

Canary Wharf Multifaith Chaplaincy

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAPLAINCY
January 2022 Vol 5:1

Editorial

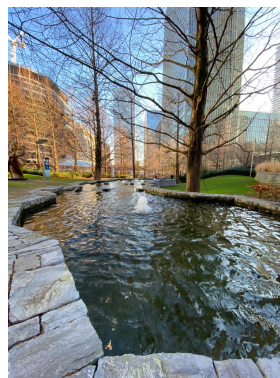
The Chaplaincy team wish you all a happy New Year, although it comes once again with many challenges. We begin the new year, in a similar way to how we ended the last year: with many people continuing to work from home. Nevertheless, many of us, including the chaplains are still physically working on the estate as the roles we play can't be done from home.

We are all longing for an end in sight of the Covid pandemic. Please God, we will hear more positive news very soon. Whilst many of our New Year's resolutions have probably already gone out of the window, we thought this month we would offer a reflection that we hope will give a little encouragement and inspiration in these difficult times.

Revd Prebendary Dr Fiona Stewart- Darling

Images of the Estate

With thanks to our Muslim chaplain, Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra for taking these beautiful pictures of the estate.



January: The Monday Morning of all the Months - Rabbi Dr Moshe Freedman

January can be one of the greyest and most uninspiring of all the months. The warmth and intimacy of the holiday season is now behind us; the excitement of family get-togethers and celebrations are now mere memories. The leftovers are tainted with a certain poignancy as reminders of the happy times we had. While the days are getting longer, there is still a lot of the cold, dark winter to get through before we begin to sense a change in climate – both meteorological and emotional. Unlike the beginning of winter which comprises of the excited anticipation of what the holidays can bring, January has no redeeming features. It is the Monday morning of the rest of the year. Little wonder that many of us feel that our mental health is challenged the most during the month of January.

How can we bring a little warmth and light into our lives and the lives of others during these difficult and dark times? The 17th Century English playwright and politician, Joseph Addison proposed a simple answer: a smile. He wrote, "What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. These are but trifles, to be sure; but scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable." We know instinctively that smiling is a good thing. But rather than merely being a response to happiness and serenity, it can induce positive feelings when we choose to smile.

In 2009, psychologist Richard Wiseman, who is Professor of the Public Understanding of Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire got over 26,000 people to take part in a study about ways of improving our happiness. He showed that simple techniques, including forcing oneself to smile can increase a person's sense of well-being. And if it works for us, it can also work when we smile to greet other people. The First Century Jewish sages, Shammai wrote that we should always receive other people "with a cheerful face". Shammai knew that what the 20th Century American stand-up comedian, George Carlin knew inherently when he once commented that "everyone smiles in the same language".

Emotions are infectious. Even without intending it, when our mood is low, we tend to make others feel low. When we show our anxiety, we make other anxious. But this can work both ways. American author H. Jackson Brown Jr. whose bestselling book *Life's Little Instruction Book* was written to his son Adam, as he left for college. It contains many aphorisms and words of advice, but my all-time favorite is: "Today, give a stranger one of your smiles. It might be the only sunshine he sees all day." Let us all bring sunshine back into our lives and the lives of everyone we meet, and help to spread a little more light and a little more happiness everywhere we go.



Holocaust Memorial Day is the UK's national commemoration day dedicated to the remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust, including the six million Jews, of which 1.5 million were children who were murdered under Nazi persecution. In addition to targeting Jews, the Nazis targeted anyone they believed threatened their ideal of a 'pure Aryan race', including Roma and Sinti people, disabled people, gay people, political opponents and others. The day also commemorates the genocides which followed the Holocaust in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

While commemorating the past we must look ahead to a future world in which all of humankind recognises that each and every other human is created in the image of God. In the words of the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks of blessed memory, in his book *The Dignity of Difference* that, "The test of faith is whether I can make space for difference. Can I recognise God's image in someone who is not in my image, whose language, faith, ideals are different from mine? If I cannot, then I have made God in my image instead of allowing him to remake me in His."

Please visit the Holocaust Memorial Day website at www.hmd.org.uk.



The Chinese New Year will take place on February the 1st and heralds the beginning of the Year of the Water Tiger, which means it's a year made for bold action. The Tiger is known as the king of all beasts in China and ranks 3rd among the animals of the Chinese zodiac after Rat and Ox. People born in 2022, 2010, 1998, 1986, 1974, 1962, 1950, and 1938 were Tigers (in lunar calendar, i.e. from late January or early February).

The tiger represents strength; people born in a year of the Tiger are brave, competitive, unpredictable, confident and have the ability to do everything on a grand scale. They are very charming and well-liked by others. But sometimes they are likely to be impetuous, irritable, and overindulgent. Tigers are also quick to take action, so be prepared in 2022 for situations to change quickly.

Famous Tiger Year people including Queen Elizabeth II, Tom Cruise, Leonardo DiCaprio, Marilyn Monroe, Ludwig van Beethoven and Lady Gaga.

UPCOMING FAITH EVENTS in January and February

January Faith Festivals

Jewish: 17th January - Tu B'Shevat which marks the beginning of the 'new year' for trees.

Universal: 27th January - Holocaust Memorial Day Remembering the millions of people killed in the Holocaust.

February Faith Festivals

Paganism: 1st February - Imbolc Honours the goddess Brigid and marks the return of Spring.

Buddhism: 1st February - Chinese New Year - Year of the Tiger. The most important of the traditional Chinese holidays.

Christianity: 2nd February - Candlemas, which commemorates the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple and the purification of his mother after giving birth.

Shinto: 3rd February - Setsubun. Part of the Spring festival with special ritual to ward off evil.

Hinduism: 5th February - Saraswati Puja. Celebrating the Goddess Saraswati - the goddess of knowledge.

Buddhism: 15th February - Parinirvana. Celebration to mark the final passing of the Buddha (may be celebrated by some on 8th February instead depending on culture).

Buddhism: 16th February - Magha Puja. Takes place on the full moon day commemorating the life of the Buddha. Also known as Sangha Day.

Bahá'í: 24th-27th February - Ayyám-i-Há. Intercalary days.

Islam: 28th February - Isra and Mi'raj. Commemorates the Prophet Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascent into heaven.