

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

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The final curtain

TIME SPENT with the playwright Ronald Harwood, who died on 8 September aged 85, was always a triple tonic. He exuded an infectious appetite for life, he seemed predisposed to like everyone he met, and he was easily moved to laughter.

But there was more to him than rollicking bonhomie. Born Ronald Horwitz, in South Africa, he had a near-obsession with moral dilemmas, and with what it meant to be a Jew. In his play *Taking Sides*, Hitler's favourite conductor, Wilhelm Furtwängler, is tried after the war as a Nazi sympathiser. He is an artistic genius, whereas his American interrogator, Steve Arnold, is a bully and a philistine. Yet Arnold has witnessed at first hand the horror of Belsen. In the face of this, what argument can Furtwängler make for the healing power of his art?

As he prepared to write the Oscar-winning screenplay for *The Pianist*, Harwood and director Roman Polanski spent time together watching reels of previously unseen SS film of Nazi treatment of the Jews. "We watched all day," he said, "and then went out for a huge dinner, and drank too much. We never talked about it, because it was unbearable."



"Jews walk a tightrope between this world and the next very comfortably," Harwood believed. "They are good at this world, but they have a spiritual dimension too." He made regular retreats with his Catholic-convert wife, Natasha, at Ampleforth, getting up at 5am for Matins. "I love it," he said, "I look at those monks, and what has been their whole lives, and I long to know whether they experience doubt."

THE ARCHITECTURAL historian Paul Walker is among those keen that Georg

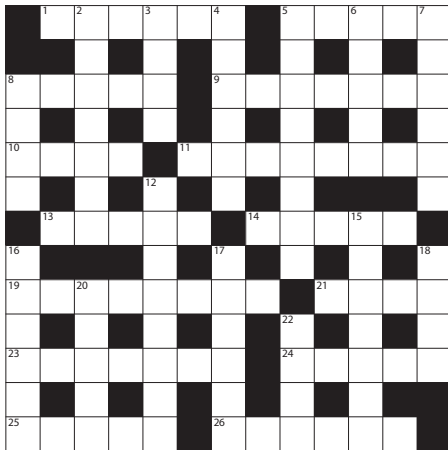
Mayer-Martons mosaic in the decommissioned church of The Holy Rosary in Oldham be saved. "It's a major piece of work," he tells us. "Christ on the cross is set against a mandorla-shaped area of gold mosaic. But if you look closely, the edges of the mandorla, instead of being perfect arcs, are somewhat 'wobbly'. With scaffolding in front when it was in the making, it could have been difficult to see whether things were going awry."

WE HEARD last week of Guido Waldman's implausible commission to translate the words of Graham Greene from French into English. That was light work compared to translating Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which took him five years. "I could only work on it at night, after a full day at the office – and I would find my labours closely monitored by the family hamster, who would run up my leg, hop onto my desk, and follow my pen with its nose."

At 88, he is still busy. Colette Bowe, a member of the Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee and a former chairman of The Tablet Trustees, tells us that Guido, a parishioner at St John the Evangelist in Islington, "makes an outstanding contribution as a reader at Mass and as a Eucharistic minister. He is a shining light of the lay ministry."

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 724 Enigma



Across

- 1 (& 5 Across) A thousand in debt, in pitiful rags, make a dollar by gardening (6,5)
- 5 See 1 Across (5)
- 8 Sounds as if the birds are a bargain (5)
- 9 Write a cheerful feature about old-fashioned flowers (7)
- 10 An American guy with poor English (4)
- 11 Where health is concerned, water containers have their points (8)
- 13 Site of the plane crash (5)
- 14 Crosses back over to take photographs (5)
- 19 Being described as too young leaves Irma mute (8)
- 21 Don't plug lyrics so aesthetically displeasing (4)

23 See Dad scam this chap (7)

- 24 Directions from the post office may help the sheriff (5)
- 25 Condescend to bring the soldier back into the study (5)
- 26 British motorists, before all others, discover an unpleasant person (6)

Down

- 2 It's late, but it's time to play cricket (7)
- 3 "Demons" is about a parliamentarian (4)
- 4 Bird finds a husband in Canada (6)
- 5 What drives many Americans (8)
- 6 It's blowing a gale in the sea (5)
- 7 Declares it to be true that evil troops drowned in soya (4,2)
- 8 Say you'll give up the gardening material (4)

- 12 The taxi returns before the train crash caused by this camel (8)
- 15 Hang clothes, like Americans, on a fabulous horse (7)
- 16 It's clear this inadequate proof of identity can't stand up (6)
- 17 Having even less money than a worker in the markets (6)
- 18 The vet, in the end, finds the keyring in the dog (4)
- 20 Tim returns with a 26 to one chance of finding a girl (5)
- 22 It's difficult to cope with these oily ones (4)

Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 19 September, 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 cannot process entries or prizes at present. Please keep entering. Winners will be notified and prizes awarded as soon possible.**

SUDOKU | Hard

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

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

Solution to the 29 August puzzle

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

Solution to the 29 August crossword No. 721

Across: 1 Gamble; 2 Sharp; 8 Petty; 9 Unravel; 10 Cash; 11 Open plan; 13 Usury; 14 Adapt; 19 Riddance; 21 Spun; 23 Heavier; 24 Lille; 25 Drawn; 26 Debars. Down: 2 Attests; 3 Buys; 4 Equips; 5 Serenade; 6 Anvil; 7 Poland; 8 Pace; 12 Arcadian; 15 Popular; 16 Orchid; 17 Scored; 18 Once; 20 Diana; 22 Glib.

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