

THE WINDRUSH BENEFICE

ALDSWORTH ❖ THE BARRINGTONS ❖ SHERBORNE ❖ WINDRUSH

Church of England – Diocese of Gloucester

This is the
MARCH

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THURSDAY to SUNDAY
of each week

TEN SHORT SERMONS ON
GOSPEL
IMPERATIVES



PRACTICAL
FAITH
FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE

SERVICES THIS MONTH

2 March 2022

Ash Wednesday

7.30 p.m. WINDRUSH

*A special service to mark
the beginning of Lent,
and to pray for peace.*

6 March 2022 *Lent 1*

11 a.m. SHERBORNE

Holy Communion CW

13 March 2022 *Lent 2*

11 a.m. LITTLE BARRINGTON
Benefice Holy Communion BCP

5 p.m. via Zoom

Evening Prayer

20 March 2022 *Lent 3*

11 a.m. ALDSWORTH

Morning Prayer CW

27 March 2022 *Lent 4*

Mothering Sunday

11 a.m. GREAT BARRINGTON
Morning Prayer
& Holy Baptism CW

IN OUR TIMES

Why would you want to go there?" "You're very brave [for which understand 'strange'] to want to go there." When I shared with some people our intention to go, as part of our first visit abroad in some years, to Auschwitz in Poland, the reaction was either one of surprise or sympathy and always, even if unspoken, the question was 'why?'

I wonder, if I had said I was going on a pilgrimage, whether that would have made any difference. After all, pilgrims have always been drawn to sites of suffering; whether of individuals (such as Canterbury, or Bury St Edmunds) or of whole communities (Glencoe in Scotland or Oradour-sur-Glane in France). Last Saturday, as pilgrims, we walked the bleak expanses of Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau, and I was made aware of several things that I had not realised before.

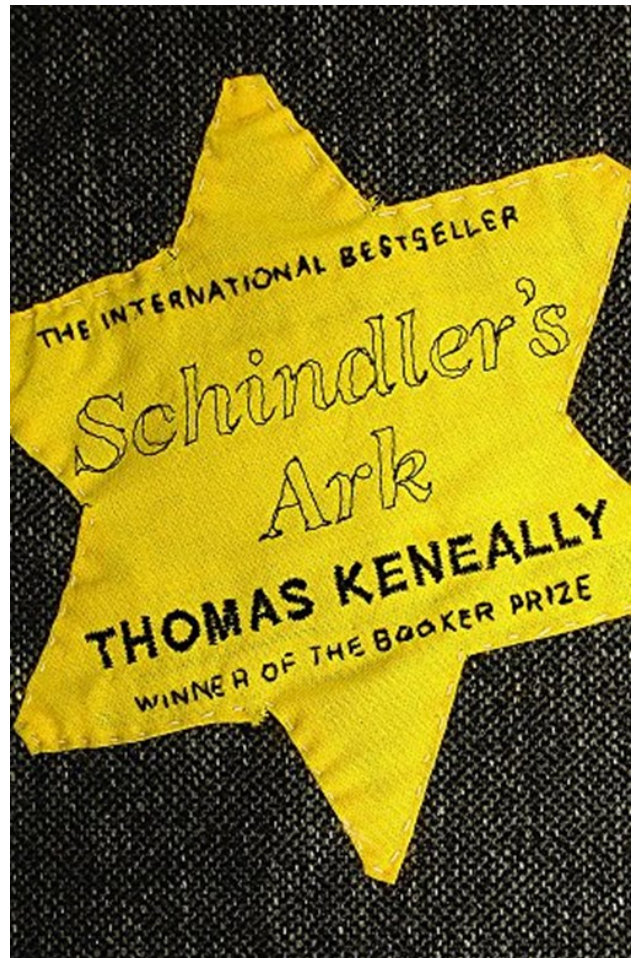
Pope Francis visiting Auschwitz in 2016



First, the **scale and organisational efficiency** of those who were doing the killing. The man in charge at Auschwitz during the war had boasted that he could have killed far more than the 10,000 a day he was achieving in the final months but, he complained, the problem was one of how to dispose of so many bodies.

Second, the **extent of the reach of that evil**. We saw a map of where the victims, mostly though not exclusively Jews, had been taken from. There were lines from Oslo and Rhodes, from Paris and Kyiv. There was no line from the Channel Islands, although we learned later that more than 120 British people were taken from there to concentration camps.

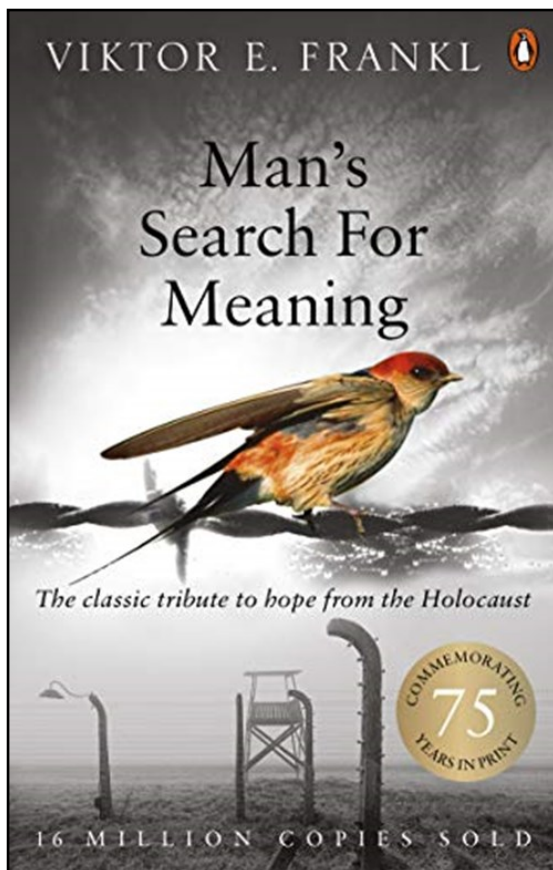
Third, **the difference that small acts of kindness and some acts of courage made**. Last Sunday we visited Oskar Schindler's enamel factory in Krakow, and saw a vivid telling of the years of occupation in that city. How every dignity and then, eventually, the lives were taken from those deemed to be worthless or a threat to the evil ones in charge. Against the terrible scale and extent of the killing, the 1,100 or so who were saved by the courage and choices of that flawed and unsavoury character Schindler, through being part of his factory staff, may have seemed like too little, too late. But certainly not to those people or to their subsequent families.



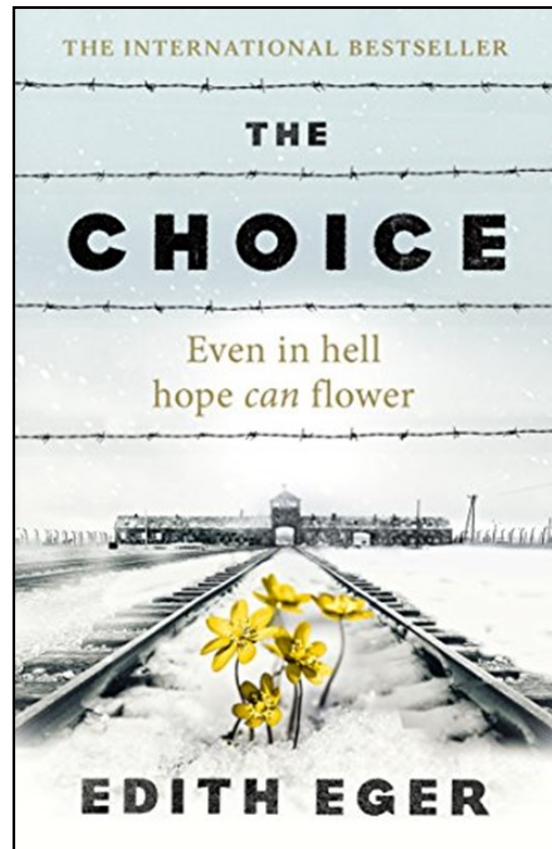
IN OUR TIMES

In 1946, Viktor Frankl published his account of his time in Auschwitz, Dachau and other concentration camps and how it was that, against all the odds, he had survived. His book, translated into English is called *Man's Search for Meaning*. The theme that unites the two parts of the book, the first about his time in the camps, the second of his life and work as a psychologist and psychotherapist afterwards, is the importance of meaning and hope. In so doing, Frankl was in accord with ancient Jewish wisdom which avers,

"Where there is no vision, the people perish"
(Proverbs 29:18).



Frankl's book and later work inspired Edith Eger, who as a sixteen-year-old ballerina was sent to Auschwitz. Today, aged 94, she looks back on a lifetime of therapeutic service to those who, like her, have experienced great evil and have survived. Her recently-published book, *The Choice*, has a similar subtext to that of Frankl's pioneering testimony, which is that '**even in hell hope can flower**'.



As we witness another war beginning in Europe, let us pray for the people of Ukraine and their neighbours, that they will not lose sight of that truth, that meaning which is found through faith, which proclaims that love and hope are stronger than fear, than any amount of suffering — and even than death itself. ❖

PRAYERS

COLLECTS : Lent

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins
of all those who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

For Peace

O GOD, from whom all holy desires,
all good counsels, and all just works do proceed;
Give unto thy servants that peace
which the world cannot give;
that our hearts may be set
to obey thy commandments,
and also that by thee, we,
being defended from the fear of our enemies,
may pass our time in rest and quietness;
through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

FOOTNOTE



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