

HIGH TIDE

*Parish
Magazine*

*Weymouth
St Paul
with Fleet*

JAN 2024



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*Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of the Parish Magazine
and to Liz Evans for the proofreading.*

*The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 28th January**. Please, send all articles,
information, news you wish to be published by Sunday 21st January.*

Front cover: "St. Bernardino of Siena"
by El Greco (1603); Museo del Prado, Madrid (Spain).

From the Vicar

Dearly Beloved,

I wonder if you know how strong human hair is. The keratinous fibres that make up human hair stretch easily, and can be extended by up to 40% before breaking. Scientific research has found that human hair has a tensile strength of around 200-260 MPa, which is comparable to steel. You could carry a person with 500–1000 human hairs. So the story of Baron Münchhausen (*a delightful little book written in 1785 and made into a film in 1988*) pulling himself and the horse on which he was sitting out of a mire by his own hair is, in theory, possible... Only we know it is not.

As we start 2024, the mind of many of us goes probably to what I consider one of the saddest things: New Year Resolutions! Did you know that research shows that 23% of people quit their resolution by the end of the first week, and 64% by the end of January? By the end of the year only 9% of the people feel more or less successful in keeping their resolutions. What, in my view, is sad about this is not the high percentage of failure but the fact that while we know perfectly well that there is something wrong in our life, often we are unable to change it.

The same is true of spiritual matters. How often we decide to be more faithful in prayer, more persevering in good deeds, to read the Bible finally, to come to church more often... so we can advance in our faith and Christian life. And yet, are we not often exactly in the same place, spiritually at least, where we were the year before and the year before that? I believe very often the reason why we fail is that, like Baron Münchhausen, we try to pull ourselves out by our own hair: relying, that is, on our own efforts, wit, and willpower.

Every year starts with the Feasts of Circumcision and of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. The first drop of Divine Blood is shed for us and the first radiance of the Holy Name shines on us right at the beginning of the year. Our power, our only chance for any real change and advancement in spiritual life (and in things temporal as well if they are profitable to our salvation) are in the Blood (=Sacraments) and Name (=personal relationship through prayer) of the Lord Jesus. Let us invoke them on ourselves, each one of us personally, and let us ~~promise, resolve...~~ humbly ask him to effectuate with his grace that change in us which is needed for our salvation, inviting us, day after day, into prayer and to his Sacraments. If this we ask, he will grant it because that was his promise. His New Year Resolution, so to say. Only that, unlike us, he, the Faithful One, always keeps his promises. So much he loves us.

Assuring you of my prayers, I am,
ever yours in Christ,

Fr. Gregory

What do you get for an £88k parish share?

by a Churchwarden (not from St. Paul's or Fleet!)

I am cheesed off. The bill for our parish share has just come in. It's £88,000. I suppose, if we were a big London church, that might not seem such a huge amount. But we're not. We are the biggest church in our benefice (in terms of congregation), and it is true that numbers go up substantially over Christmas and Easter. The average attendance for the main service on Sundays, however, is about 80 — each of whom is now expected to fork out £1100 a year for the privilege of worshipping with us.

A holy priest whom I used to visit liked gin. I asked him whether he gave it up for Lent, and he said that he didn't. He said that he had tried, but he had spent the whole of Lent thinking about gin — which rather defeated the object of the exercise. I am a churchwarden, and it would be good to be able to think about something other than money — a far more spiritually toxic substance than gin.

But it's always Lent these days for churchwardens. When I have complained about the gigantic sums exacted from our church to anyone with any connection to the diocese, I am taken aside and spoken to as if I were a prefect complaining about the food at school meals. “Irresponsible”; “Think of others”; “Large outgoings”; etc. Well, there are five other churches in our benefice which are expected to pay a parish share, and the most that any of them is required to pay is £18,000.

Especially frowned upon is the question “What do we get in return?” “You get your Vicar” is the answer. And the answer contains a veiled threat: “And if you don't pay up, you'll lose him.” And they are not joking: a large parish in the neighbouring benefice fell short of its dues and lost its last vicar. Now, hardly anyone worships there (to the irritation of the diocese).

We certainly could afford to pay for our Vicar: the poor chap doesn't cost anything like £88,000. There is supposed to be one other half-vicar in the benefice, to look after some of the other churches. I would have thought that their parish share would cover half a vicar, at least.

So, what are we getting? Good question. The lead was stolen from our church roof last year. It cost us £80,000 to repair (insurance companies have learned their lesson, and won't insure against theft of lead any more); so we had to raise the money from trusts and grants. Did the diocese offer to help? Certainly not. They are, we are told, stony broke.

Well, I say that, but, looking at their website, they seem able to employ a lot of people doing jobs such as “Hospitality Coordinator” and “Head of

People Services”, whose combined salaries, I should have thought, would cover our parish share.

It’s a mess. The diocese — well, the C of E — doesn’t approve of churches like ours. We’re predominantly elderly, and we’re plugged into



the very heart of the village, which means that our services fulfil a social and therapeutic function, as well as a spiritual one (if such a distinction is valid).

What is our — what’s the word? — ecclesiology? Theology? I don’t know, but we are trad, middle-of-the-road C of E. We are dying faster than we can be replaced, which has potentially catastrophic consequences for our budget (the deceased no longer pay monthly contributions), and, therefore, for our parish share — and, therefore, presumably, serious consequences for the diocese. But younger people are coming — not as many or as fast as we would like; but the many of us who love our church feel that God is at work there, and are confident that he won’t let it wither on the vine.

It always amazes me how contemptuous the Church is of the old. I came to the Church in my thirties, but, by the time I was 50, I realised that I was past my sell-by date, and that the Church was after younger flesh.

It’s a ludicrous obsession, partly because, as with musicians, child prodigies are the exception, and most of us acquire what meagre understanding we have of the workings of the Holy Spirit through practice, age, and experience.

As we approach the end, we become more aware of how much we are in need of spiritual support — bizarrely, a facility not readily on offer in the conventional structures of the Church of England. Older people constitute a huge resource of wisdom and faithfulness, which should be celebrated and valued rather than apologised for and sidelined — because it is our generation that sustains the Church outside cities and in the countryside. If it is God’s will and purpose that rural worship should die out over the next 30 years, he will no doubt applaud the current policies of the Church of England. If, however, God sees in our grey hairs and faltering steps some intimation of a Zechariah-like renaissance, he may call to account those who so wilfully tax us into penury, while ignoring our cries for spiritual guidance, and dismissing the good will and good service that we offer.

(Church Times, 8 Dec 2023)

BLESSING OF A HOME IN EPIPHANY-TIDE

The whole family, or a member of it says: Bless, O Lord, almighty God this home that it be the shelter of health, chastity, self-conquest, humility, goodness, mildness, obedience to your commandments, and thanksgiving to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. May blessing remain for all time upon this dwelling and them that live herein. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. *(Another possible prayer is printed on the following page; or it can be used as a closing prayer.)*

After each prayer the appropriate room is sprinkled with Holy Water. At the entrance: O God, protect our going out and our coming in; let us share the hospitality of this home with all who visit us, that those who enter here may know your love and peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the sitting room: O God, give your blessings to all who share this room, that we may be knit together in companionship, in peace and charity. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the kitchen: O God, you fill the hungry with good things. Send your blessing on us, as we work in this kitchen, and make us ever thankful for our daily bread. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the dining room: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you give us food and drink to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad. Help us to be grateful for all your mercies, and mindful of the needs of others. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the bedrooms: Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, we may rest in his peace. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the garden/on the terrace: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. You formed us in wisdom and love. Refresh us in body and in spirit, and keep us in good health that we might serve you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

They all say together the Lord's Prayer and an appointed person writes the following above the entrance door (or next to it) with the blessed chalk:

20 + C + M + B + 24



Hear us, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal God, and send your holy Angel from heaven to watch over, cherish, protect, be with, and defend all who live in this house. We/I call upon your saints, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, to protect this family and this home from every harm and danger, and we/I place the marks of their holy names over the doors of this home to remain there as a constant reminder to us and to all who enter here that this house is truly a house of the Lord. O God, make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need charity and companionship, narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride, and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling block to anyone but rugged and strong enough to turn back the Tempter's power. O God, make the door of this house the gateway to your eternal Kingdom. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

I CANNOT SAY

from 'THE SERVER' magazine, sent by Jeanne James

I cannot say **Our** if my religion has no room for others and all their needs. I cannot say **Father** if I do not demonstrate this relationship in my daily life.

I cannot say **Who art in Heaven** if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things. I cannot say **Hallowed be thy name** if I, who am called by his name, am not holy.

I cannot say **Thy Kingdom come** if I am unwilling to give up my own sovereignty and accept the righteous reign of God.

I cannot say **Thy will be done** if I am unwilling or resentful of having it in my life. I cannot say **On earth as it is in Heaven** unless I am truly ready to give myself to his service here and now.

I cannot say **Give us this day our daily bread** without expending honest effort for it or by ignoring the genuine needs of my fellow men.

I cannot say **Forgive us our trespasses** as we forgive those who trespass against us if I continue to harbour a grudge against anyone.

I cannot say **Lead us not into temptation** if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted. I cannot say **Deliver us from evil** if I am not prepared to fight in the spiritual realm with the weapon of prayer.

I cannot say **Thine is the Kingdom** if I do not give the King the disciplined obedience of a loyal subject. I cannot say **Thine is the power** if I fear what my neighbours do or say to me. I cannot say **Thine is the glory** if I am seeking my own glory first.

I cannot say **Forever** if I am anxious about each day's events. I cannot say **Amen** unless I honestly say "Cost what it may, this is my prayer".

Interesting facts about the Feast of the Epiphany!

While the hustle and bustle of Christmas ends for many people on 26 December, throughout Christian history Christmas lasts for twelve days – all the way until 6 January. This feast marking the end of Christmas is called “Epiphany.”

In Western Christianity, Epiphany celebrates the revelation that Jesus was the Son of God. It focuses primarily on this revelation to the Three Wise Men, but also in his baptism in the Jordan and at the wedding at Cana. In the Eastern Churches, Theophany – as Epiphany is known there – commemorates the manifestation of Jesus’ divinity at his Baptism.

Ancient Feast — Together with Easter, Epiphany is a very, very early feast, it predates the celebration of Christmas on 25 December. In the early Church, Christians celebrated the coming of Christ on 6 January by commemorating Nativity, Visitation of the Magi, Baptism of Christ and the Wedding of Cana all in one feast. Only in the fourth century Christmas and Epiphany became separate feasts in some dioceses.

Italy: La Befana — La Befana, nowadays a rather unattractively looking old witch, brings sweets and presents to children not on Christmas, but on Epiphany. As the story has it, *la Befana* sheltered the Magi on their way to Bethlehem. After the wise men left, she decided to follow them in search of the baby Jesus. Children in many parts of Latin America, the Philippines, Portugal, and Spain also receive their presents on “Three Kings Day.”

The Irish — call it the Feast of the Epiphany or Little Christmas or Women’s Christmas. On this day, women traditionally rested and celebrated for themselves after all the cooking and hard work of the Christmas holidays. Today, women typically dine at a restaurant or gather in a pub in the evening. They may also receive gifts from family members on this day. Sometimes sprigs of Christmas holly are burnt in the fireplace which have been used as decorations during the preceding twelve days.

Chalking — Epiphany in countries of the former Habsburg Empire, is marked by taking chalk – along with gold, incense and amber – to be blessed at Mass. Back at home people bless their house using the chalk and water blessed in church.

Cakes — In nearly every part of the world, Christians celebrate Epiphany with a Kings Cake (or Twelfth Night Cake): a sweet cake that sometimes contains an object like a figurine or a lone nut. In some locations lucky recipient of this prize either gets special treatment for the day, or they must then hold a party at the close of the traditional Epiphany season on 2 February.

Blessing of Water — To mark the day, Eastern Christians, after fasting, begin celebrations with Divine Liturgy at the church, which includes a blessing of the waters in the baptistry. After the water is blessed, the faithful drink the water, and bring bottles to take some of the blessed water home for physical and spiritual healing. Many parishes hold feasts after Liturgy is over. During the Theophany season, priests also try to visit each home in the parish to bless the house with Holy Water that was blessed at Theophany.

The Russians and their icy waters — In Russia the Epiphany is celebrated on 19 January (due to the differences between the Julian and Gregorian Calendars) and marks the baptism of Jesus. As elsewhere in the Orthodox world, the Russian Church conducts the rite of the Great Blessing of the Waters. Believing that on this day water becomes holy and contains special powers, Russians cut holes in the ice of lakes and rivers, often in the shape of the cross, to bathe in the freezing water. Participants dip themselves three times under the water, honouring the Holy Trinity. The ritual symbolically washes away their sins from the past year and provide a sense of spiritual rebirth. Orthodox priests bless the water and rescuers are on hand to monitor the safety of the swimmers in the ice-cold water.

Water Psalm — In the Assyrian Church, the festive prayers for Epiphany begin with the evening prayer, held at sunset on 5 January. These prayers, however, are preceded by a day-long fasting and abstinence. The night prayer is a long vigil and includes the so-called “Water Psalm.” It contains all the sentences of the psalms that include the word water or its equivalent (rain, river, sea, etc.).

The Best Man of Christ — One of the popular traditions associated with Epiphany, which is common among the Assyrians and members of the Church of the East in Iran, is that of the ‘Best Man of Christ’. Before the service of the Holy Mass, water is placed in a small vessel in which a cross is placed. After the end of the Mass and before partaking of the Eucharist, the priest blesses this water with a special prayer called the prayer of blessing the water. The faithful present donate money to the church, and then a lottery is held between the names of the donors. Whoever wins the lottery becomes the Best-Man of Christ. The Best Man of Christ lifts the cross from the water, dries it and holds it in his hand. The believers present in the church then come to kiss the cross and be blessed by it. Many also bring up small bottles of water (filled before the service), which are also blessed with the vessel and the cross. These they take home with them after the service. The Best Man of Christ gets to keep the cross in his house until the feast of the next year.

More swimming — In Greece, Cyprus and the Greek diaspora throughout the world, the feast is called the Theophany or Phota (colloquial Greek for “Lights”) and customs revolve around the Great Blessing of the Waters. A long procession is formed and follows whatever road leads to a body of water. Leading the procession are the sacred icons, followed by the priests and oftentimes musicians. At the end of the ceremony a cross is thrown into the water and the men of the community jump in the water to retrieve it. Whoever finds the cross in the icy waters is considered blessed for the rest of the year.

Polished shoes — In Spain and some Latin American countries they call it El Día de los Reyes (The Day of the Kings), the day when three Kings - Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar - representing Arabia, the Orient, and Africa, arrived on horse, camel and elephant, bringing respectively gold, incense and myrrh to the baby Jesus. Before going to bed on the eve of 6 January, Spanish children polish their shoes and leave them ready for the Kings’ presents to be put in them. The next morning they will find presents in their shoes, or if they were naughty during the year, coal (usually a lump of hard sugar candy dyed black, called Carbón Dulce). Most towns in Spain arrange colourful parades representing the arrival of the three kings.

Why 6 January? — Scholars furnish various answers. One of them tells us that according to the old Egyptian calendar 6 January was the day of the winter solstice. Some pagans (especially the Egyptians) celebrated on this day the conquest of winter darkness by the invincible god-sun. Others celebrated the appearance and glorification of the god-emperor in a city (especially the Romans). Christians, who acknowledged Christ as “the sun of righteousness” (Malachi 4,2) and the “light of the world” (John 1,9 and 8,12), replaced the worship of the pagan god-sun and the glorification of the god-emperor by the worship of Christ. Later on the new Roman calendar placed the winter solstice on the 25th of December and provided the occasion for another pagan celebration. Christians found the occasion to introduce a new Feast, Christmas, commemorating the birth of Christ, who is Emmanuel, God with us.

It is clear from these rich traditions that Epiphany is truly the most ancient feast of the Church after Easter and it had a huge spiritual and cultural impact on our world. Here at St. Paul’s we will bless water, chalk, gold, incense, and myrrh which - with the exception of gold...sorry... - you are welcome to take home. By doing so, we join Christians of two millennia from all over the world celebrating God’s “entry” into our created world and using created, visible, material goods to invoke on our lives God’s blessing.



Photos: (1) An Orthodox Christian bathes in a blessed lake in January, in Russia. (2) Procession of faithful with icons in front of an Orthodox-Cross-shaped opening carved into the ice on a lake in Russia. A wooden cross is floating on the water and the priest, wearing white vestments, is ready for the blessing. (3) A Greek Catholic bishop blesses the Danube in Budapest, Hungary. In Hungarian, Epiphany is called “Vízkereszt” which literally means “Water-Cross.” (4) Men trying to catch the Cross thrown by an Orthodox priest into the waters over their heads; Greece.

Christmas Day Lunch at St. Paul’s

Pam Winspear writes

On Christmas morning over thirty of us, who would have been alone for Christmas, came along to St. Paul’s and were treated to a free Christmas lunch arranged by Tony Cox and his team of helpers.

We all had a great day with lots of food and good company. Everybody was happy, friendly, and full of the good food.

Thank you Tony and your team for all your hard work.

The Three (?) Kings (?) Magi (?) Wise Men



How about some biblical trivia to start off the New Year? Did you know that if we had only the Gospel of John, we would not know the name of Jesus' Mother? Did you know that if we had only the Gospels of Mark and John, we would have no details at all of Jesus' infancy? And, did you know that if we did not have the Gospel of Matthew, we would not have the Magi story we hear on the Feast of Epiphany?

Who were these gift-bearing kings, these Wise Men of the East? The Wise Men—not yet called kings—make only a single appearance in Holy Scripture. St. Matthew's Gospel (Mt 2,1-12) tells of their arrival in Jerusalem shortly after the birth of Jesus. They have come seeking the newborn King of the Jews because they had seen his star rise in the East. Herod, the current ruler, knows nothing of an upstart princeling but learns that prophecies place him in Bethlehem. Herod directs the Wise Men to search there for the Child and keep him informed. Following their star, the Wise Men find Jesus with his Mother. They worship him and bestow gifts of gold, frankincense, and



myrrh. Warned by an angel, they do not reveal the Child's location to jealous Herod but return secretly to their own land.

In the Bible the Wise Men are *Magoi* in Greek or *Magi* in Latin. We easily recognise the origin of our English word “magician” but actually this word had multiple meanings in Biblical times. A *magus* could be a Zoroastrian priest from Persia, an occultist, a magician, or a charlatan. Because the New Testament Magi study the stars, their mystic wisdom presumably includes astrology. Hence some recent Bible translations call them “astrologers,” a less evocative term than the more traditional “Wise Men.”

Some early Christians equated the Magi with Chaldean star-readers from Babylon, masters of the occult. St. Justin Martyr and Tertullian thought they were Arabians but most early Christians took their Persian origin for granted.

Origen suggested that the Magi were descendants of the pagan prophet Balaam who had predicted that “a star shall rise out of Jacob” (Numbers 24,17). Others linked them to different Old Testament figures including the priest-king Melchizedek (Genesis 14,18-20), the generous Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10), and the faithful Three Young Men in the Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3).

Strangers who worship the new King of Judah and bring gifts fulfil Messianic prophecies. “*The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts; the kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute*” (Psalm 72,10). “*All they from Sheba shall*



come, bearing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praises of the Lord.” (Isaiah 60,6)

Because the Scriptures speak of kings, Tertullian called the Magi kings. Origen specified that they numbered three to match their gifts and their named kingdoms. St. John Chrysostom preached about twelve Wise Men but his interpretation failed to find favour.

St. Irenaeus of Lyons was the first Church Father to equate the Wise Men’s gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh with Christ’s roles as King, God, and Sacrifice. This became the dominant reading, still familiar through the

beautiful Victorian Christmas carol, “*We Three Kings of Orient Are.*” But other interpretations also appeared in which the gifts stand for the virtues of faith, chastity, and purity of heart or else for almsgiving, prayer, and mortification.

The Magi in art

The Adoration of the Magi has been a popular subject for artists since Late Antiquity. The earliest surviving examples are catacomb paintings from the second and third centuries and carvings on stone coffins from the first half of the fourth century. On the coffins, three nearly identical Magi process toward the enthroned Madonna and Child. Their gifts allude to the alms the deceased person had given in his lifetime. Famous mosaics depicting the Magi also appear in the churches of S. Maria Maggiore in Rome (440) and S. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (561). The Magi are represented in exotic



“Eastern” garb, wearing tunics, leggings, and soft peaked caps. They observe imperial Roman court etiquette by presenting their gifts with covered hands or on trays. The gold is often in the form of a royal wreath.

By the tenth century, Western artists are portraying the Wise Men with crowns. Now they stand for the three known continents of the Old World: Europe, Asia, and Africa, and for the three races descended from the sons of Noah.

In later medieval art the Magi lay aside their crowns to interact with the Christ Child and receive his blessing. Their garments become increasingly fantastic and their faces are often modelled on contemporary rulers. By the fourteenth century, the youngest Magus is portrayed as a black African in many Northern European paintings. In subsequent centuries, other racial types joined the trio, including East Indians, Asians, Incas, and Canadian Indians, so that the Wise Men could represent all nations.

The thirteenth century *Golden Legend* gives the Magi’s names in Greek as Apellius, Amerius, and Damascus; in Hebrew as Galgalat, Malgalat, and Serchin; and in Latin as Caspar, Balthasar, and Melchior—the favourite set. There are inconsistencies about which Magus is which but in Germanic lands, Casper (gold) is elderly; Melchior (frankincense) is middle-aged; and Balthasar (myrrh) is young. The gifts are presented in order of age.



The centre of the Magi's cult is Cologne in Germany. The cathedral there boasts a splendid golden shrine holding their relics that has drawn swarms of pilgrims since the 12th century. The Kings' protection is traditionally invoked against travel dangers, plague, fever, and sudden death. Their initials C+M+B form a protective acronym for *Christus mundum benedicat* ("Christ blesses the world"), later changed into *Christus mansionem benedicat* ("Christ blesses [this] house"). Pilgrims started to chalk these letters over their doors to ward off evil.

The alleged remains of the Magi are claimed to have been discovered in the East by St. Helena and brought to Milan in 400, whence they were looted by Frederick Barbarossa in 1162 and given to Cologne. The bones in the shrine are wrapped in genuine purple silk from St. Helena's lifetime.

Thus Scripture and legend have combined to honour the Wise Men of the East as universal symbols of mankind adoring God Incarnate. May these first pilgrims who traveled by the light of a star "guide us to the Perfect Light."

(Originally published in the Catholic Herald newspaper, January 2007)

Images: (1) Mosaic in the Basilica of St. Apollinaris, Ravenna (Italy), 6th century; (2) The Adoration of the Magi by Hieronymus Bosch (1510); (3) The three wise men by Joseph Christian Leyendecker (1900); (4) The Adoration of the Magi, from a book of hours, France (ca. 1480); (5) The Adoration of the Magi by Francesco di Simone da Santacroce (1500-1508)

**Calendar, Service times,
and Prayer Intentions**

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for January 2024

MON	1 st	CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD	9am
TUE	2 nd	THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS	9am
WED	3 rd	<i>Feria</i>	10am
THU	4 th	<i>Feria</i>	6pm
FRI	5 th	Vigil	12pm
SAT	6 th	EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD	10am
SUN	7 th	THE MOST HOLY FAMILY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	8 th	<i>Feria</i>	9am
TUE	9 th	<i>Feria</i>	9am
WED	10 th	<i>Feria</i>	10am
THU	11 th	<i>St. Hyginus Pope, Martyr</i>	6pm
FRI	12 th	Monthly Requiem	12pm
SAT	13 th	BAPTISM OF OUR LORD	9.30am
SUN	14 th	2ND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	15 th	St. Paul the First Hermit	9am
TUE	16 th	St. Marcellus I Pope, Martyr	9am
WED	17 th	St. Anthony Abbot	10am
THU	18 th	<i>St. Prisca, Virgin & Martyr</i>	6pm
FRI	19 th	<i>St. Marius & Companions, Martyrs</i>	12pm
SAT	20 th	SS. Fabian Pope & Sebastian, Martyrs	9.30am
SUN	21 st	CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL AP.	10.30am, 4pm
MON	22 nd	SS. Vincent Deacon & Anastasius, Mart.	9am
TUE	23 rd	St. Raymund of Penafort	9am
WED	24 th	St. Timothy Bishop, Martyr	10am
THU	25 th	CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL AP.	6pm
FRI	26 th	St. Polycarp Bishop, Martyr (<i>Anointing</i>)	12pm
SAT	27 th	St. John Chrysostom, Bishop	9.30am
SUN	28 th	SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY	10.30am
MON	29 th	St. Francis of Sales Bishop, Doctor	9am
TUE	30 th	King Charles the Martyr	9am
WED	31 st	St. John Bosco	10am

Daily Intentions



Anniversaries of death

We pray for...

- 1st Our Parish - *Harriet & Edward Davison, Earin Dean, Hilda Everett, Ron Samways*
2nd Our Parish - *Maug Wignall, Janet Formosa, Peter Moss pr.*
3rd Chapter of St. Aldhelm - *Howard Butler, Thomas Sefton pr, Roger Keat pr.,*
4th Priests & vocations - *Phyllis Bruford* *3 Jan: Dora Burgess*
5th Dying - *Arthur Stonton pr, Edie Bowring, Glyn Price pr.*
6th Our Parish - *Fred Parsonage, Fred Palmer, John Bentley, Henrietta Cooper, Paul Sylvester*

7th Our Parish - *Ernest Cooper, Edna Humm, Barbara Smith*
8th Beechcroft - *Ivy Waight, Sheila Colwell*
9th Peace in Ukraine
10th Peace in Gaza, Israel, & Palestine - *Rbeta Mogasha*
11th Victims of human trafficking - *Sylvia Toop, Frank Harvey, Nora Hooper*
12th Departed - *Irene Heasman, Bob Wray, Celia Hoskins*
13th Cell of O.L.W. - *Brian Humm, John Buffrey pr.*

14th Our Parish - *Jack Biles, Mary Buxton, John Pryer*
15th The elderly & lonely - *David Green pr, Norman Print pr., Helen Galling*
16th Westham - *Frank Uphill*
17th Religious vocations - *Frank Anderson, Cyril Hicks, Patrick Weavis, Alun Taylor,*
18th Bishop Stephen of Salisbury *17 Jan: Ross Staddon, Mary Jackson*
19th Persons with eating disorders - *Martin Gibbs pr., Brian Day*
20th Shrine of Walsingham - *Doris Lansdowne*

21st Our Parish - *Reginald Uphill, Leonard Toop*
22nd Persecuted Christians - *Doris Moore*
23rd Addicts
24th Unity of the Holy Church - *John Tute pr.*
25th Our Parish - *Lucy Hussey, Iris Fitt, Kit Jackson, Brenda Chedzoy, Monica Tarrier*
26th Sick - *Sybil Bridge, Reginald Gentle, Ivy White*
27th Rosary Group

28th Our Parish - *Brian Groves*
29th Bishop Paul of Oswestry - *John Jones*
30th HM The King
31st Young people - *Alice Wray, Olly Denman, Eric Goddard, Scott Tolman*

If there are names missing from the list or you want to add names, please, talk to the Vicar.

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless thy holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding and kindle my affections; that I may worthily, attentively, and devoutly recite this Morning Prayer, and so be meet to be heard before the presence of thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... **R.** Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. O Lord, open my lips. **R.** And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

V. O God, make speed to save me. **R.** O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. **R.** As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

V. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him!

R. O taste and see how sweet is the Lord!

V. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his.

R. O taste and see how sweet is the Lord!

V. The sea is his, for who but he made it; and his hands fashioned the dry land. O come, let us worship and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us! For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

R. O taste and see how sweet is the Lord!

V. Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, on the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, and put me to the test, and they saw my works.

R. O taste and see how sweet is the Lord!

V. For forty years I loathed that generation, and I said: They always err in heart, they have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath: they shall not enter my rest.

R. O taste and see how sweet is the Lord!

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

R. O taste and see how sweet is the Lord!

HYMN

O Jesu, King most wonderful
Thou conqueror renowned,
Thou sweetness most ineffable,
In whom all joys are found!

O Jesu, light of all below,
Thou fount of life and fire,
Surpassing all the joys we know,
And all we can desire:

When once Thou visitest the heart,
Then truth begins to shine;
Then earthly vanities depart;
Then kindles love divine.

May every heart confess thy Name,
And ever thee adore;
And, seeking thee, itself inflame
To seek thee more and more.

Thee may our tongues forever bless;
Thee may we love alone;
And ever in our lives express
The image of thine own. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	Psalm 103	Genesis 17,1-13 Romans 2,17-end	3	127	Ruth 2 Colossians 3,1-11
2	18 v. 1-30	Exodus 3,13-16 Philippians 2,1-11	4	72	Ruth 3 Colossians 3,12-end

5	99	Ruth 4,1-17 Colossians 4	19	27	Genesis 9,1-19 Matthew 25,14-30
6	132	Jeremiah 31,7-14 John 1,29-34	20	122	Genesis 11,1-9 Matthew 25,31-end
7	89 v. 29-34	Sirach 3,2-6 Ephesians 5,21 - 6,4	21	113	Jonah 3,1-5 John 3,16-21
8	29	Genesis 1,1-19 Matthew 21,1-17	22	108	Genesis 11,27-end Matthew 26,1-16
9	122	Genesis 1,20-end Matthew 21,18-32	23	36	Genesis 13 Matthew 26,17-35
10	20	Genesis 2 Matthew 21,33-end	24	46	Genesis 14 Matthew 26,36-46
11	24	Genesis 3 Matthew 21,1-14	25	66	Ezekiel 3,22-end Philippians 3,1-14
12	67	Genesis 4,1-16 Matthew 22,15-33	26	65	Genesis 16 Matthew 26,57-end
13	33	1 Samuel 16,1-3 John 1,29-34	27	68	Genesis 17,1-22 Matthew 27,1-10
14	145 v. 1-12	Isaiah 62,1-5 1 Corinthians 6,1-5	28	71 v. 1-6	Jeremiah 1,4-10 Mark 1,40-end
15	146	Genesis 6 Matthew 24,1-14	29	57	Genesis 18,1-15 Matthew 27,11-26
16	132	Genesis 7 Matthew 24,15-28	30	93	Genesis 18,16-end Matthew 27,27-44
17	81	Genesis 8,1-14 Matthew 24,29-end	31	93	Genesis 19,1-29 Matthew 27,45-56
18	76	Genesis 8,15-end Matthew 25,1-13			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTUS – *One of the following antiphons is used:*

Ant: He gave Himself to deliver His people, and to get Himself an everlasting Name. Alleluia.

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, *
 who has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
 born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets God promised of old *
 to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,
To show mercy to our ancestors, *
 and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: *
 to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
 holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
 for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
 by the forgiveness of all their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
 the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
 and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
 and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, *
 world without end. Amen.

Ant: He gave Himself to deliver His people, and to get Himself an everlasting Name. Alleluia.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (the world), for those in need, and for the dead. Then follows one of the Collects:

O God, you have appointed your Only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and have commanded that His Name should be called Jesus; mercifully grant that we who here on earth worship that most Holy Name may be made glad in heaven by His Presence. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

V. The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life.

R. Amen. V. Let us bless the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. R. Amen.

Morning Prayer ends with the final Antiphon of Our Lady:

Mother of Christ, hear thou thy people's cry - Star of the deep and Portal of the sky! - Mother of Him who thee from nothing made. - Sinking we strive and call to thee for aid: - O, by what joy which Gabriel brought to thee, - Thou Virgin first and last, let us thy mercy see.

V. After childbirth thou didst remain a virgin.

R. Intercede for us, O Mother of God.

V. Let us pray. O God, who, by the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary, hast bestowed upon mankind the reward of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech thee, that we may experience her intercession, through whom we have been made worthy to receive the author of life: our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son.

R. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

V. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

R. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it unto me according to thy word.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt amongst us.

V. Hail Mary... R. Holy Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. Let us pray. We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his Resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. O God, make speed to save me. R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

HYMN

Jesu, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than thy blest Name,
O Saviour of mankind!

O Hope of every contrite heart,
O Joy of all the meek,
To those who fall, how kind thou art!
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah! this
Nor tongue nor pen can show:
The love of Jesus, what it is
None but his loved ones know.

Jesu, our only joy be thou,
As thou our prize wilt be;
Jesu, be thou our glory now,
And through eternity. Amen.

The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:

1	Psalm 115	Deuteronomy 30,1-10 Acts 3,11-16	6	98	Baruch 5 John 2,1-11
2	45	Deuteronomy 30,11-end Acts 3,1-10	7	100	Sirach 3,12-14 Matthew 2,13-15 & 19-23
3	110	Isaiah 60,13-end John 1,43-end	8	45	Amos 1 1 Corinthians 1,1-17
4	85	Isaiah 61 John 2,1-12	9	46	Amos 2 1 Corinthians 1,18-end
5	97	Isaiah 49,1-13 John 4,7-26	10	47	Amos 3 1 Corinthians 2

11	48	Amos 4 1 Corinthians 3	22	138	Hosea 3 & 4 1 Corinthians 9,15-end
12	68	Amos 5,1-17 1 Corinthians 4	23	145	Hosea 5 & 6 1 Corinthians 10,1-13
13	85	Amos 5,18-end 1 Corinthians 5	24	149	Isaiah 49,1-13 Acts 22,3-16
14	96	Isaiah 60,1-6 Hebrews 7,1-10	25	119 v. 41-56	Ecclesiasticus 39,1-10 Colossians 2,1-7
15	71	Amos 6 1 Corinthians 6,1-11	26	67	Hosea 7 1 Corinthians 11,17-end
16	97	Amos 7 1 Corinthians 6,1,12-end	27	72	Hosea 8 1 Corinthians 12,1-11
17	98	Amos 8 1 Corinthians 7,1-14	28	34 v. 1-10	1 Samuel 3 1 Corinthians 14,12-20
18	99	Amos 9 1 Corinthians 7,25-end	29	20	Hosea 9 1 Corinthians 12,12-end
19	73	Hosea 1 1 Corinthians 8	30	19	Hosea 10 1 Corinthians 13
20	61	Hosea 2 1 Corinthians 9,1-14	31	81	Hosea 11 1 Corinthians 14,1-19
21	33 v. 1-12	Jeremiah 3,21-end Titus 2,1-8			

Each reading ends with these words:

V. This is the word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.

MAGNIFICAT

Ant: You shall call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, alleluia.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,+
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;+
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed;+
the Almighty has done great things for me*
and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him,*
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm*
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones*
and lifting up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things*
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,*
to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our ancestors,*
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Ant: You shall call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, alleluia.

V. Let us pray. – *Intercessions* are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (world), for those in need, our Benefactors, and for the dead. Then one of the following Collects is said:

O God, you have appointed your Only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and have commanded that His Name should be called Jesus; mercifully grant that we who here on earth worship that most Holy Name may be made glad in heaven by His Presence. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *R.* Amen.

V. Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

V. Let us bless the Lord. *R.* Thanks be to God.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *R.* Amen.

Optional private prayer to be said after Evening Prayer: To the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, to our Lord Jesus Christ Crucified, to the fruitful Virginity of the most blessed and most glorious Mary, always a Virgin, and to the holiness of all the Saints be ascribed everlasting praise, honour, and glory, by all creatures, and to us be granted the forgiveness of all our sins, world without end. Amen.

Litanies of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

*To be used in times of temptation, in joy, or in sorrow;
and to be meditated upon for an increase of faith, hope, and love.*

Jesus, splendour of the Father.

Jesus, brightness of eternal light.

Jesus, King of glory.

Jesus, sun of justice.

Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary.

Jesus, most amiable.

Jesus, most admirable.

Jesus, the mighty God.

Jesus, Father of the world to come.

Jesus, angel of great counsel.

Jesus, most powerful.

Jesus, most patient.

Jesus, most obedient.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart.

Jesus, lover of chastity.

Jesus, lover of us.

Jesus, God of peace.

Jesus, author of life.

Jesus, zealous lover of souls.

Jesus, our God.

Jesus, our refuge.

Jesus, father of the poor.

Jesus, treasure of the faithful.

Jesus, good Shepherd.

Jesus, true light.

Jesus, eternal wisdom.

Jesus, infinite goodness.

Jesus, our way and our life.

Jesus, joy of Angels.

Jesus, King of the Patriarchs.

Jesus, Master of the Apostles.

Jesus, teacher of the Evangelists.

Jesus, strength of Martyrs.

Jesus, light of Confessors.

Jesus, purity of Virgins.

Jesus, crown of Saints.

Lord Jesus Christ, You have said, 'Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you'; mercifully attend to our supplications, and grant us the grace of Your most divine love, that we have loved You with all our hearts, and in all our words and actions, and never cease to praise You.

*Make us, O Lord, to have a perpetual fear and love of Your holy name, for You never fail to govern those whom You establish in Your love. You, Who live and reign forever and ever.
Amen*

From the Book of Common Prayer

Circumcision: *ALMIGHTY God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man: Grant us the true Circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

The Collect is addressed to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who by adoption and grace is also our Father. Circumcision was the entrance into the covenant of the Law and to receive it implied taking on the whole obligation of the Law. It was the Father's will that his Incarnate Son should submit to that Law. Yet he did not submit to the Law for his own sake, but for ours in order to fulfil in our place our debt to the whole Law of God. And the shedding of the drops of blood at his circumcision point to the greater shedding of his precious blood for us at Calvary, thirty or so years later.

In the light of the Incarnation, Circumcision and Obedience of Christ Jesus, we earnestly pray for an internal gift of grace, the true circumcision of the Spirit. Not the old circumcision of the flesh but "circumcision of the heart, in the spirit" (Romans 2,28-29). That is, we ask for the action of the Holy Spirit upon our spirits that energised by heavenly power we shall be enabled to cut away all sinful desires from our hearts and to put them to death. For it is only when the power of evil desires and habits is dispelled from the soul, that we are able seriously to obey the will of the Lord, our God.

Thus, when spiritually circumcised, we are able to present out bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God (Romans 12,1). Hands, cleansed and ready to work on God's assignments; feet, washed and ready to run his errands of mercy and love; eyes, purified from lust, ready to meditate upon and contemplate God's works and words; ears, cleansed of flattery and enticement, ready to hear the voice of God and the cry of the needy; the tongue, mortified of evil speech and idle words, ready to praise the Lord - in all a living sacrifice!

In conclusion, even as the Litany joins together the Nativity ("made of a woman") and the Circumcision ("made under the law"), so let us celebrate these Events by our faithful use of this Collect to the salvation of our souls and the redemption of our bodies. May it become for us all a resolution to follow in this new year!

The Rev'd Dr Peter Toon (+2009)

STEWED LENTILS – traditional Tuscan recipe

Ingrediens:

- 500 grams of dried lentils
- Half of (brown) onion
- 1-2 carrots
- 1-2 ribs of celery
- sage *or* bay leaves - optional
- 400 g tomato puree (or tomato pulp)
- salt
- pepper
- extra virgin olive oil
- water
- (bacon or sausages)



Wash the lentils well under running water to remove any impurities. Peel the onion and the carrots. Chop finely the carrot, celery and onion. Transfer them to a saucepan with a little olive oil (and either a few sage leaves or one bay leaf if you like the taste) and let them simmer over a low heat, stirring occasionally, until they are soft and well cooked.

(Some people add bacon cubes or whole sausages to the dish at this point but they are not part of the traditional recipe.)

Now add the tomato puree and cook for 3-4 minutes, then add the lentils and some water. Add enough water to cover the lentils. Salt and pepper a little bit, you don't want the lentils to be bland so they need to cook in some salt — but be careful not to over-salt.

Bring everything to the boil, then lower the heat and cook the lentils over medium-low heat for approximately 30 to 40 minutes (check the times indicated on the package) or until the lentils are cooked. During cooking, stir the lentils from time to time and add more water if they start drying out.

Once cooked, the lentils should be soft but “creamy-dry” like a dense stew and not like a soup.

It can be served hot or cold, as a side dish or main course (especially on days of fasting and abstinence, if you left out the bacon and sausage, as lentils are a good source of protein). It is a hearty, healthy dish and can be part of a balanced diet after the Christmas period. Enjoy!

(As for the photo, I couldn't cook this dish in time for the Magazine, so this time the photo comes from the Internet.)

Two quick, (mostly) veggie-based dishes

Dish No. 1 - Ingredients:

- 2 courgettes
- ca. 120 grams of cooked ham (or mortadella)
- ca. 100 grams of mozzarella (or provola or any cheese that melts)
- breadcrumbs
- grated Parmigiano
- olive oil
- salt, pepper
- dried basil or oregano or thyme (optional)

Mix the breadcrumbs and grated Parmigiano in a bowl. In another one mix some olive oil with salt, pepper and (optional) your favourite dry seasoning. Cut (long-wise) into thin slices the courgette and dip them first in the oil and then in the breadcrumb mix. Put a slice of prosciutto and a slice of cheese on each courgette slice, roll them up, fix them with a toothpick. Place them in an baking tray and bake them in the oven or air fryer (at 180C for 20-25 mins). Serve warm. *(This time I didn't cover the courgette slices in breadcrumbs to make it more diet friendly...)*



Dish No. 2 - Ingredients:

- 2-3 fennels
- breadcrumbs
- grated Parmigiano
- olive oil

Cut (long-wise) the fennels into not-too-thin slices (0.5-1cm ca.) and blanch them for a minute or two in boiling water with salt. Dry them. Mix the the breadcrumbs with half of the grated Parmigiano in a bowl. Brush the bottom of a baking tray with olive oil, cover it with the other half of Parmigiano, place the fennel slices on it (they should not be overlapping), sprinkle them with a generous amount of the breadcrumb mix. Bake at 200C for 10-15 mins or until golden brown. Serve warm or cold.



Saint of the month: St. Raymond of Pennafort

23 January

St. Raymond was an evangelist at heart, but he was an educator, lawyer, canonist, organiser, preacher, and penitent by trade. He served the Church in numerous ways throughout his long life.

Raymond was born into a noble family in a small town near Barcelona, Spain. He was well educated and began teaching philosophy at the age of twenty. In his thirties, he obtained a doctorate degree in both civil and canon law, becoming an admired teacher for several years. Raymond's gifts were soon noticed by many people, saints and sinners alike. Among the sinners was the King of Aragon; among the saints were the Bishop of Barcelona and even the pope himself.

In his forties, leaving behind wealth and career, Raymond joined the Dominican Order and began his life as a friar. As a Dominican friar, he gained a reputation for being humble, obedient, and fervent in his devotion and service to others, especially the poor.

He would often ask his superiors to impose upon him some penance so that he could more fully imitate his Lord, Who was humbly obedient even unto death.

Among the many penitents who came to him for Confession, was the king of Aragon. Legend has it that on one occasion, the king took Raymond with him on a journey to the Island of Majorca. Though the king was a good man, he suffered from a weakness of sinning with women. Father Raymond confronted the king who promised to change, but he did not keep his promise. So Raymond decided to leave the Island. The king declared he would punish any ship captain who brought Fr. Raymond back to Barcelona. Putting all his trust in God, Raymond spread his cloak upon the water, tied up one corner of it to a stick for a sail, made the Sign of the Cross, stepped onto the cloak, and sailed along for six hours until he reached Barcelona. This miracle moved the king to true conversion.

In his fifties, Fr. Raymond was summoned to Rome by the Pope and was given the monumental task of organizing the many legal decrees of the Church into a single collection. It took Raymond three years and five volumes to finish the work. It became the basis of the Church's law until 1917 (!).

The pope was so pleased with Fr. Raymond that he appointed him Archbishop but Fr. Raymond started to pray until he became quite sick and could convince the pope to permit him to remain a humble friar and to return home. Once the Pope gave up his plans to make our Saint a bishop, Fr. Raymond regained his good health.

He didn't get to enjoy his peace long, however, because when he was 63 he was elected by his fellow Dominicans to be the Master General (=head) of the whole Order, the successor of Saint Dominic. Raymond worked hard, visited on foot all the Dominicans, reorganised their Rule and managed to put through a provision that a Master General be allowed to resign. When the new rules were accepted, Raymond immediately resigned...

He could finally do what he loved. He preached, evangelized, catechized, and heard confessions. He felt especially called to preach to Jews and Muslims and helped establish schools where his fellow friars could learn Hebrew and Arabic to help them better evangelize these non-Christians. When Fr. Raymond was in his early eighties, he wrote a letter to his Superior General stating that 10,000 Muslims had been converted and baptized through his evangelical efforts.

On his deathbed he was visited by princes, princesses, two kings, and one queen. He prayed and fasted continuously, and miracles were even attributed to his intercession. Finally, in his 100th year, on the Feast of Epiphany, the Good Lord let Raymond retire. He now rests in Heaven while his earthly body lies in the Cathedral of Barcelona, Spain.

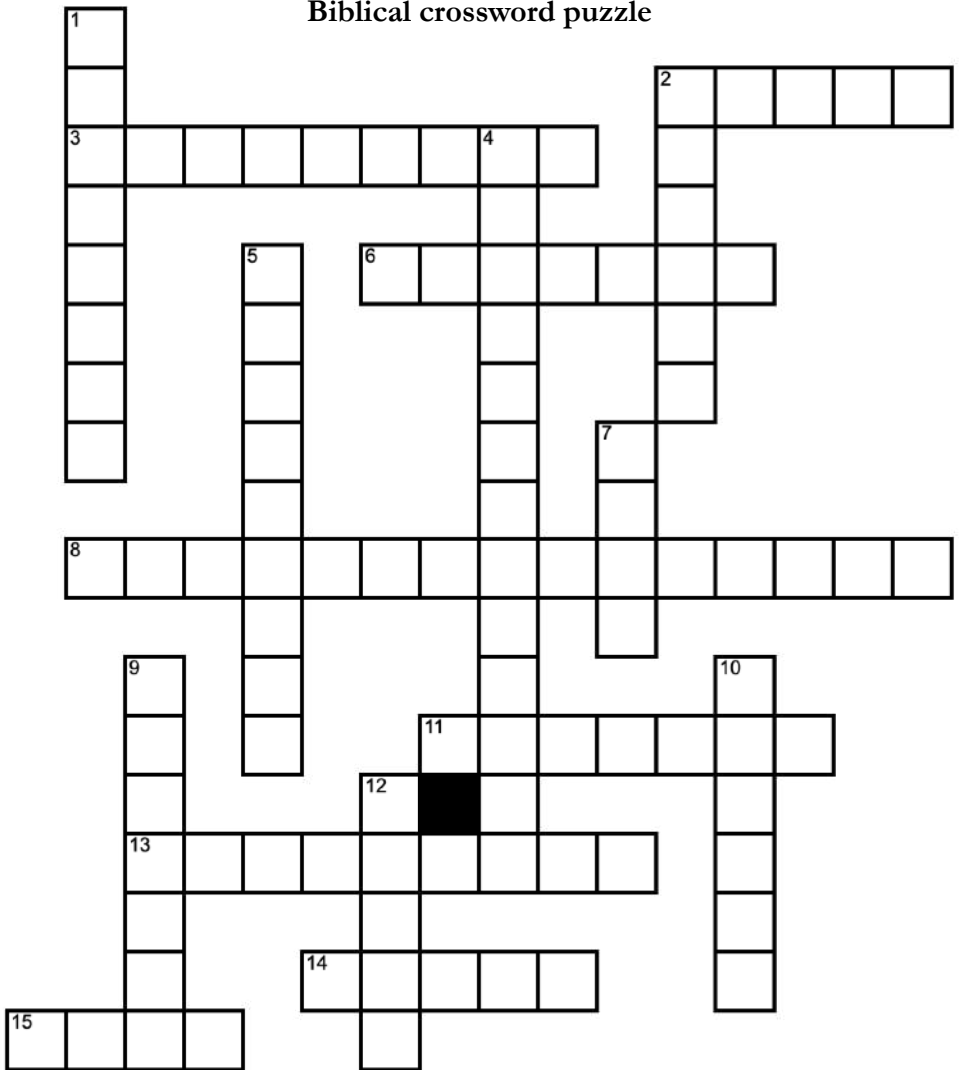
St. Raymond is sometimes pictured skimming across the sea with his cape as both boat and sail. Other images show him as preacher, pointing to Christ. He often also holds a book under his arm, referring to his works on canon law, and his right hand holds a wand and key, symbolising his status as Master



General of the Dominicans. Still other images refer to a miracle: once Raymond interceded with God to let a very recently dead person have a few more moments of life so as to confess and be absolved of his sins.

Saint Raymond, your numerous gifts were noticed by many, but above all you sought not recognition but humility and the salvation of souls. Please pray for me, that I may always place my gifts at the service of God and obey His holy commands with perfection and love. Saint Raymond of Pennafort, pray for me.

Biblical crossword puzzle



Across: (2) Known as the mother of all nations; (3) Most wonderful mother-in-law and daughter-in-law: ... (and) ...; (6) Deborah was called the ... Princess; (8) Moses' birth mother ... and adoptive mother ... (11); Mother to Jacob and Esau; (13) Mother of John the Baptist; (14) Sarai's maid, impregnated by Abram; (15) Photini was known as the Woman at the ... **Down:** (1) Esther was raised by ...; (2) Mother of James and John; (4) First to encounter the risen Christ (2 words); (5) Though wife of another, David seduced her; (7) Timothy's grandmother; (9) Mother to Athaliah; (10); Only woman in Bible who died in childbirth; (12) Baren wife of Abram.

(Answers in next month's magazine.)

Is it in the Bible or not...?

Y/N

See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!	
Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.	
It is more blessed to give than to receive.	
At times I think there are no words but these to tell what's true, and there are no truths outside the gates of Eden.	
But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! 'Let us eat and drink,' you say, 'for tomorrow we die!'	
A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!	
God moves in mysterious ways.	
In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage.	
His judgement cometh and that right soon.	
Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.	
Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.	
Love is a temple, love a higher law.	
I'm here to tell you there's something else: the afterworld. A world of never-ending happiness; you can always see the sun, day or night.	
The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'	
If two men are fighting and the wife of one of them... seizes him by his private parts, you shall cut off her hand. Show her no pity.	
God helps those who help themselves.	
Call me Ishmael.	
A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.	

(Answers in next month's magazine.)

The Most Holy Name of Jesus

(from various sources)

“This is that most holy name longed for by the patriarchs, anxiously awaited, called upon amid cries of suffering, invoked with sighs, implored with tears, given when the fullness of grace arrives” (St. Bernardine of Siena).

The name “Jesus” comes from the Latin form of the Greek “Iesous”, which in turn is the transliteration of the Hebrew “Yeshua” or “Yehoshua” which means “YHWH (God) is salvation.”

The beginnings of the veneration of the Most Holy Name of Jesus date back to the 14th century. It was St. Bernardine of Siena (on the cover of this parish magazine) who in the 15th century spread its veneration.

IHS

St. Bernardine used to carry a wooden placard (still exposed in the cathedral of Volterra in Tuscany) showing the Eucharist surrounded by rays with the monogram “IHS,” an abbreviation of the Name of Jesus in Greek. Later it was interpreted as “*Iesus Hominum Salvator*” which is Latin for “*Jesus, Saviour of men.*”

Spiritual aids

Invoking the holy Name of Jesus with faith brings help in bodily needs, according to the promise of Christ: “*In my name they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover*” (Mark 16,17-18). In the name of Jesus, the Apostles gave healing to the lame (Acts 3,6; 9,34) and life to the dead (Acts 9,40).

It also gives consolation in spiritual trials. The name of Jesus reminds us, sinners, of the prodigal son’s father and of the good Samaritan; it recalls to the just the suffering and death of the innocent Lamb of God. It protects us against Satan and his wiles, for the devil fears the name of Jesus, who has conquered him on the cross.

In the name of Jesus we obtain every blessing and grace for time and eternity, for Christ has said: “*If you ask the Father anything in my name he will give it to you*” (John 16,23).

Let us then invoke with love and affection, devotion and faith the Holy Name of Jesus, especially in times of temptation, spiritual hardship, and physical suffering. Let us use, especially during January, month dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus, his Litanies (*see page 28 for a shorter version*).

God's titles and Names in the Old Testament


(from various sources)

lord, Lord, LORD — In your Bible (especially in older or more traditional versions) you may see three ways of writing the word “lord”. When written with lower-case “l”, the Hebrew word behind it is “*adon*” which simply means “my master” or “my lord”, and indicates a man with authority over others.

When written with capital “L”, it always refers to God only and the Hebrew word behind it is “*adonai*” which is the plural of *adon* and while it is always translated as “Lord”, it literally means “*my lords*”. Hebrew often uses titles in plural to refer to God.

Finally, when the word “lord” is written in all upper-case letters (LORD), the Hebrew behind this word is the very name of God: יהוה (YHWH). As this Name is never pronounced out of reverence and holy fear, it is substituted with the word “LORD”.

God — There are three different words used in the Bible that are translated as God: *el*, *elo'ah*, and *elohiyim*.

 El can be used to indicate false gods too, and it simply means god or God. The origin of this Hebrew word is rather fascinating. Hebrews, like Egyptians, used a pictograph script to write: symbols, that is, rather than letters. The pictographic form of *El* is (reading from right to left!) the head of an ox and a shepherd's staff.

Ancient Hebrews were an agricultural people raising livestock such as oxen, sheep, and goats. The strongest and most valuable of these is the ox. Because of its strength, it was used to pull large loads in wagons as well as to plow the fields. The “letter” then represents the concrete idea of “muscle” and “strength.”

A shepherd always carried his staff. It was a sign of his authority and was used to lead the sheep by pushing or pulling them in the correct direction as well as to fight off predators. Since the yoke is also a staff that is used to direct the oxen, the yoke is seen as a staff on the shoulders (see Isaiah 9,4). The “letter” represents the concrete view of a yoke as well as leadership from the shepherd who leads his flock with the staff.

When the two letters are combined, the word *El* is formed with the meaning of an “ox in the yoke” as well as a “strong authority.” It was common to place two oxen in the yoke when pulling a plow. An older, more

experienced ox was matched with a younger inexperienced one so that the younger would learn the task of plowing from the older. This older “ox in the yoke” is the “strong leader” of the pair and was the ancient Hebrews concrete understanding of “God.” God is Israel’s “strong authority”, he is the “mighty one” but he is also the older ox who teaches his people, the young ox, how to work. God binds himself to his people.

It was by no accident at all that the Hebrews, inspired by Aaron, made a golden calf in the desert (Exodus 32,4-5) rather than any other statue/idol.

The imagery of the ox and shepherd staff were common symbols of strength, leadership and authority in ancient times. Chiefs and kings commonly wore the horns of a bull on their head as a sign of their strength and carried a staff representing their authority over their flock, the kingdom. Both of these symbols have been carried through the centuries to the modern day where kings and queens carry sceptres and wear crowns, and bishops carry croziers and wear horn-shaped mitres. The Hebrew word *qeren*, meaning horn, is the origin of the word “crown.”

Elo'ab - derived from El, stresses even more the meaning “yoke that binds.” This word is usually translated as an “oath” but is also used to indicate God. In Genesis 26,28 we read: “And they said, we see that the LORD is with you and we said please, let there be a binding yoke between us, between us and you and let us make a covenant with you.”

God, the creator of heaven and earth, has bound himself to his covenant people. Through the covenant, God has bound himself to them in order to teach and lead them through life and into truth.

Elohiym - is the plural of *El* and can indicate false gods, can refer to judges but most often is used for God in the Bible like in Genesis 1,1. The English language uses the plural to identify quantity, such as two “trees.” The ancient Hebrew language on the other hand uses the plural to identify quality as well as the quantity. For instance, the Hebrew language can say “two trees” either to indicate two trees or to indicate one tree that is larger or stronger than the other trees.

In Deuteronomy 10,17 we read: “For the LORD (YHWH) your God (*elohiym*), he is God (*elohiym*) of the gods (*elohiym*), and Lord (*adonai*) of lords (*adonai*), the great God (*el*), mighty and awesome.”

On a side note: all this reveals a deeper meaning of Jesus’ words (“*learn from me [...] for my yoke is easy*”) in Matthew 11,28-30 and shows how he declares himself God.

Finally, a few ways how God is called and what it reveals of him:

In Hebrew	literal meaning/usual translation	where
El	mighty one/the most high God	Gen 14,19
Elo'ah	power/God	Deut 32,15
Elohiym	powers/God	Gen 1,1
YHWH	he exists/LORD	Gen 4,1
Ehyeh	I exist/I AM WHO I AM	Ex 3,14
Adonai	lords/the Lord	Gen 18,27
Ehhad	one/one	Zech 14,9
Melekh	king/king	Ps 47,6
Av	father/Father	Is 64,8
Moshi'ah	deliverer/Saviour	Is 45,15
Ru'ahh	wind/Spirit	Gen 1,2
Borey	creator/Creator	Is 40,28
Ba'al	master/Husband	Is 54,5
Kedowosh	holy/The Holy One	Is 54,5
Oseh	maker/Maker	Is 54,5
Qana	jealous/Jelous	Ex 34,14
El Shaddai	mighty breasts/Almighty	Gen 17,1
Adonai YHWH	Adonai of YHWH/Lord GOD	Gen 15,2
YHWH Elohiym	YHWH of Elohiym/LORD God	Gen 2,4
YHWH Yireh	YHWH sees/The LORD will provide	Gen 22,14
YHWH Nisi	YHWH is my standard/(same)	Ex 17,15
YHWH Shalom	YHWH is completeness/The LORD is peace	Jud 6,24
YHWH Tseva'ot	YHWH of the armies/LORD of hosts	1 Sam 1,3
Elohiym Tseva'ot	Elohiym of the armies/God of hosts	Ps 80,7

The Psalms

Psalm 33: In praise of God

Psalm 33 is a festive hymn, originally used in the Temple worship and was accompanied by musical instruments. Most probably the psalm was used especially at the Convent Festival at New Year when, naturally, Jewish people would look back at the past year and, based on their experience of God's presence in their lives, would also look with confidence and hope to the coming year. Even before reading the psalm, we can have a foretaste of it by recalling the hymn "Now thank we all our God".

Psalm 33 can be easily divided into five sections: introduction (*verses 1-5*), God and creation (*6-9*), God and history (*10-12*), God tries the hearts of men (*13-19*), affirmation of faith (*20-22*). It is by pure chance (if there is such a thing!) that we are examining this psalm in the January parish magazine—let us then use it as a prayer at the beginning of 2024.

Verses 1-5 — The psalm starts with a call, three times repeated, to sing God's praises. Then it brings forward the basic faith of the Old Testament, rooted in Israel's daily experience: God's faithfulness. Unlike the false gods of other nations to whose incalculable moods their people were subjected, the God of Israel keeps his promises. People can trust him, he is not a despot. Righteousness and justice are not required only of God's people but God, too, holds himself to them.

And yet, righteousness and justice are not the last or more important words that can be said about God. For above all, there is grace and love. That the God who has proved himself to be the Lord of whole creation pays heed to man at all and takes care of him—of man who would have no claim whatsoever to such care and often even turns his back on God—is the greatest miracle of faith. This is the true source of Israel's hope and joy.

Verses 6-9 — These verses, which reach back to the very beginning of creation, give a vivid image of God. What a God must it be whose breath of mouth suffices to create the immeasurable heavens with its innumerable host; who gathers huge masses of water into oceans and establishes their limits. How much more sublime is the power and majesty of the God of Israel who, unlike the false gods of the Babylonians and Assyrians and other nations, did not have to fight with the elements of universe as he himself created them all! Confronted by this power and majesty, Israel have only one possible answer: the holy fear of God. How powerful ("*he but spoke and it was done!*") and faithful is the Word of God.

Verses 10-12 — After having contemplated nature, David now turns to history which, too, throws into relief God's majestic power. For behind the seemingly chaotic disorder of human history—often a history of conflicts—faith perceives the invisible hand of God and his eternal purpose. The wisest and most powerful nations and kings are brought to nought in the twinkling of an eye when they try to oppose God's eternal decrees. Israel, a small and often divided country, had seen the rise and fall of powerful and rich empires just to learn the lesson: God is the Lord of time and history. Yet another lesson of faith—of a faith which discerns the saving will of God in the torturous paths of human history.

Verses 13-19 — David now turns to examine the responsibilities laid upon men who enter into a relationship with God, Lord of creation and history. If God is Lord of space and time, of creation and history then he has every right to claim man for himself. This claim must be recognised and accepted on a daily level through how man lives, thinks, and behaves. Nothing can remain hidden from the King of heavens who looks down on man whose heart he himself created, not even the most secret thoughts in the innermost recesses of man's heart—and this accounts for the ultimate seriousness of man's responsibility.

However, when man recognises that nothing is hidden from God, he is not moved to obedience only but to confidence as well. The God of commandments is also the God of grace and of presence. He is by the side of those who invoke him and who trust in him. We all need to trust someone or something and the psalm warns us from misplacing our trust by turning to powerful men, riches, allies, etc. Deliverance and salvation only God can grant - even from death.

The godly one knows, through faith, who alone is to be feared and in whom alone he can trust. He knows that God's eyes rest always on him and so he knows that he is safe in God's loving-kindness. He can look forward towards the future without fear and can even face its dangers without being perturbed.

Verses 20-22 — These last verses are both a testimony and supplication of the faithful. From the past and present, David turns towards the future. God has once more manifested his majesty, power, and providence, unshakable foundations of his people's hope, trust, and joy. But only faith can see this manifestation and, consequently, only faith can lead to hope, trust, and joy. Who cannot see or forget God's faithfulness and providence in the past, can never live in hope - in that hope which, as St. Paul will put it in Romans 5,5 - does never disappoint.

Keeping the Vigils

by Peter M. J. Stravinskias

(As here, at St. Paul's, our liturgical life and calendar contain vigils abolished in most places, it is good to remind us of the history and meaning of vigils. We should understand that by keeping them we are not "different" or "strange" but that rather we join a tradition of thousands and thousands of years. Firmly grounded in Judaism, the Church adopted vigil celebrations, as she did in so many aspects of her liturgical life.)

The observance of a "vigil" has its roots in both Roman and Jewish practice. St. Jerome informs us of the Roman tradition in one of his epistles: "The night is divided into four watches of which a single one is reckoned to be a period of three hours" (Epistles 140.8). For Jewish people it is still a living practice: *Shabbat* begins on Friday evening at sunset; indeed, every Jewish feast begins on the preceding night.

Of course, the Gospels tell us that Our Lord Himself spent whole nights in prayer, especially before embarking on important decisions. He also asked His inner group of Peter, James and John to "*watch and pray*" with Him during His agony in the Garden. Sadly, they were not up to the task – as our sorrowful Lord observed: "*The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*" (Mt 26,41).

Firmly grounded in Judaism, the Church adopted vigil celebrations, as she did in so many aspects of her liturgical life: vestments, incense, candles, sacred vessels. Around 112 A.D., the Roman historian, Pliny the Younger, gives evidence of the Church's "night watches," when he writes to the Emperor Trajan that "on a stated day Christians are accustomed to meet before daybreak and to recite a hymn among themselves to Christ, as though he were a god."

We find numerous witnesses to the keeping of vigils from the early Christian writers. For example, Tertullian (+240) speaks of the "the nocturnal gatherings" of believers, as well as their "spending the whole night long at the paschal solemnities". The peripatetic Egeria describes the solemn celebration of vigils in the churches of Jerusalem in the early 380s.

During the third and fourth centuries, it was customary to hold a vigil in three parts, as night-watches in preparation for Holy Mass in the morning of the feast proper; that anticipatory service consisted of readings from Sacred Scripture, the singing of psalms, and homilies, all of which developed into the monastic celebrations, called "vigils" in the Rule of Saint Benedict of that canonical hour later given the name of Matins and now generally called the Office of Readings.

With the passage of time, the vigil took on a penitential aspect. The notion was that true preparation for a great feast should entail at least some degree of self-denial. The psychology underlying the intuition is quite sound. When all we have is one big party, the grand party isn't much at all. Just think of what has become of Advent, which is a kind of four-week vigil in anticipation of Christmas: a month of parties has destroyed any genuine sense of celebration for what should be the "main event."

Pope Leo XIII inherited sixteen "vigils," to which he added a seventeenth – the vigil of the Immaculate Conception. In 1955, Pope Pius XII took the scalpel to the list, reducing it to seven, the same we still have: Ascension, Pentecost, Nativity of John the Baptist, Saints Peter and Paul, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, Nativity of Our Lord, and Epiphany. Needless to say, the "mother of all vigils" is that of Easter.

So much for the history lesson. What does all this have to do with us today?

We need to re-capture the connection between a vigil and a feast, especially the concept that real feasting needs some real fasting, the better to appreciate the event, both spiritually and psychologically. Incessant partying leads to a dead end – at every level of human existence, and likewise in a life of faith. St. John Henry Cardinal Newman, while still an Anglican, taught his congregation:

"In the world feasting comes first and fasting afterwards; men first glut themselves, and then loathe their excesses; they take their fill of good, and then suffer; they are rich that they may be poor; they laugh that they may weep; they rise that they may fall. But in the Church of God it is reversed; the poor shall be rich, the lowly shall be exalted, those that sow in tears shall reap in joy, those that mourn shall be comforted, those that suffer with Christ shall reign with Him; , , , [let us] serve Him with steadfast eyes yet active hands; that we may be truly His in our hearts, as we were made His by Baptism,—as we are made His continually, by the recurring celebration of His purifying Fasts and holy Feasts."

Thus let us proceed in the use of all our privileges, and all will be benefits. Let us not keep festivals without keeping vigils; let us not keep Eastertide without observing Lent; let us not approach the Sunday feast without keeping the Friday abstinence, , , , And lastly, let us beware, on the other hand, of dishonouring and rudely rejecting God's gifts, out of gloominess or sternness; let us beware of fearing without feasting."

Vicar

Fr Gregory Lipovsky - vicar@stpaulsweymouth.org - 07796 963703 - The Vicarage, 58 Abbotsbury Road, Weymouth, DT4 0BJ

The Vicar's day-off is Monday. With enquires about Baptisms, Weddings, Banns, or Funerals, please, contact the Vicar.

Assistant Priests

Fr Tony Ball - tonyball2008@hotmail.co.uk - 07899 027710

Fr James Baker - thevicar@live.com - 07512 591254

St. Paul's	Fleet
<u>Churchwardens</u> Jeanne James jeannejames@uwclub.net 07854 275895 Sharon Waight sharonwaight3@gmail.com 07879 681900	<u>Churchwardens</u> John Coombe john@seabarn.co.uk Anthea Spearing antheasp@googlemail.com
<u>Parish Office</u> 01305 771217 stpweymouth@gmail.com	<u>Parish Office</u> 01305 782757 geofftaylor919@btinternet.com

S.P.O.T.

Pat Perry - 01305 750951 or 0330 0162953

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