

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

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Vatican's square ball

THE ENGAGING bromance comedy *The Two Popes* ends with Anthony Hopkins and Jonathan Pryce on a sofa watching the July 2014 World Cup Final, Hopkins as Pope Emeritus Benedict cheering on Germany and Pryce as Pope Francis crestfallen at Argentina's defeat. Of course, it's all fantasy.

But what if it were Uefa's European Championships and the team to support was that of the Vatican City State? Liam Kelly, who steers the work of the Abbot's Office at Ampleforth and is the author of *The Glorious Journey* (Darton, Longman and Todd), a book of reflections based on the film for use in Lent by individuals or groups, worked in the Vatican in the 1980s and played football for the Vatican City State. The Vatican's own league was founded in the 1970s with teams representing the Vatican Museums, the Police, the Swiss Guards, *Osservatore Romano*, Vatican Radio (for whom Liam was a tireless box-to-box midfielder), the Vatican Library, and the Vatican Bank ("leaky at the back, always giving things away, never having a good defence", jokes Liam). From all these teams a national squad was chosen to represent the Vatican at international level,



playing against teams such as San Marino, Monaco, and small Italian clubs.

"I think we should have been allowed to join Uefa", Liam laments. "Not having our own stadium would have been an obstacle, admittedly, but St Peter's Square is surely big enough to put a few jumpers down as goalposts."

"THE PRECAUTIONS taken have successfully contained the contagion," the fathers of the London Oratory have announced, and public Masses have resumed after the outbreak of coronavirus in the community. The

fathers' own beautiful chapel, on the ground floor inside the Oratory house, was restored some years ago, paid for by the same donor who had commissioned the fresco background behind Darío Fernández' calvary scene inside the Oratory church executed by Alan Dodd.

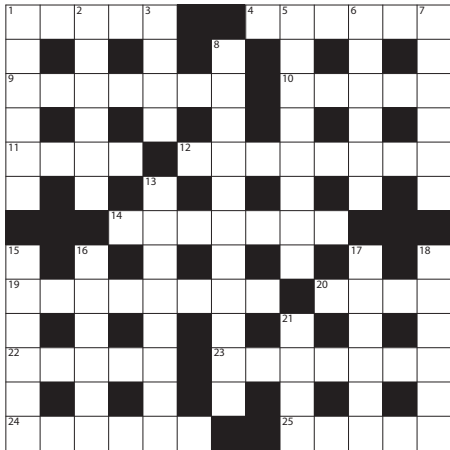
The fathers' generous benefactor was Della Howard, a doctor's daughter from Patrickswell in Co Limerick who became one of London's grande dames. She died last November; she would have turned 96 on Christmas Day. Working in London in the 1940s Della met the art dealer and collector Denis Howard, brother of the military historian Sir Michael Howard. They married at the Oratory in July 1951. Della discovered she had a good eye. She became a period furniture adviser to Sotheby's and an accomplished collector in her own right.

Della organised a stall and a charity auction at the Oratory's summer fair. She had taste, charm and persistence. Her friend Celia Lee of Della's beloved Polish Hearth Club remembered her pointing out the window of a smart Knightbridge shop and telling her that when she called there, they had 14 scarves on display; Della had procured every one for the fair.

She lived round the corner from the Oratory and attended Mass every day until lockdown nudged her to acquire a computer for the first time so she could enjoy livestreamed services.

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 743 Alanus



Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 13 February, 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 Saints, Monasticism and Philosophy of Religion – 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 Time to muse concerning hymnal and poetic works (5)
- 4 Forbid court cards we hear and so incapacitate (6)
- 9 Cause creative idea from part of church? (7)
- 10 (& 23 Across): When I'm outside overworked nun can rest in private chamber (5,7)
- 11 See 20 Across
- 12 Before end skinflint pleading for mercy (8)
- 14 Last drink remedy when canonisation invalid (7)
- 19 Mammal first animal with a short route for five into Noah's refuge (8)

- 20 (& 11 Across): OTT Dumas novel idea for Covid protection? (4,4)
- 22 City girl from France (5)
- 23 See 10 Across
- 24 Actually in brief way in for sacristy (6)
- 25 Means of fastening hospital against poisonous creatures (5)

Across

- 1 Puzzling thing in Elgar's varied music (6)
- 2 Me being next to Nativity witness in Italian shrine town (6)
- 3 Roman poet metamorphosing about the time of Christ (4)
- 5 Arrange cue for saint and pope opposed to Gnostics (8)

- 6 Dutchman's directions for heretical leader (6)
- 7 Handel work about seer following saltire with cross (6)
- 8 Bank income from appeal of Apostle Peter's working gear? (3,8)
- 13 Belt for messenger? (8)
- 15 Directional help in car from above? (6)
- 16 Heavenly body of Holst's work (6)
- 17 Are you an assassin as well? (6)
- 18 Hostility of a lost soul we ended up with (6)
- 21 Cross for life in Christian Khartoum (4)

SUDOKU | Challenging

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

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

Solution to the 23 January puzzle

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

Solution to the 23 January crossword No. 740

Across: 1 Ghent; 4 Pascal; 9 Lucifer; 10 Delft; 11 René; 12 Disciple; 14 Capella; 19 Troaipaion; 20 Dewi; 22 Libel; 23 Holiest; 24 Galaxy; 25 Sisal. Down: 1 Galero; 2 Eocene; 3 Taft; 5 Aedicula; 6 Caliph; 7 Luther; 8 Praise To The; 13 Parallax; 15 Stalag; 16 Pombal; 17 Jewels; 18 Pistil; 21 Albs.