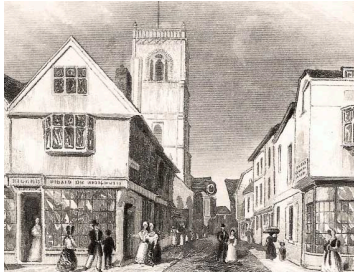


Did You Know? An Anglican Glossary

Tower Bells



The bells we most associate with churches are those that ring from tower or steeple to call the faithful to church, celebrate weddings or other events. Tradition says that St. Paolinus of Nola introduced church bells in 400. Pope Sabinianus sanctioned their use in 604. They became very popular in England. Bells were blessed, like any other article set aside for church use. The ceremony was sometimes referred to as “baptism of the bell.”



Top: A bishop blessing a bell from an old Mss. Below: Tower of St. Lawrence, Ipswich in 1846.

The old children’s rhyme memorializes the bells of six London churches: Clement, Martin, Old Bailey (possibly St Sepulchre-without-Newgate opposite the prison), Shoreditch, Stepney.

St. Lawrence’s, Ipswich, Suffolk has the oldest existing bells in England. Four of them were cast c.1450 and a fifth added c.1480. Sadly the church has reverted to secular use.