

# Canary Wharf Multifaith Chaplaincy

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAPLAINCY  
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## Editorial

Spring has finally arrived, and the Canary Wharf Chaplaincy team are delighted to see that so many employees have returned to the estate. We are also delighted to welcome our newest member, Deacon Wayne O'Reilly who will be our new Catholic Chaplain following Father Vlad's retirement. Wayne has hit the ground running and I am pleased to say that our main piece in the newsletter this month is an interview with him. We wish Father Wayne all the very best in his work at the chaplaincy.

The team has continued to build new relationships with companies moving into the Wharf, both in helping them to understand the support available to them for their employees in terms of pastoral care and how the team of chaplains can act as faith advisers to companies. We always look forward to working with new partners and drawing on our years of experience helping professionals foster a diverse and inclusive workforce.

The chaplaincy work for individual employees also continues, with us offering both online and face-to-face pastoral meetings to all employees. We are here to provide independent and confidential support to all those who work on the Canary Wharf estate who may be experiencing difficulties in their lives. We are a free, face-to-face service where individuals can self-refer and receive a rapid response and offer of a meeting – often within the same day. We are here for everyone. Our primary concern is to help those who come to us navigate through the issues they have, regardless of whether they are part of a faith tradition or not.

We all very much hope to see a bright future ahead as the pandemic restrictions are lifted and life can return to normal. But whatever challenges you may be facing, please remember that we are just a phone call, email, or text message away.

*Rabbi Dr. Moshe Freedman*

## Welcome to Father Wayne O'Reilly!

Welcome to Father Wayne O'Reilly, our new Catholic Chaplain. Wayne spent some time chatting with Moshe about his background and how he sees his role as Catholic Chaplain.



*Tell us a little about yourself. How did you become a Deacon?*

"I'm married with 6 daughters. Most of my early was spent in the business sector. I worked as a manager in Marks and Spencer and I worked for various other companies, but I always felt that there was something missing. I used to serve as a Master of Ceremonies at Church, where I was responsible for all the liturgies and there was one day when I was listening to a homily by the parish Priest that he turned round and says from one of the letters from Timothy, 'Don't be just a hearer of the word, be a doer of the word.' That kind of spoke to me – that God was calling me to do something else.

So, I spoke to my family about becoming a Deacon and they were fully supportive. I then spoke to my Parish Priest and his first words were: 'What's taken you so long?' I asked him why he hadn't said something to me before, and he told me that it was up to me to find my own path. So, I explored it and did my five years of study and then became a Deacon in the Catholic Church."

*What's the best part of being a faith minister?*

"Meeting people from all areas – people with faith, people with no faith, and accompanying them along their journey. Sometimes in faith, and sometimes with issues they have in their life."

*What do you think are the most significant differences between working in a church community and working in chaplaincy?*

"In a chaplaincy you get to meet people in their working environment, in their everyday lives and they bring more issues to you. In church we just meet them for one hour. In the workplace they bring different issues to you and we are meeting them where they are."

*What is the best part of working as part of a multifaith team?*

"Working as part of a multi faith team is new to me, but I have enjoyed the start. I think it's about exploring the similarities between our faiths but also respecting the differences between our faiths and working together towards a common goal."

*What do you see as the biggest challenges for people in the coming year and how do you think the chaplaincy can help them?*

"I think one of the biggest challenges we have is the fallout from the pandemic. People are working out whether they want to come back into the office space or whether they want to continue working from home. I think it's difficult to balance that. We need to allay some of their fears about coming back but recognising the importance of the social interaction within the workplace."

*Tell us something interesting about you that we don't already know!*

"I'm a mad football supporter. I go with my brother most Saturdays to watch QPR. I also used to play semi-professional football for Hounslow. I wasn't quite good enough to make the grade though. I played left-back, and my dad used to joke – 'yeah, left back in the changing room!'"

*Interview conducted by Rabbi Dr. Moshe Freedman*

## April Faith Festivals

### Islam: Ramadan



Muslims will be observing the month of Ramadan this April. The exact date will be determined by the sighting of the crescent moon. All adult and healthy Muslims will be fasting throughout the daylight hours from dawn until sunset, with no food or drink allowed. There are certain exemptions for those who suffer from ill health or are undertaking long and arduous journeys etc.

Muslims will try to increase the time they spend praying and many will endeavour to finish the complete recitation of the Qur'an. It is also a very special family time, and many things will be done collectively, especially the breaking of the fast at sunset. Our April Newsletter will have a more detailed account of Ramadan and look at the opportunities and challenges it presents to Muslims and their colleagues in the workplace.

## April Faith Festivals

### Judaism: Pesach (Passover)



The eight-day Jewish holiday of Pesach (Passover) will be celebrated this year from Friday evening, April 15th until Saturday night, the 23rd of April. The festival commemorates the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. Pesach is observed by avoiding the consumption, benefit, and ownership of leaven products. Jewish people hold a special commemorative gathering and meal called a Seder. This includes drinking four cups of wine which symbolize the four expressions of redemption, eating matzah which is unleavened bread, and bitter

herbs such as lettuce which reminds us of the bitterness of slavery. We also recount the story of the Exodus with familiar songs and traditions.

The Torah explains that after many decades of slavery to the Egyptian pharaohs, during which time the Israelites were subjected to backbreaking labor and unbearable horrors, God saw the people's distress and sent Moses to Pharaoh with a message: "Send forth My people, so that they may serve Me." But despite numerous warnings, Pharaoh refused to heed God's command. God then sent upon Egypt ten devastating plagues, afflicting them and destroying everything from their livestock to their crops.

Pharaoh's resistance was broken, and the Israelites left in such a hurry that the bread they baked as provisions for the way did not have time to rise. Six hundred thousand adult males, plus many more women and children, left Egypt on that day and began the trek to Mount Sinai to receive the Torah and become constituted as the Jewish people. This would begin their forty-year journey to the Promised Land: the Land of Israel.

## April Faith Festivals

### Christianity: Lent, Holy Week and Easter explained



The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and lasts for forty days (not including Sundays). It is a time when Christians reflect and prepare for the celebrations of Easter. Some people fast, eat frugally or give up treats following the example of Jesus, who fasted for forty days in the wilderness. People also give to charity, set aside time to study the Bible and meet with other Christians to reflect on Jesus' life and prepare for the events of Holy Week and Easter.

Holy Week is the name given to the week beginning on Palm Sunday and ending on Easter Sunday.

On Palm Sunday Jesus arrived in Jerusalem to crowds and cheers. His triumphant entry into Jerusalem has been celebrated on the Sunday before Easter since the first centuries of Christianity. Churches have outside processions waving palms and some even have donkeys, so the procession is the acting out of Jesus riding into Jerusalem. Often at this service that follows the reading of the full text from one of the Gospels of the account of Jesus' last week on earth before his death.

Maundy Thursday is the day when we remember Jesus sharing the Last Supper with his disciples before his death. Maundy Thursday gets its name from the Latin word 'mandare' meaning to command. Christians remember Jesus' command: 'Love one another as I have loved you'. At the Last Supper Jesus washed the disciples' feet. Some churches recreate this act of service at special services and events. This is not only an important reminder of the nature of Jesus, who we serve, but also the kind of service we are meant to demonstrate our love for one another.

Good Friday is the day when Christians remember the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. It is a sombre day. Usually, churches meet, pray and reflect on the sacrifice Jesus willingly paid for all our sins. Traditionally hot cross buns were only eaten on this day as the cross on the bun symbolises Jesus' death on the cross.

The Easter Vigil usually takes place late on Holy Saturday (the day before Easter Day). It begins with a symbolic expectant waiting and often around a fire. This is the first service of Easter and is a major celebration of Jesus' resurrection on first Easter morning. Easter bunnies, chicks and easter eggs have very little to do with the Christian festival. Although it is said Easter eggs can represent the stone that was rolled away from the empty tomb revealing that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead. Some churches paint hard boiled eggs and have egg rolling completions.

Different church traditions might celebrate Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week and Easter with slightly different customs but they do not detract from this being the most important part of the churches calendar.

## [CHAT WITH A CHAPLAIN](#)

Just to remind you even if we are not always visible in Canary Wharf, we are still happy to catch up over a coffee either in person or virtually!

## Up Coming Faith Events

### March Faith Festivals

**Bahá'í: 20th - 21st March** - Naw-Rúz End of the Nineteen Day Fast and the beginning of the Baha'í New Year.

**Zoroastrianism: 26th March** - Khordad Sal Celebrating the birth date of Zoroaster.

### April Faith Festivals

**Islam: 2nd April** - Ramadan Starts the most significant month for Muslims. Marks a period of daily fasting from dawn to sunset.

**Shinto: 8th April** - Hanamatsuri Flower festival celebrating the birthday of Shakyamuni, whose teachings form the basis of Buddhism.

**Hinduism 10th April** - Ram Navami Celebrates the founding of the Khalsa, the Brotherhood of the Pure by Guru Gobind Singh.

**Christianity 10th April** - Palm Sunday The first day of Holy Week, commemorating Jesus' triumphal arrival in Jerusalem before his arrest and death.

**Jainsim: 14th April** - Mahavir Jayanti Celebrates the birth of Lord Mahavira, the last Tirthankara (saviour).

**Sikhism: 14th April** - Vaisakhi Marks the creation of Sikhism and the ordination of the Khalsa.

**Sikhism: 14th April** - Guru Nanak Gururab Celebrates the birth of the first Sikh guru.

**Christianity: 14th April** - Maundy Thursday Commemorates the Last Supper.

**Christianity: 14th April** - Good Friday Commemorates the death of Jesus by crucifixion.

**Judaism: 16th - 23rd April** - Passover Celebrates the Exodus, the freedom from slavery of the Children of Israel from ancient Egypt that followed the Ten Plagues.

**Hinduism: 16th April** - Hanuman Jayanti Celebrated to commemorate the birth of Hanuman.

**Christianity: 17th April** - Easter Day Christians celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. The Easter season lasts for 50 days to Pentecost.

**Bahá'í: 20th April - 1st May** - Feast of Ridván Start of festival commemorating the commencement of Bahá'u'lláh's prophethood.

**Christianity: 23rd April** - St George's Day Commemorates the patron Saint of England.

**Christianity: 24th April** - Easter Day (Orthodox Christianity) Based on the Julian calendar.

**Judaism: 28th April** - Yom HaShoah Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, serves as a day of remembrance for those who perished in the Shoah (Holocaust).

**Islam: 28th April** - Laylat al-Qadr Marks the night in which the Qur'an was first revealed.

**Bahá'í: 28th April** - Ninth Day of Ridván Day when Bahá'u'lláh's family joined him at the Najibiyyih Garden, Baghdad.

### May Faith Festivals

**Paganism: 1st May** Beltan Celebration of fertility marking the beginning of Summer.

**Bahá'í: 1st May** Twelfth Day of Ridvan Close of the festival.

**Islam: 2nd May** Eid al-Fitr After the end of Ramadan with an additional morning congregational prayer in the mosque.

**Hinduism: 3rd May** Akshaya Tertiya An auspicious day for the Hindu.

**Buddhism: 15th May** Wesak Celebration of Buddha's enlightenment.

**Paganism: 20th May** Spring Equinox Celebration of Spring.

**Bahá'í: 23rd - 24th May** Declaration of the Báb Celebrates the Báb's declaration of his mission as the messenger of God.

**Christianity: 26th May** Ascension Day Marks the ascension of Jesus Christ to Heaven after he rose from the dead on Easter Sunday.

**Bahá'í: 29th May** Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh Commemorates the death of Bahá'u'lláh.