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| |  | | --- | | **82nd Anniversary of the bombing of St Clement Danes Church**    Dear Stephen,  ***THE LAST MAJOR RAID OF THE BLITZ***  The night of 10-11 May 1941 marked the last major raid of the Blitz. It inflicted the highest number of casualties of any single night raid of the London Blitz: 1,436 Londoners killed and over 2,000 others seriously injured.  After the war, the RAF were looking for a central London church to adopt, so negotiations were had with The Diocese of London, and eventually a deal was struck. It was agreed that if the RAF rebuilt St Clement Danes Church to Sir Christopher Wren’s designs, the RAF could have its central church.  A worldwide fundraising campaign was launched in mid 1950s to raise £125,000 to enable the rebuilding. Within months, the generosity of the grateful British public, and those from the allied Commonwealth nations, enabled work to commence.  The church was completed in September 1958 and on the 19th October, The Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II attended the reconsecration service at the elegantly rebuilt church.  2023 marks the 82nd anniversary of the destruction of the church. Under the care of the RAF, St Clement Danes Church still stands proudly on its island on the Strand, the magnificent bells playing “Oranges & Lemons” on the hour. What of the future for St Clement Danes?  82 years on, the church is still suffering the legacy of that fateful night - the intense fire created microscopic fissures in the Portland stone of the Gothic Steeple. Over the years water has seeped into the stone, reached the metalwork holding the masonry together, which has now rusted, expanded and caused major structural damage.  Last year, the RAF launched another worldwide fundraising appeal to dismantle and rebuild the James Gibbs Gothic Steeple and to open and expand the crypt. This will ensure the church can continue to welcome and serve the RAF and local community for generations to come.  Any donation, no matter how small or large will help us ensure the steeple is safe and that we can continue to ring the famous bells of St Clements and will buy us time to raise the main appeal target to restore the steeple stone by stone.  If you are able to help with this emergency appeal, we have launched a special Just Giving page with all the details, please just click this link:  <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/emergency-steeple-appeal-2023?invite=true>  Alternatively please go to our website at the following link and make a donation towards the 1941 Appeal.  <https://stclementdanesraf.org/give/>  Thank you for your help.  Best wishes,   The Support Relations Team. | |

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