

Artist cracks ancient egg yolk painting style

A PART-TIME artist has revived a centuries-old painting technique in an ambitious project for a Basingstoke church.

Newbury-based painter Paul Forsey is using the ancient practice of gilded egg tempera to create 15 panels depicting the final hours of Jesus's life.

The project, called The 15 Stations of the Cross, will go on display in St Bede's Church in Popley Way by Easter 2014.

The egg tempera method uses egg yolk, coloured pigment and water to create paint which is added to 1.4m tall gold-bordered panels.

With only one text published in the 15th century outlining how to use the technique, Paul said it was a hard task learning from scratch.

Using a translation of the Renaissance DIY manual, the 46-year-old spent more than a year

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researching and perfecting the style.

"I have learnt the whole process by trial and error," said Paul. "It was very difficult to get it to a point where I was happy with it."

"Each station shows each part of the story of Jesus's final hours, but there are themes running across all them. There are stories within stories."

To date, he has completed three of the works, each station taking up to three months to complete.

Paul was commissioned to carry out the work by former St Bede's priest Father Vincent Harvey two years ago.

He held a number of workshops with parishioners, who approved

his design, which uses his contemporary style, but pays homage to traditional icon paintings.

St Bede's current parish priest Father Dominic Golding said he was excited about the project.

He said: "Paul's work will bring an added dimension to the imposing space within St Bede's."

"The attention to technical and biblical detail is a testament to the emotive nature of the subject matter and we are looking forward to seeing how this work unfolds."

Paul said that while the project still has a long way to go, he too is looking forward to getting it finished.

He said: "This is a massive task and I realise that there is still a great deal of hard work to be done."

"I am very much looking forward to seeing the whole completed series in the beautiful and fitting surroundings of St Bede's."



• One of the completed stations