

In St. Paul's Cathedral

Robert A. Rees

At the annual service of the
most distinguished Order of
St. Michael and St. George

The choir came in
followed by the college of
minor canons,
the prebendaries and
the Bishop of London, who,
as the official program notes,
was supported by the
Dean and Chapter
(The Dean is Dean of the Order).
Next came the Companion
of the Order, followed by
the Knights Commanders,
with Squires carrying Banners,
the Knights Grand Cross,
The Deputy Secretary,
The Gentleman Usher of
the Blue Rod,
The King of Arms,
and a host of regal dignitaries,
including
The Chancellor
(preceded by a Squire carrying his Banner),
The Prelate
(preceded by his Chaplain),

The Dean's Verger,
The Succentor
(The Bishop's Chaplain bearing the Crozier),
The Bishop of London,
supported by the Dean and Chapter,
The Grand Master's Banner,
The Lord Mayor Locum Tenens
Bearing the Pearl Sword,
H. R. H. The Duke of Kent
(Grand Master of the Order),
H. M. The Queen
(Sovereign of the Order),
H. R. H. The Duchess of Kent and,
finally, the Queen's Bodyguard of
The Yeomen of the Guard.

As the procession moved down the nave,
the choir, on reaching Wren's great Dome, sang
All Creatures of Our God and King.

After the Lesson,
read from Philippians by the Grand Master,
the choir again sang
(lift up your voice and
with us sing)

Blessed are the pure in Heart
after which all knelt in prayer:
Lord have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us.

Across the street in the small park,
reflected in black mirrors,
a mother dressed in simple blue
nurses her newborn child.

Beneath an ancient mulberry
the chauffeurs stain the pavement
mauve and purple
where they stand.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!