

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

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Legendary fisher of young souls

OLD FISHES – as alumnae of New Hall School near Chelmsford are known – learnt last month of the death of the legendary Sr Mary Francis CRSS, headmistress from 1963 to 1986. Frances Wood arrived at New Hall aged five. “They had to make a special table and chair for me,” she later said. By the time she was 12, she was certain that she wanted to become a nun. She was appointed headmistress at the age of 32.

Sharp, droll, full of vision and ambition, she would hurl herself enthusiastically into new projects. Numbers grew, day students arrived, a riding school was opened. Sr Mary Francis would sometimes blindside parents by declaring that boarding schools were “a necessary evil”, and that if she was a mother with a “decent-sized family” she would not send her children away to school. “In a perfect world, parents would have their children at home, and have enough of them so that they would learn to live with one another.”

OUR CLAIM that the illustration to Margaret Hebblethwaite’s article in our 11 July issue,



“A royal search for illumination”, depicted Henry of Blois of Winchester has been challenged by John Comiskey, a Canadian professor of church history. Henry of Blois was a bishop, but the figure, as Comiskey points out, is shown wearing a pallium, which is reserved for archbishops. “Could it be Becket himself?” wonders Comiskey. Or did Henry insist on being depicted as an archbishop?

The caption was provided by Winchester Cathedral, which includes the illumination in its “Kings and Scribes” exhibition. Christopher Norton, whose theories on the Winchester

Bible featured in our article, points out it shows Jerome presenting his Latin “Vulgate” translation of the New Testament to Pope Damasus. So it is not Henry of Blois, says Norton, but “Pope Damasus robed as an archbishop”. He explains: “Prior to the introduction of the papal tiara, popes were regularly represented in art in archiepiscopal robes with a normal mitre.”

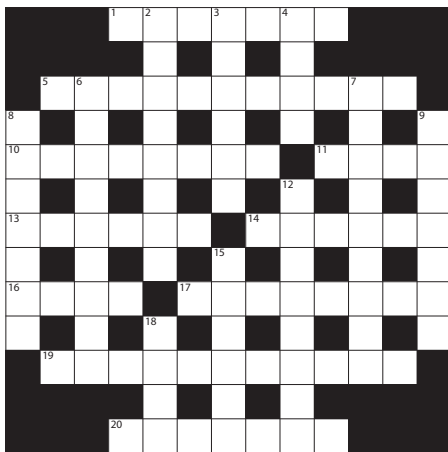
FRANCIS CAMPBELL tells us that when her regulars on *Thought for the Day* gathered on Zoom to say farewell to the producer Christine Morgan on her retirement, there was one notable exception: Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

Pope Benedict filled the slot on Christmas Eve 2010. Campbell explained: “It followed behind the scenes lobbying by a director general of the BBC, several cardinals and the odd government minister. After three years, Christine’s coalition delivered.”

Campbell, who was then British ambassador to the Holy See, helped steer the project – the first time any pope had ever written and recorded a script for a particular broadcaster – through the labyrinthine paths of Vatican diplomacy. “So what now for Christine?” Campbell wonders. “Based on her 2010 success a career in diplomacy would be a good next step.”

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 729 Axe



Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 24 October, 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.

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Across

- 1 I am hiding among verberna – I, Ahab, Solomon’s commander (7)
- 5 Murder One, they figured? (4,3,4)
- 10 Thalia and he get spliced, seeing the temple singer (8)
- 11 Israelite champion from slave, in the end, old Newman movie gets associated with (4)
- 13 Leader of 220 kinsmen who moved the ark before a road’s put through wood (6)
- 14 City where Paul had trouble with the Jews over minerals described by old flyers (6)
- 16 A mother’s issue with 5? No, it’s their Dad (4)

- 17 King’s in High Peak, lost without a key (8)
- 19 Canaanite descendants’ poor phone links here in France’s the short answer (11)
- 20 Book a church in the country (7)

Down

- 2 With no sort of remand, Neanderthal Man’s not good aide for King Jehoiakim (8)
- 3 Man Peter cured is found capsized in Colossae nearly (6)
- 4 Numbers giant first among northern allied kings (4)
- 6 Ham has CIA confused with Danite in Exodus ... (9)

- 7 ... is it “a hot pie” in Amharic? (9)
- 8 Time in ancient days to have one hour in the O.T. valley (7)
- 9 Modern day’s dull with no end for the Prince of Persia (7)
- 12 Babylonian governor in Judah to applaud in retrospect, being terribly aged to start with (8)
- 15 Mum’s almost aristocratic middle name is an old Maltese one (6)
- 18 King of Sodom’s castigated after removing Edward (4)

SUDOKU | Challenging

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

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

Solution to the 3 October puzzle

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

Solution to the 3 October crossword No. 726

Across: 7 Beninu; 8 Phoebe; 9 Baal; 10 Amashai; 11 Lachish; 13 Annas; 15 Sheba; 17 Aspatha; 20 Eliashib; 21 Amen; 23 Talmud; 24 Ararat.
Down: 1 Bera; 2 Diklah; 3 Judaism; 4 Ephah; 5 Dothan; 6 Abiasaph; 12 Athaliah; 14 Eshbaal (or Ishbaal); 16 Brahma; 18 Anaiah; 19 Rhoda; 22 Elah.