representative of St Magnus the Martyr*

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah.

Blessèd are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.

They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,  
and its leaves shall stay green;  
in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## THE PSALM

---

### Psalm 46

*The response is:*

**The river makes glad the city of God.**

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble;  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,  
and though the mountains tremble in the heart of the sea; **R**

Though the waters rage and swell,  
and though the mountains quake at the towering seas.  
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy place of the dwelling of the Most High. **R**

God is in the midst of her;  
therefore shall she not be removed;  
God shall help her at the break of day.  
The nations are in uproar and the kingdoms are shaken,  
but God utters his voice and the earth shall melt away. **R**

## THE SECOND READING

---

### Revelation 22.1-5

*Read by a representative of Southwark Cathedral*

A reading from the Book of the Revelation to St John.

The angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## THE CANTICLE

---

### **The Song of Ephrem the Syrian**

Jesus, how wonderful your footsteps, walking on the waters!  
You subdued the great sea beneath your feet.

**All** **Yet to a little stream you subjected your head,  
bending down to be baptised in it.**

The stream was like John who performed the baptism in it,  
in their smallness each an image of the other.

**All** **To the stream so little, to the servant so weak,  
the Lord of them both subjected himself.**

## THE GOSPEL

---

### **Mark 1.9-11**

*Read by a representative of St Magnus the Martyr*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

**All** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## THE PRAYERS

---

*Led by a representative of Southwark Cathedral*

*The response is:*

Lord, in your mercy:

**All** **hear our prayer.**

*and, at the end:*

Merciful Father,

**All** **accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son  
Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## THE BLESSING OF THE RIVER

---

The Lord be with you.  
**All and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy,  
at all times to give you thanks and praise,  
for today the grace of the Holy Spirit  
in the form of a dove descended upon the waters.  
Today the sun that never sets has risen  
and the world is filled with splendour  
by the light of the Lord.

Today the clouds drop down upon all people  
the dew of righteousness from on high.  
Today the Uncreated of his own will  
accepts the laying on of hands from his own creature.  
Today the waters of the Jordan  
are transformed for healing by the coming of the Lord.  
Today the blinding mist of the world is dispersed  
by the Epiphany of our God.  
Today things above keep feast with things below,  
and things below commune with things above.

So, Father, accept our sacrifice of praise;  
by the power of your life-giving Spirit  
bless the waters of this great river through your anointed Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit  
we lift our voices of praise:

**All Blessèd be God, our strength and our salvation,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*When it is safe to do so, a wooden cross is cast into the river.*

Heavenly Father,  
may your Holy Spirit,  
who has brought us to new birth in the family of your Church,  
raise us in Christ, our anointed Lord,  
to full and eternal life.  
For all might, majesty and dominion are yours,  
now and for ever.

**All Alleluia! Amen.**

*The people are sprinkled with water as a sign of blessing.*

## **THE BLESSING & DISMISSAL**

---

God, who in Christ gives us a spring of water  
welling up to eternal life,  
perfect in you the image of his glory;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit  
be upon you and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

Let us go, rejoicing in the peace of Christ.

**All Thanks be to God.**

---

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000.

All words covered by the Christian Copyright Licensing have been reproduced under CCL licence no. 223439 and livestreaming licence 145859.

The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches in the USA: Scripture quotations from The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible © 1989 The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

# SOUTHWARK

## ◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

**making space for love**  
with heart, mind, and soul

Set on the south bank of the River Thames, in one of the most vibrant and diverse communities in London, this building has been a constant witness in a place of change.

The first church was built on the site around the year 606. First a convent, then a monastery, it became in 1106 the Augustinian Priory of St Mary Overie ('over-the-river'). With Westminster Abbey and St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield, it is one of the three remaining great monastic churches of London. At the Reformation, the Priory became a parish church, and it remains so for the people of Bankside. In 1905, as south London was rapidly expanding, the church was consecrated as the Cathedral for the new Diocese of Southwark.

The Cathedral has a momentous and significant history and has had links with many famous and influential characters including St Thomas Becket, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens. It has also been a Cathedral for those who feel on the edges of faith or society, our welcome reaching out to all people in their beautiful God-given diversity.

At Southwark Cathedral, our Christian faith is captured in our vision to 'make space for love: with heart, mind, and soul'. Faith requires our hearts to stand up for social justice, upholding integrity and kindness, and supporting the vulnerable and oppressed. It challenges our thinking, inviting our minds to be enquiring, honest, and generous. Faith also seeks to deepen our inner lives, with the arts and creativity, by sharing in the life of our community, and by learning the arts of prayer and attention. In Jesus Christ we see the human face of God, and our faith in him is our joy and our life.

Southwark Cathedral  
London Bridge  
London  
SE1 9DA

+44 (0)20 7367 6700  
[southwarkcathedral.org.uk](http://southwarkcathedral.org.uk)

*subscribe to our weekly newsletter on our website*