

## A charming facade for Rees-Mogg

There was no Tommy Trinder and the Tiller Girls waving from a revolving stage at the end of the show at the London Palladium: just a stationary coffee table and two chairs. But the audience who had come to listen to Jacob Rees-Mogg in conversation with the editor of *The Spectator*, Fraser Nelson, last week went home happy, all 2,300 of them.

Rees-Mogg was serenely polite even to the most hostile of questions from the audience. He works one day a week at the capital management company he set up in his twenties, paying himself £500 an hour. "Isn't that a bit much when you're voting for nurses and doctors to have pay freezes?" he was asked. "Completely irrelevant comparison," he snapped back. That was as cross as he got.

"I must find out which saint's day it is on the 29 March," Rees-Mogg mused. "If we have really left, then that saint will be so honoured. With Pol Roger, with Bollinger – you name it, that saint will be honoured." The saint who could be lionised by the Brexiters is Berthold, who was born in



Limoges, France, and probably (there's some dispute over this) founded the Carmelite Order. A delay in departure of one month would take us to 29 April: the feast of Catherine of Siena, declared a patron state of Europe by Pope John Paul II. Perhaps not the ideal Patron Saint of Brexit either.

The full recording of the event is on *The Spectator* podcast channel.

Radio 4's *The Archers* is a rare British soap opera: it takes religion seriously and the Church's seasons – Christmas, Lent and

Easter – are always part of the narrative. Now it turns out that one of the show's actors has developed a profound faith of her own. In Redemptorist Publication's special supplement, *Lent Extra*, Emerald O'Hanlon, who plays Emma Grundy, describes how her mother, who died suddenly in a motorbike accident, was Catholic, and her father became a convert. Although she was baptised, and had received her First Holy Communion, it was only after a pilgrimage to Rome during the Year of Mercy that her faith came alive.

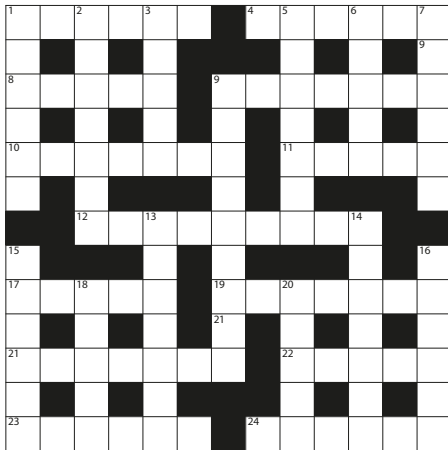
"I came home knowing I belonged in the Catholic Church", she says. Telling people was the difficult bit, she admits. "As an actor, it seemed harder to 'come out' as Christian than if I were gay."

The preacher chosen to lead the Lenten retreat for Pope Francis and the Curia is Benedictine monk Bernardo Gianni, abbot of one of the architectural jewels of Florence, the Abbey of San Miniato.

The Italian spiritual writer Luigi Gioia tells us that he is an inspiring speaker and thinker. But the Pope might need to be on his guard. "Bernardo's impersonations of Pope Benedict, whom he admires, are immaculate." The six-day retreat begins tomorrow, 10 March.

## PUZZLES

### PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 648 | Axe



Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 9 March, The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY.

Email: [thetablet@thetablet.co.uk](mailto:thetablet@thetablet.co.uk), with Crossword in the subject field. Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. Three books – on Paul, Theology and Christian Ethics – from the OUP's Very Short Introduction series will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random on Friday 22 March. The answers to this week's puzzles and the crossword winner's name will appear in the 30 March issue.

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### Across

- 1 Book of -----, from the ninth century, housed at Trinity College, Dublin (6)
- 4 Roland de -----, 1532-94, major composer of polyphonic spiritual music (6)
- 8 Body of traditional Islamic law (5)
- 9 Saint and abbot of Iona from 679 (7)
- 10 Crafty ophidian of the Garden of Eden, in K.J.V. parlance (7)
- 11 One of twelve of 15? (5)
- 12 Man who Paul disciplined for spreading false teaching (9)
- 17 One of Jesus' brothers or half-brothers, according to Matthew (5)
- 19 Major diocese (4-3)
- 21 Herod -----, a.k.a. the Tetrarch (7)
- 22 Germanic mystic symbols or spells, originally pagan (5)

- 23 Protestant theologian excommunicated in 1521 (6)
- 24 Raised structures upon which gifts to a deity are made (6)

### Down

- 1 Italian city famed for two contemporaneous saints of the twelfth-thirteenth century (6)
- 2 Candelabrum with nine branches used during the Jewish Hanukkah festival (7)
- 3 Abundant and unmerited love freely given by God to humanity (5)
- 5 Disciple and missionary (7)
- 6 Biblical peninsula, desert and mountain separating Asia and Africa (5)
- 7 Inheritor of the disobedience of Adam and Eve (6)
- 9 Followers of four saints with the same

- name, the original being an Egyptian hermit (9)
- 13 Strip of silk formerly worn over the left arm of those performing the Mass (7)
- 14 Part of Daniel, according to Jerome; apocryphal to Protestants (7)
- 15 Name God gave to Jacob, first, at the Jabbok ford (6)
- 16 Short subsections of biblical text (6)
- 18 Liturgical piece forming a major part of the oeuvre of 4 Across (5)
- 20 One of the Apostles of the Slavs who is credited (wrongly?) with inventing a particular alphabet (5)

### SUDOKU | Challenging

3			5		4	2
	2		8	6		
		6		7		
	9				8	3
1						
	4	8			7	
8						4
		6	4			5
7		2		6	1	

Each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

2	8	3	5	6	1	7	9	4
4	1	6	7	2	9	5	3	8
5	7	9	3	4	8	1	6	2
7	4	5	2	8	6	3	1	9
6	2	1	9	3	7	8	4	5
3	9	8	1	5	4	6	2	7
8	6	7	4	1	2	9	5	3
9	3	2	6	7	5	4	8	1
1	5	4	8	9	3	2	7	6

Solution to the 16 February puzzle

### Solution to the 16 February crossword No. 645

- Across:** 1 The Creation; 8 Absalom; 9 Low on; 11 Moab; 12 Augustan; 14 Lesser; 16 Vishnu; 18 Tarshish; 19 Paul; 22 Shiva; 23 Iconium; 24 Benedictine.  
**Down:** 2 Hosea; 3 Cult; 4 Emmaus; 5 Talmudic; 6 On watch; 7 Carmelites; 10 Non-Muslims; 13 Bethpage; 15 Service; 17 Assisi; 20 Arian; 21 Copt.  
**Winner:** James Lonie, of Linlithgow, Scotland.