

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

diary@thetablet.co.uk

A life in glass

PATRICK REYNTIENS died on 25 October at the age of 95. Trevor Mostyn, the *Tablet's* Middle East correspondent for several years, knew him well. After leaving Ampleforth, Reyntiens served in the Scots Guards for two years, and then studied at Edinburgh School of Art, where he met the painter Anne Bruce, Mostyn's first cousin. They later married.

"When I was about 12," Mostyn told us, "Patrick gave me a lesson in cutting stained-glass. Years later in Coventry Cathedral I pointed at the huge baptistry window. 'That, up there somewhere', I told my friends 'is my piece of glass in the window of one of the greatest stained-glass artists of our age, my cousin Patrick.'"

Reyntiens started as an assistant to Edward Nuttgens. Two years later he was introduced to John Piper by John Betjeman. They worked together for 35 years, Reyntiens converting Piper's designs into gorgeous, finished stained-glass. Like St Peter's Basilica, Coventry Cathedral had a "complicated interior", Reyntiens once said, and Piper "didn't know how to make a unity of



it all". To solve the riddle Reyntiens wanted to do a Bernini, and "throw a bomb in the middle of it". The idea for the window came from St Peter's, whose stained-glass element, introduced by Bernini, depicts a dove in a burst of light.

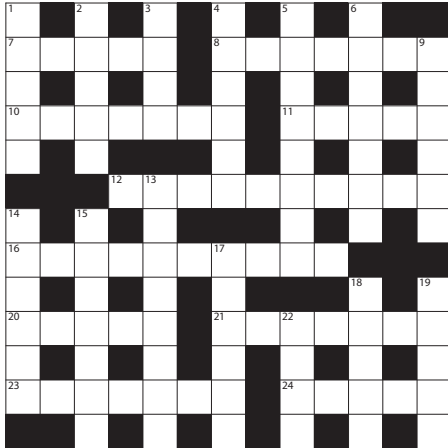
Piper and Reyntiens' other great work was the lantern tower at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. Inspiration came when Reyntiens recited the description of the Trinity at the end of Dante's *Paradiso* of "three great eyes of different colours, each one winking at the other". In 2009 Reyntiens, with the artist

Graham Jones, was awarded what he described as "one of the largest commissions in my life". He created the designs and painted the glass for eight forty-foot high windows for the fifteenth-century church in Cochem on the Mosel. In the documentary film made by his son John, *From Coventry to Cochem*, Sir Roy Strong says, "I hope there will be a rediscovery of Reyntiens as an artist of very considerable stature in his own right and not merely the person who had the knack of turning designs by Piper into stained glass."

Patrick wrote regularly on art for *The Tablet* for 20 years. Although his beautiful, artistic, decadent Belgium grandmother Flora, who did a bunk to England to escape a love scandal, would shout "Take the child away. Such a stupid child", she inspired his art. At his 90th birthday party at the Chelsea Arts Club he pointed to each of his children in turn and said "I love you." He had hoped to live to 100. He wrote to Mostyn in December 2016. "I can't get rid of old age," he reflected. "Isn't it a pity ... I may be with you for another nine years. We'll see." He prayed the rosary every day. "When I die," he said, "I think I will just give myself to God in the way that one ought to," adding that he had had an "absolutely, extraordinarily beautiful life."

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 781 Enigma



Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 13 November, *The Tablet*, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY.

Email: 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.

■ We are processing entries but there may be a delay in notifying winners and sending out prizes. Please keep entering.

Prizes kindly donated by

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

www.oup.com

Across

- 7 Something a bit existential from an American Christian community (5)
8 Slightly burned, the cleaner is blushing (6)
10 "Too much employment" gets no bad reviews (7)
11 Putin! Putin! We need your contribution! (5)
12 Singing of love to a tennis legend before the bell rings (10)
16 Acted more cleverly by slyly laying Maud to rest (10)
20 A battered tin one hesitates to bury (5)
21 We must make a move, so clear off! (7)

23 Silly girls! Des can fly! (7)

24 Dominican's nervous reaction to a measure of alcohol (5)

Down

- 1 Excessively hugging a sailor is forbidden (5)
2 "Marine activist in a bad place." Start reading! (5)
3 One could call you old-fashioned (4)
4 A plan to canonise a revolutionary? I object! (6)
5 About now one of the navy personnel helps to prepare the meat (8)
6 Weep over the empty pot; I see it's like all the others here (7)

9 The dog ate badly in its declining years (6)

13 A sad melt-down for a rising prophet in arboreal surroundings (3,5)

14 A firm Chinese emperor will soon arrive (6)

15 A dog's friendly messaging service (3,4)

17 About six points to go over for the exam (6)

18 Footwear insulting to Eliot (5)

19 Protestants chase poultry from here (5)

22 Tom came up with nothing? That's debateable! (4)

SUDOKU | Beginner

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

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

Solution to the 23 October puzzle

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

Solution to the 23 October crossword No. 778

Across: 7 Toy dog; 8 Savage; 10 Pyramus; 11 Klong; 12 Eric; 13 Groat; 17 Krill; 18 Kore; 22 Liege; 23 Bigfoot; 24 Cygnet; 25 Filial.

Down: 1 Steppes; 2 Pyrrhic; 3 Worms; 4 Jackdaw; 5 Aaron; 6 Henge; 9 Astrolabe; 14 Froebel; 15 Borodin; 16 Reptile; 19 Clock; 20 Serge; 21 Agria.