



Paintings by Paul Forsey at

# **The Crypt Chapel**

**Lambeth Palace, London**

# An introduction

Some years ago, I was challenged by the Director of Education at the Diocese of Oxford, to produce a series of Advent paintings. The purpose was to offer an interpretation of biblical events through the traditional medium of painting from someone experienced in visual communications, but learning about these events for the first time; then share them with young people new to these stories, too.

I had been experimenting with Old Testament themes and was particularly interested in illuminated manuscripts, with their hierarchical perspectives and direct storytelling style. I toured the Diocese speaking of my discoveries. It went well.

Subsequently, a more far-reaching project was commissioned involving many significant moments from the life of Christ. The aim was the same – a fresh look at some enduring themes.

As playwright Alan Bennett suggests in *The History Boys*, “if knowledge is like pass-the-parcel, most of the time we are simply passing it on; but every so often we are lucky enough to get the chance to open a layer and see what is inside”. For me, this was that chance.

With the support of the Diocese of Oxford, I was able to work full-time on this project for over two years, and during this period produced some 24 finished paintings in gouache and watercolour on paper, 12 of which are here today.

Since then, there have been wonderful opportunities to show these paintings at many significant locations including Douai Abbey, Winchester, Wells and Lincoln Cathedrals and York Minster, as well as in equally sincere but more modest community settings. A book *The life of Jesus through the eyes of an artist* was published, and a composition for orchestra and voice *Step into the Picture* was performed nationwide. Some of the paintings featured in *Thy Kingdom Come* at Trafalgar Square in 2019, where I also ran a workshop in medieval gold punchwork.

I do hope that in the years since these paintings were created, the joy, brightness and optimism that I strived to quietly imbue into each image is undimmed and still recognisable.

I am so very pleased to be able to share them with you here at Lambeth Palace.

Paul Forsey



## Infancy



1. Annunciation



2. The birth of Jesus



3. Visitors from the East



4. Baptism



5. Fishers of men



6. Calming a storm



7. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem



8. Jesus washes the feet of his disciples

## Ministry

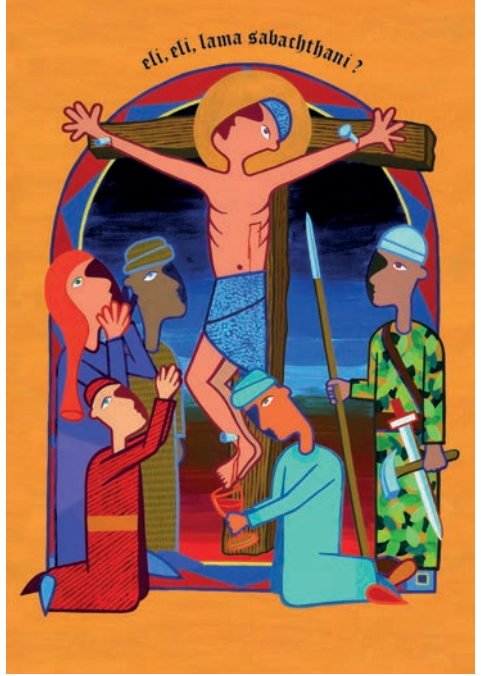
## Passion



## Glory



9. The Lord's supper



10. Jesus dies on a cross



11. Jesus is alive



12. The visit of the Holy Spirit



## About the artist

Paul Forsey is an artist, designer and photographer. His work embraces a range of genres, including landscape, architecture and devotional painting. He has featured in books, exhibitions, on television, radio and other media.

Paul's work is in many private collections including Arthur Andersen Art collection, DFDS, and ten works on paper for the London headquarters of Enterprise Oil, now part of Royal Dutch Shell.

He has been artist in residence at Southern Sinfonia, where his work was an inspiration for *Step into the Picture*, a composition for orchestra and voice, and also at an international music festival during which time he completed designs for a commemorative stained glass window. As creator of The Newbury Mosaic he is credited in Pevsner's *Architectural Guide: Buildings of England*. For this mosaic, Paul is also named as a stop location for *Pokemon Go*, a popular worldwide game for mobile phones.

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There are 24 paintings in this cycle. All are painted in gouache and watercolour on rag paper. Gouache is an intense tempera, soluble with water, with strong colours and almost entirely opaque producing a flat matt finish.