

2004 - A year of Celebration and Mission

Rochester Diary of Events

January

Thursday 1

An Audience with Jonathan Veira, international virtuoso. A favourite BBC singer, at home with pop and classics, Jonathan will present a one-man show. (Christ Church, Luton - 7.30 pm) Tickets £5.00 - contact Carol Smedley on 01795 872894

Sunday 11 Epiphany 1

Inaugural Liturgy (Rochester Cathedral - 10.30 am)

Tuesday 27 Holocaust Memorial Day

Commemorating Victims of Genocide (Rochester Cathedral - 8.00 pm)

February

Sunday 8

Great Organ Works Recital (Rochester Cathedral - 4.30 pm)

Friday-Sunday 13-15

Friends of Cathedral Music National Gathering Weekend in Rochester

Saturday 14

Past/Present Boy/Girl Choristers Concert (Rochester Cathedral - 7.30 pm)

Tuesday 24

Lenten Lecture 1- "Mission from the Margins I" by the Bishop of Tonbridge (Rochester Cathedral - 8.00 pm)



25 January - The Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then on his way to Damascus Saul had a vision

of Christ that stopped him, literally, in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah he had longed for.

Saul changed overnight. He took a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ. He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote many epistles to the young churches he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: he was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in AD 64, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many millions of people down the centuries.