

Built to last



Heather Smith *reflects on* 1 Peter 2:2-10

What do stones mean to you? The psychologist Carl Jung did extensive work on symbols and their meanings. Stones of all sizes and many types are a major feature of our planet and humans have relied on them for tools, constructing houses and many other things. It isn't surprising that Jung found that human societies have given meaning to such an important commodity. In *Man and His Symbols* he said, "Men have collected stones since the beginning of time and have apparently assumed that certain ones were the containers of the spirit of the life-force with all its mystery." Perhaps stones were given this significance in many societies because they are permanent features which do not decay. They were thought to be ideal for holding the life-force.

Peter's references to "living stones" are metaphorical, but the idea of Christ as the living cornerstone and Christians as living stones built into a spiritual house resonates with Jung's

idea. We are not built into mud houses that could be washed away, but into something strong and long-lasting, suitable for containing a royal priesthood that will stand throughout all time.

All around us, buildings hold the spiritual, the domestic, the world of work, justice, culture and recreation. As living stones, there is much to be built, encompassing all these aspects of human life and drawing them into the spiritual building that God is constructing. The cornerstone, the strength of the whole building, is Christ. 😊

God, who sustains all life, make us living stones. May we bring holiness and righteousness to each aspect of our lives, encompassing them within the house that you are building. Amen.

Being a good godparent

by Caroline Hodgson

Like so many things with Christian origins (Christmas, Easter, marriage), it's all too easy to go through the motions of baptism without really engaging with its significance. So why not use this as an opportunity to reconnect with your own faith? You could

keep a "faith diary", recording your thoughts, prayers, inspirations and doubts. It doesn't have to be heavy or take a long time. Pray, think and write about the promises you make at the Christening ceremony. (A priest will lend you a copy of the Rite of Baptism, or you can find it online.) Ask yourself: What does it mean to "renounce the deceit and corruption of evil"? Is there anything you need to do before you can commit to "repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour"? God loves an enquiring mind, and you will have something meaningful to hand on to your godchild. 😊

“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”

C. S. Lewis (1898-1963), writer and theologian

Gregory Dix – priest, monk, scholar

by Julian Smith

Gregory Dix (1901-1952) was a monk and priest of the Anglican Benedictine community at Nashdom Abbey, a scholar and an author. Dix is best known for his book *The Shape of the Liturgy*, which was published in 1945 and ensured his place as one of the most influential figures of twentieth-century Anglicanism.

It has been an inspiration for generations of clergy and has had a profound influence on liturgical revision throughout the Anglican Communion. Although Dix's work has sometimes attracted criticism and his conclusions are at times suspect, the book remains authoritative for the study and practice of worship today.

Our commemoration of Dom Gregory on Tuesday reminds us that we are the priestly people of God and our identity is best expressed when we gather for worship. We are the body of Christ and, like him, are called to be broken to feed a spiritually hungry and desperate world. 😊