

High Tide

Parish Magazine
Weymouth, St. Paul with Fleet



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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 26th February**. Please, send all articles, information, news you wish to be published by Sunday 19th February.*

Front cover image: "Ash Wednesday"; Missal of Eberhard von Greiffenklau (ca. 1430); The Walters Art Museum (Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.)

From the Vicar

Dearly Beloved,

As I am becoming older, so do I increasingly realise what a substantial part my family's history plays in who I am. This is one of the reasons why I have been so passionate about researching my family tree in recent years.

Sometimes the process was surprisingly easy, at other times frustratingly complicated. It was easy to draw the first few little “branches”—I remember most of my grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Unexpectedly easy was to map out the historic part of my family tree: in most places where my ancestors lived there are good church records starting around the end of 17th century. Being good Catholics, Lutherans, or Calvinists, they were all baptised, they all married in church, and were buried by their own pastors which means I could read about their main life events in the historic registers, now all available online.

The most difficult part was to work out the link between those I knew and still remember, like my grandparents, and those whom I never met or at least whom I do not remember even if I met them at a very young age, like my great-grandparents. So I called my mother.

Two and a half hours (!) later not only my missing links were reconstructed but I had been given a vivid image (and some photos I didn't even know existed) of my ancestors through dates, anecdotes, and gossip...

It is not by chance that from the time of the first Christians, the Church is called our Mother. I dearly love this incredibly old fashioned expression: the Holy Mother Church (*Anyaszentegyház* for those who want to learn some Hungarian...). She knows those whom we have never met in person—Christ, Mary, the Saints—and she has all the dates, anecdotes, info, and “holy gossip” to make our image and knowledge of Christ one that is rich in colours and details.

Through her traditions and worship, in her Sacraments, through her faithful explanation of the Scriptures, through the life of her Saints, our Mother, the Church, can bring us close to Christ as no one else can. All the family events and “secrets” have been revealed to her by Christ and she is keen to share them with us. All we need to do is to “call” her which means, just as in the case of my own mother, to *listen* to her with love and patience.

Every parish priest's duty is to give you *our* Mother's “phone number” so she can talk to you about Christ—something I am trying to do through the various activities planned for Lent. It is up to you now to dial her number...

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

Fr. Gregory 3

Various

Our Lenten preparation

While it may seem somewhat early, it is actually the right time to start thinking about our Lenten practice. Lent is not only a preparation for Easter. Lent is the time when we follow in the steps of the Lord Jesus who spent forty days in the desert, praying and fasting.

Septuagesima—the official “introduction” to Lent—starts on 5 February and it is an invitation for each one of us to carefully plan our Lent: in what aspects of our Christian life do we want, with God’s grace, to make some progress this year. Charity, prayer, discipline, faith, Christian knowledge?

As a parish, during Lent we offer the following for you to choose from, alongside any Lenten practice and discipline of your own:

- Stations of the Cross: every Friday at 5pm.
- Lent group: a simple lunch together (soup & bread) and then we will meditate together, through art (mainly paintings), on the Sorrowful Mysteries (The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemani; The Scourging; The Crown of Thorns; The carrying of the Cross; The Crucifixion)
- St. Paul’s calendar contains all the days of traditional fasting (if you want a copy, just talk to the Vicar)
- every weekday Mass will have a short homily
- the Standing Committee will identify a good cause towards which we will have a continuous collection during Lent.

These initiatives cover the traditional Lenten practices of study, charity, prayer, and fasting.

Weekly prayer list

As always, you are very much encouraged to write names (sick, dying, departed) and intentions on the weekly list in church. These are prayed for and mentioned explicitly at every weekday Mass. In addition, on the weekly sheet (available both in church on Sundays and on our website) each member of our Congregation will be “assigned” to a day during the week. In church we will be praying in particular for that person on that day and you are being asked to remember the same person on that very day in your private prayers at home.

Shrove Tuesday

You are invited to our Parish lunch for the Sunday preceding Shrove Tuesday for a “final celebration” before Lent. List on the Noticeboard.

Monthly prayer list

There are empty lists on the Noticeboard for the upcoming months for you to write prayer intentions on it. If you know about a good cause, an urgent need, an important initiative, a group or person who would want our prayers... please, write them on the list and they will be printed in the Calendar of the parish magazine.

Please, note, some days are already assigned to various intentions—for example, on Fridays with Anointing we always pray for the sick; on the first Friday of the month for the dying, etc. Please choose one of the available days.

Finances

It would be extremely hard to ask anyone to increase their donation to St. Paul's in a year of economical hardship. However, our expenses will inevitably be higher: electricity and gas, deanery share, altar wine, candles—everything is more expensive. At the moment, one of our best incomes is from S.P.O.T. Helping as a volunteer (daily, weekly, or even just monthly) is a great and free way to help the parish. Please, consider helping us this way and talk to Pat Perry about it. Thank you.

Funeral wishes

An even more difficult topic than finances are our funeral plans and wishes. Lent may be a good time to write down (or to prayerfully reconsider your existing) plans and wishes for your funeral. While families tend to avoid talking about it, it is actually a great help to those left behind at the time of our death: one important thing less for them to worry about. It is also a consolation for those who mourn to know that the funeral they organised was one you wanted. Finally, please consider asking in your funeral wishes that the final collection is for St. Paul's. We receive very little from funeral fees (most of it goes to the Diocese) and this, again, is a simple way to help our parish. We are aware that there are many good causes and important charities but we also hope that this parish and this church, in your lifetime, have given you a lot.

Glastonbury

This year we want to participate at the traditional Glastonbury Pilgrimage, combining it with a parish picnic. Details will follow in due time but a list to indicate early interest is on the Noticeboard. If our readers who are not from our congregations want to join us, please, email the Vicar.

A prisoner of Christ Jesus

by Father Pál Bolváry

The “Concentration Prison”

One of the entire concentration prison’s commanding personalities was the famous second lieutenant Mihalicska, who conducted the evening “closing ceremony” several times a week.

We had terrible experiences at night. In front of the cell doors, Mihalicska and his henchmen chained the “sabotage workers and rule violators.” At this time, there were two Jesuits among the sufferers: the former principal of my high school, Father Alajos Tüll and Father Vid, the one-time superior of the Budapest monastery.

Both were working in the button factory within the prison. As older men, their task was to sew the buttons onto cardboard. They performed their work in an area on the second floor. A young man who walked on crutches also worked with them. Every day the Jesuit Fathers brought up his lunch, so that he would not have to walk the stairs.

This young man, “a remarkable socialist Stahanovist,” sewed the buttons on the cardboard even during lunchtime. Father Tüll once asked him not to work during his lunch break but to rest. Otherwise, his performance would be taken as the norm, which they, the older ones who worked only eight hours, could not in any way come near to.

The following night both Jesuit fathers were bound in chains because of “sabotage.” They suffered without moans but not their unfortunate companions. They moaned, cried, swore and begged the guards to loosen the chains on their wrists and legs.

There were those who fainted. They revived them with a pail of cold water and took the shackles off their wrists. When they were completely well, they put the chains back on their wrists until the two or four hours were over. Unnoticed, we watched through the small slit of the door and could see those in chains.

Both Father Tüll and Father Vid got sixteen hours in chains. Therefore, for eight days, they had the tightly-closed chains on their wrists and ankles for two hours. Mihalicska even knelt on the chain and pulled it tighter. For some of them, their feet and hands began to swell after fifteen minutes. If there was a well-meaning guard in service, he took pity on those moaning and loosened their chains a little.

In 1941, our high school had had a pre-military training for students. Here we had to learn the name of the chief commander, Stephen Kudriczy. I



had never dreamed that in this life I would see him face-to-face. Now in prison, for months I could see him many times daily. He worked in the kitchen furniture factory of the prison. One day, during his work in the factory he complained about something.

After work, the inmates of the entire section (about 400 men) had to assemble in rows of six in the ground-floor hallway. Corporal Pintér, after having counted those standing there, called for Stephen Kudriczy. Yelling, he asked him, “What was your occupation in civilian life?” The bald head of Kudriczy turned red but he answered like a soldier, “I was a soldier, Lieutenant General!” Suddenly the small corporal, in front of 400 prisoners, gave him two hard slaps on the face. The blood nearly froze in everybody but Kudriczy did not even stagger.

The weather had turned to winter already when I was placed into a cell on the second floor of another section, and was appointed a worker in the button factory. There were already some Jesuit fathers working here: Father Alajos Tüll and Father Elemér Csávossy, who were my principals at one time in Kalocsa. Father Jenő Kovács was my French professor and superior in the minor seminary. Father József Vid was from the Budapest monastery. Some diocesan priests also slaved with us in this hard work.

I was “condemned” to button shining. There was a work bench on which there was a half-yard sized palm-width wheel that made 3,600 rotations per minute; it was sewed together from pieces of rags. I had to sit behind this wheel with a tool similar to a flashlight in my right hand. Its head revolved on a socket of ball-bearings. Into this head we had to turn a hardwood condensation on top of which there was a deepening or groove of the size of the button that had to be shined. There were ten thousand 26-millimeter sized men’s coat buttons that had to be shined in 8 hours. This was the industrial norm. The rag wheel wore out very fast. There was a terrible dust in the room where twenty such wheels were running. At the end of our work, our faces and clothes were filled with textile powder.

In this room, Father Csávossy was one of the cleaners. It was a rule that we had to wear prisoner caps on our heads and if we met a guard, we had to take off the cap and greet him. The good Father, with a pail in each hand and with a broom under one arm, met Corporal Berkes face-on. He could not lift up his cap, but he greeted him only by bending his head. For this, he was immediately asked, “What is your number?” Father Csávossy was

taken for interrogation after work and the following evening Mihalicska put him into chains for two hours for “disrespectful behaviour.”

One Saturday afternoon I was taken for a bath in a group. A monk from my former monastery, Brother Louis, was coming back from the bath in another group. Seeing me from the stairs, he greeted me loudly. One of the guards heard this and asked him whom he greeted. Ten minutes later, he and I both were already in the office of the section.

The section leader was just washing his hands by the faucet and asked me disdainfully whom I had greeted. I told him that I had been greeted. For this, he slapped me in the face with his wet hand. In his office there was a huge printed note on the wall: *“Don’t only watch them but hate them too!”*

In November of 1952, after collecting all our belongings, we had to gather in the hall. We were taken again to Vác in tarpaulin-covered trucks. I was put in a cell with other priests.

After lunch on December 24, 1952, the guard called into the cell that I should collect my belongings. After a few minutes the other cell-mates got the same command. Half an hour later, they opened the door of the cell and we were ordered out into the hall. There were some others there facing the wall. Later we were taken into different empty cells. I did not know what I would come to after this. The time passed very, very slowly.

They gave everyone their “Christmas supper”: sauerkraut and a piece of jam-filled roll. I ate the roll but did not touch the sauerkraut. One of the guards opened the door and asked why I did not eat my supper. “Sir, sergeant, would you have an appetite if you did not know what was going to happen to you in the next hour?” I asked him. Then, smiling, he said only this, “You will be released,” and he put his forefinger on his lips.

I could not believe this. I was walking up and down nervously. An hour later, the section leader, Mocsári, came into the cell and called me to go with him. We went over into another building to the clothes storage. They looked for a long time, but they could not find my clothes. The prisoner caretaker pulled pieces of clothing from different sacks and put them into my hands along with a pair of shoes. Equipped with these, I went back to my cell where I had to dress. A sleeping shirt, underpants and black summer clothes, two elastic-sided boots and a hat was my total wardrobe. Outside, the snow began to fall quietly. A lieutenant in civilian clothes came in. He put the hat on my head and, laughing, he told me that I looked very handsome.

It was already dark outside when we had to gather in the hall again. Mocsári accompanied us, four priests, to the office of the prison’s manager. Here the treasurer gave us some money, then, one by one, we were called into the office of the manager, Major Lehota.

Some reflections on the Old Testament

Connor Hansford writes:



Holy Trinity Brompton in London is the progenitor of the Alpha Course. The vicar was until recently Nicky Gumbel. Google them, it's hard to imagine a church less like ours than Holy Trinity Brompton! When I was a student in Plymouth I attended St Matthias on North Hill, a HT Brompton 'plant'. Not for me, I decided. Now every day I listen to the Bible in One Year, Nicky Gumbel's app, which does exactly what it says on the tin! You get a psalm or extract from the book of Proverbs, a New Testament reading, beginning with Matthew, and an Old Testament reading, beginning, of course, with Genesis, all interspersed with

commentary from Nicky and his wife, Pippa. The idea is that after a year you will have read the whole Bible from start to finish. I am not a theologian or a priest, but I thought I would offer my thoughts on some of what I've learnt so far. At the time of writing, Jacob, son of Isaac, is on the verge of returning to Canaan with his wives and – I lose track of how many children, but there are twelve boys, I know that. Jacob is the son of Isaac who was the son of Abraham who was prepared to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God, knowing God had promised to bless his offspring. A priest told me once that the moral of this story was at the time, stop killing your children! My interpretation is, God has promised to love you and take care of you, trust him, though I see why it might put some people off!

Doubtless many of you are already familiar with Isaac's son Jacob and his elder brother Esau, whom Jacob, with the help of his conniving yet loving mother Rebekah, fleeces out of his inheritance. (Isaac on his deathbed promises to bless Esau if Esau will bring him his favourite meal. Rebekah, overhearing this, tells Jacob to hop to it, covering his hands and neck with goatskin to emulate Esau's hairiness – it's all very strange). Fearing Esau's vengeance, Rebekah urges Isaac to send Jacob to the land of her forebears to find a wife among his own people, as opposed to the Canaanites. Two things

happen along the way which I think are worth mentioning. Jacob, resting ‘in a certain place’, lays his head upon a rock and dreams a dream of time gone by... no wait, that’s Susan Boyle! God shows Jacob a vision of a stairway, or ladder, descending from heaven to Earth; on it are angels travelling up, and down. What a beautiful image. I never realised but this is the origin of Stairway to Heaven and Jacob’s Ladder. Christians and Jews disagree over its significance. I wonder if it’s our guardian angels on their way to work. I love my guardian angel. My partner Blue laughed because when Jacob awakes from his dream ‘he called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.’ How confusing for the people of Luz! God says something interesting, He says, ‘I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.’ I often wonder why God doesn’t speak to us as he did to people like Jacob. Perhaps it’s because His people eventually arrived at the Promised Land, allowing Him to take a back step? I’ll find out later, I guess! Or perhaps he still does, perhaps I don’t listen hard enough.

Soon Jacob arrives at the land of the ‘eastern peoples’ where he finds a well, covered with a large stone. Lying near it are flocks of sheep waiting to be watered, waiting in other words for the stone to be rolled away. I don’t know about you but when I hear of stones being rolled away I immediately think Jesus. ‘When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone away from the well’s mouth and water the sheep. Then they would return the stone to its place over the mouth of the well.’ Thousands of years later, John’s Gospel tells us, ‘Jesus had to go through Samaria. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of



ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. *Jacob's well* was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well.’ It’s the same well! There Jesus meets a Samaritan woman, and he says to her ‘everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.’ Well well well! Not only does Jacob’s Well prefigure Jesus’ death and resurrection (the stone rolling away), but we also see that Jesus is the Good Shepherd who will water his sheep with living water. This synergy, this link, would have been obvious to Jews in Jesus’ time. There is a tendency among Christians today to discount the Old

Testament yet put into this context Jesus' coming is even more extraordinary. He's there, already, at the very beginning! Indeed, even in Genesis, God says to the snake 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.' One day Jesus will conquer the snake, but at a cost. During the school choir service, I called the story of Christmas the greatest ever told. It's easy to see why when it began at the beginning. Jesus appears again in the plains of Mamre, although not by name. Abraham is visited by three angels, and he says, 'my *Lord*,' not 'my *Lords*'. Three-in-one: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Anyway, excuse me, I'm off to find out what happens next...

(Opening image: William Blake's interpretation of Jacob's dream. Second photo: Jacob's Well in 2013.)

St. Wite

Connor Hansford writes:



Did you know there is a patron saint of Dorset? Because I didn't! It is however Saint Wite, though I can't tell you much about her because, well, no-one knows. Some think she was a Welsh princess, others a hermit who tended beacons along Dorset's coast to warn sailors of approaching cliffs, a sort of early lighthouse keeper. Indeed

'Wite' has been translated as 'to guard' or 'to preserve'. What we know for certain is she was born in the ninth century and was 40 when she died. We know this because her bones are interred at the Church of Saint Candida & Holy Cross at Whitchurch Canonicorum, near Bridport. What makes this story so extraordinary is that during the English Reformation, troops under the command of Henry VIII destroyed tens of thousands of religious relics, believing them to be fraudulent and idolatrous. This included the original Our Lady of Walsingham. Only two saints survived this onslaught: one of them was Edward the Confessor, as Henry VIII believed it would be bad luck to desecrate one of his own, and, curiously, Saint Wite. No-one knows why. Perhaps she was hidden, or perhaps Bridport was too far away. Whatever the answer, I wonder if we shouldn't as a church go on pilgrimage to Whitchurch Canonicorum to pay our respects to Saint Wite, the patron saint of Dorset.

The garden in February, & what to do

Anne Mullis writes:

If you have a greenhouse or windowsill, now is a good time to start sowing seeds. Fill a seed tray with compost, pat down, sow seeds on top, cover with compost or vermiculite, water carefully so as not to disturb seeds too much, and wait...

Also a good time to plan what you are going to grow in your garden, buy a gardening magazine for ideas.

Order summer bulbs ready for when warmer weather comes.

I have lots of seed packets from last year that I didn't use (free from a subscription magazine). Please help yourself and grow some flowers.

Don't forget to feed the garden birds, clean the feeders and keep them topped up. Your reward will be watching the birds in your garden .

It's cold, it's dark, it's quiet,
You cannot hear a sound;
Jack Frost is up there dancing
Hard across the ground.

The icy wind is biting;
We're waiting for the spring
When baby roots start shooting
And birds begin to sing.

We huddle deep within the soil
In groups of 9 and 10,
When sunshine warms the earth once more
We'll grow and rise again.

(Below: snowdrops around the ancient Abbey of Walsingham)



153 large fish

Gerald Duke writes:

When occasionally dipping into the Bible, I am struck by the odd reference in a passage that is often simply passed by in any reading. The following curious piece of scripture is found in John's gospel at 21:11 "So Simon Peter got into the boat and hauled the net to the land, full of large fish, 153, and although there were so many, the net was not torn". One such curiosity was the precise number of fish. What was the intended meaning? Was the number simply plucked from the air?

I will come back to the number of fish as there are compelling pointers that John, or whoever the author of this gospel may have been, was using a reference his readers (familiar with Greek philosophy) would have been accustomed to, but taking their understandings to a new place.

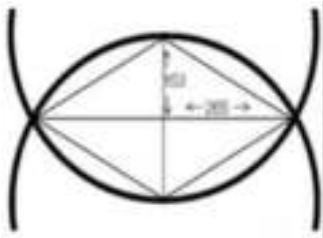
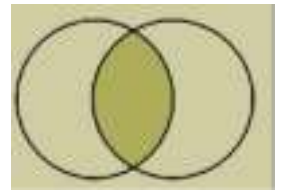


For no particular reason, some 20 years ago I visited the church of St. Mary at Six Penny Handley. Inside, on the north wall is what remains of a 12th century statue referred to as 'Christ in Majesty'. Having previously spent many centuries exposed to the elements outside it is, at first sight, a very worn unimpressive relief carving as you see from the photograph I took at the time. A better example of this statue can be found at the church of St. Sernin in Toulouse, France. See <https://tinyurl.com/4mmcy7jv>

It is the shape outlining the figure of Christ that in iconographic or symbolic terms is so important, not only within the Christian faith but also for much earlier religions and beliefs. This shape is known as the '*Vesica Piscis*'.

I was reminded of this shape recently whilst on holiday in Crete. I was in discussion with an influential Greek feminist discussing the failure of men when compared with the power of Greek goddesses. I wanted to point out that what she was talking about was based on a myth, but instead, I asked her if she knew of the '*Vesica Piscis*'. She did not, so I tried to explain its importance, not only relating to issues of recognition of femininity in religion but also to many other aspects of Christianity, some of which may seem just a little farfetched.

Firstly, what is the ‘*Vesica Piscis*’? Put simply, it is the point where 2 circles overlap. Many will know of this form from the very simple car sticker or lapel badge with 2 rounded lines that appear as a fish. The words translate to fish’s bladder and are also known as the *Mandorla*, meaning almond in Italian. It was used as a sign by early Christians to identify themselves with a quick sketch in the sand with a toe, which for their safety and to avoid prosecution, could be quickly erased.



The symbolism and use of this pattern dates back over 6000 years to ancient Egypt. It was not until Pythagoras (some 500 years before the writing of the gospel) that mathematics was applied. ‘153’ forms a part of the ratio of the triangle found between the two circles, the other number being ‘265’ as shown on the diagram. It is worth noting that Pythagoras met a group of fishermen with a full net and set out to guess the number of fish there might be. Once more the number was said to be 153 which he guessed correctly.

As John’s gospel was written to give the Message to Hellenistic (Greek) Christians, its author would most likely have been aware of the numerical significance of the numbers, and also the philosophical movement of Pythagoreans which was the cult or movement of the sophisticated and wealthy. If 265 is divided by 153 the result is 1.732 which is the square root of 3. The number was described by Aristotle as ‘the number of the fish’. This significance cannot be lost on any Christian. Returning to John 21:11 it is accepted that this story of the 153 fish in the net referred to the 3rd appearance of Jesus after the resurrection.

I am not suggesting the event described may not have occurred. There are many academic theories both ancient and modern as to why the number 153 was used, and what the author of John’s gospel might have meant by its use. My preferred theory is that it was a coded message giving credence to Mary Magdalene. Others might claim the story is simply an invitation to become a “Fisher of Men”? It may be its description was carefully crafted in terms the people it was written for would readily understand. That this must have taken place is impressed on us at 2 Timothy 2-4.

A question that remains takes us back to Six Penny Handley. Where does the issue of femininity arise? The use of the *Mandorla* in Christian art

and architecture was to frame the figure of Christ at his ascension and also to enclose the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalen or other saints as the passage between heaven and earth. It is within this shape that the figure of Christ in Majesty is found. The ‘mystic almond’ was also associated with purity and virginity as the oval is a universal symbol of the Divine Feminine, the *Mandorla* as the birth passage.

The Christ child is often shown inside the *Mandorla*, superimposed over Mary’s womb. Mary herself can be equated with the goddess Aphrodite Marina, who brought forth all the fish in the oceans, Aphrodite Marina’s blue robe and pearl necklace, like Mary’s, are classic symbols of the sea.

The connections are many: the *Vesica Piscis* illumines the common heritage of Christianity and the Goddess traditions it absorbed. The *Vesica Piscis* has been described as “the most stable visual symbol in the history of human beliefs and culture. It denotes divine femininity, the beginning of new life, and unity.” To consider this issue further, a helpful starting point can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/522yrthn> and <https://tinyurl.com/yc73zjr8> and with considerable further academic resource at <https://tinyurl.com/mw6kx5x6>.

Having started with my curiosity of 153 fish and its intended meaning, the question remaining is did John intend such depths of thought and interpretation in his writing?



Founder's Day

Eileen Galling writes:

February 22nd is a very special day for Scouts and Guides. It is the day we celebrate the joint birthdays of our founder, Lord Baden-Powell, and his wife, Olive.

Scouting is the largest youth movement in the world and combines all faiths. This is the last message sent to the Scouts by Lord Baden-Powell:

Dear Scouts,

If you have ever seen the play Peter Pan you will remember how the pirate chief was always making his dying speech because he was afraid that possibly when the time came for him to die he might not have time to get it off his chest. It is much the same with me, and so, although I am not at this moment dying, I shall be doing so one of these days and I want to send you a parting word of goodbye.

Remember, it is the last you will ever hear from me, so think it over. I have had a most happy life and I want each one of you to have as happy a life too. I believe that God put us in this jolly world to be happy and enjoy life.

Happiness doesn't come from being rich, nor merely from being successful in your career, nor by self-indulgence. One step towards happiness is to make yourself healthy and strong while you are a boy, so that you can be useful and so can enjoy life when you are a man.

Nature study will show you how full of beautiful and wonderful things God has made the world for you to enjoy. Be contented with what you have got and make the best of it. Look on the bright side of things instead of the gloomy one.

But the real way to get happiness is by giving out happiness to other people. Try and leave this world a little better than you found it and when your turn comes to die, you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best.

'Be Prepared' in this way, to live happy and to die happy – stick to your Scout promise always – even after you have ceased to be a boy – and God help you to do it.

Your friend,
Baden-Powell

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

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

Calendar for February 2023

WED	1st	St. Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop & Martyr	10am
THU	2nd	PURIFICATION OF OUR LADY	10am, 6pm
FRI	3rd	<i>St. Blaise Bishop & Martyr</i>	12pm
SAT	4th	St. Andrea C. Bishop (<i>burying of Alleluia</i>)	9.30am
SUN	5th	SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	6th	St. Titus Bishop	9am
TUE	7th	St. Romuald Abbot	9am
WED	8th	St. John of Matha	10am
THU	9th	St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop	6pm
FRI	10th	St. Scholastica	12pm
SAT	11th	Apparition of Our Lady at Lourdes	9.30am
SUN	12th	SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	13th	<i>Feria</i>	9am
TUE	14th	<i>St. Valentine Martyr</i>	9am
WED	15th	<i>Sts. Faustinus & Jovita, Martyrs</i>	10am
THU	16th	<i>Feria</i>	6pm
FRI	17th	Monthly Requiem	12pm
SAT	18th	<i>Of Our Lady</i>	9.30am
SUN	19th	QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY	10.30am, 4pm
MON	20th	<i>Feria</i>	9am
TUE	21st	<i>Feria</i>	9am
WED	22nd	ASH WEDNESDAY	10am, 6pm
THU	23rd	St. Peter Damian Bishop	6pm
FRI	24th	ST. MATTHIAS APOSTLE	12pm, 5pm Stations
SAT	25th	<i>Feria</i>	9.30am
SUN	26th	1ST SUNDAY OF LENT	10.30am, 4pm
MON	27th	St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows	9am
TUE	28th	<i>Feria</i>	9am

Daily Intentions



Anniversaries of death

We pray for...

- 1st Persecuted Christians - *Jack Freegard*
- 2nd Our Parish - *May Biles, Neil Pollock pr, Edward Webber, Vera Heller*
- 3rd Dying - *Dot Thorne*
- 4th Shrine of Walsingham

- 5th Our Parish - *Amelia Woods*
- 6th Our Servers - *Doll Rowland*
- 7th Inner peace
- 8th Addicts, alcoholics, gamblers - *Mike Hetherington*
- 9th Priests & vocations - *Leonard Paddock, Pam Groves, Maureen Riggs*
- 10th Peace and reconciliation in our Families
- 11th Our Cell of Walsingham - *Hilda Dix*

- 12th Our Parish. - *Elizabeth Woolveridge*
- 13th Our PCC - *Den Phillips*
- 14th Those getting married - *Thomas Bibby, Win Marshall, Charlie Cooper*
- 15th An increase of our missionary spirit
- 16th Peace in Ukraine - *Joan Hodge, Bob de Quehen, Caroline Stewart*
- 17th Departed - *Ivy Curtis, Steve Warner*
- 18th Holy and fruitful Lent

- 19th Our Parish
- 20th Our Organists & Choir - *Leslie Quehen pr*
- 21st Scouts & Guides
- 22nd Unity of the Church - *Stephen Elliott, William Gentle, Gordon Vincent pr*
- 23rd Grace of true conversion - *Sandra Ryder*
- 24th S.P.O.T., its clients & volunteers - *Mary Adlam*
- 25th Sick

- 26th Our Parish - *Francis Miles*
- 27th Grieving mothers - *Bill Frecker, Jack Williams*
- 28th Our Benefactors (living & departed) - *Toni Adams*

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.

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. Let us come before the presence of the Lord and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

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. Let us make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

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. Let us come before the presence of the Lord and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

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. Let us make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

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. Let us come before the presence of the Lord and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

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. Let us come before the presence of the Lord and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

HYMN

Hail day! whereon the One in Three
First formed the earth by sure decree,
The day its Maker rose again,
And vanquished death, and burst our chain.

Away with sleep and slothful ease
We raise our hearts and bend our knees,
And early seek the Lord of all,
Obedient to the Prophet's call.

O Father of unclouded light!
Keep us this day as in thy sight,
In word and deed that we may be
From ev'ry touch of evil free.

That this our body's mortal frame
May know no sin, and fear no shame,
Nor fire hereafter be the end
Of passions which our bosom rend.

Redeemer of the world, we pray
That thou wouldst wash our sins away,
And give us, of thy boundless grace,
The blessings of the heavenly place.

Most Holy Father, hear our cry,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord most High
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee
Shall live and reign eternally. Amen.

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

1	119 v. 1-32	Hosea 11,1-11 1 Corinthians 14,1-19	2	48, 146	Exodus 13,1-16 Romans 12,1-5
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3	17, 19	Hosea 13,1-14 1 Corinthians 16,1-9	16	56, 57	2 Chronicles 13 John 20,1-10
4	20, 21, 23	Hosea 14 1 Corinthians 16,10-end	17	51, 54	2 Chronicles 14 John 20,11-18
5	5, 6	Jeremiah 26,1-16 Acts 3,1-10	18	68	2 Chronicles 15,1-15 John 20,19-end
6	27, 30	2 Chronicles 2,1-16 John 17,1-5	19	72	Exodus 34,29-end 2 Corinthians 4,3-6
7	32, 36	2 Chronicles 3 John 17,6-19	20	71	Jeremiah 1 John 3,1-21
8	34	2 Chronicles 5 John 17,20-end	21	73	Jeremiah 2,1-13 John 3,22-end
9	37	2 Chronicles 6,1-21 John 18,1-11	22	38	Daniel 9,3-6 & 17-19 1 Timothy 6,6-19
10	31	2 Chronicles 6,22-end John 18,12-27	23	77	Jeremiah 2,14-32 John 4,1-26
11	41, 42	2 Chronicles 7 John 18,28-end	24	3	Jeremiah 3,6-22 John 4,27-42
12	100, 150	Job 38,1-21 Colossians 1,15-20	25	7	Jeremiah 4,1-18 John 4,43-end
13	43	2 Chronicles 9,1-12 John 19,1-16	26	119 v. 1-16	Jeremiah 18,1-11 Luke 18,9-14
14	52	2 Chronicles 10 John 19,17-30	27	10, 11	Jeremiah 4,19-end John 5,1-18
15	119 v. 57-80	2 Chronicles 12 John 19,31-end	28	44	Jeremiah 5,1-19 John 5,19-29

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: The Lord said unto Noah: The end of all flesh is come before Me, make an ark that seed of all flesh may be saved therein.

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: The Lord said unto Noah: The end of all flesh is come before Me, make an ark that seed of all flesh may be saved therein.

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 Lord, we beseech you favourably to hear the prayers of your people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by your goodness, for the glory of your Name. Through 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:

Hail, O Queen of heaven, enthroned! Hail, by Angels Mistress owned!
Root of Jesse, Gate of morn, Whence the world's true Light was born:
Glorious Virgin, joy to thee, Loveliest whom in heaven they see:
Fairest thou, where all are fair, Plead with Christ our sins to spare.

V. Allow me to praise thee, O holy Virgin.

R. Give me strength against thine enemies.

V. Let us pray. Grant, O merciful God, to our weak natures thy protection, that we who commemorate the holy Mother of God may, by the help of her intercession, arise from our iniquities. Through the same Christ our Lord.

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.

HYMN

O blest Creator of the light,
Who mak'st the day with radiance bright,
And o'er the forming world didst call
The light from chaos first of all;

Whose wisdom joined in meet array
The morn and eve, and named them day:
Night comes with all its darkling fears;
Regard thy people's prayers and tears.

Lest, sunk in sin, and whelmed with strife,
They lose the gift of endless life;
While thinking but the thoughts of time,
They weave new chains of woe and crime.

But grant them grace that they may strain
The heavenly gate and prize to gain:
Each harmful lure aside to cast,
And purge away each error past.

O Father, that we ask be done,
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son;
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
Doth live and reign eternally. Amen.

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

1	Psalms 12, 13	Deuteronomy 30,11-end Acts 3,1-16	7	33	Baruch 5 John 2,1-11
2	122, 132	Ruth 1 Colossians 2,8-end	8	119 v. 33-56	Isaiah 61 Titus 3,4-7
3	22	Ruth 2 Colossians 3,1-11	9	39, 40	Joshua 3 Hebrews 1,1-12
4	24, 25	Ruth 3 Colossians 3,12-end	10	35	Genesis 1,1-19 Matthew 21,1-17
5	4	Isaiah 49,1-13 John 4,7-26	11	45	Genesis 1,20-end Matthew 21,18-32
6	26, 28, 29	Genesis 2 Matthew 21,33-end	12	148	Ecclesiastes 3,1-11 1 Peter 1,3-12

13	47, 49	Genesis 3 Matthew 22,1-14	21	102	Genesis 12,1-9 Matthew 26,1-16
14	50	Genesis 4,1-16 Matthew 22,15-33	22	51	Isaiah 49,1-13 Acts 22,3-16
15	59, 60	Genesis 6,1-10 Matthew 22,34-end	23	74	Ecclesiasticus 39,1-10 Colossians 2,1-7
16	61, 62, 64	Ezekiel 2 Galatians 1,11-end	24	31	Genesis 15 Matthew 26,47-56
17	38	Genesis 6,11-end Matthew 24,1-14	25	73	Genesis 16 Matthew 26,57-end
18	65, 66	Genesis 7 Matthew 24,15-28	26	50 v. 1-15	Genesis 17,1-22 Matthew 27,1-10
19	84	Genesis 8,1-14 Matthew 24,29-end	27	14	Genesis 28,10-end Philemon 1-16
20	72, 75	Genesis 8,15-end Matthew 25,1-13	28	46	Genesis 18,1-15 Matthew 27,11-26

Each reading ends with these words:

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

MAGNIFICAT

Ant: Be valiant in battle, fight the ancient serpent and accept the eternal kingdom.

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: Be valiant in battle, fight the ancient serpent and accept the eternal kingdom.

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 Lord, we beseech you favourably to hear the prayers of your people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by your goodness, for the glory of your Name. Through 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 Home advice

Lenten Prayers

O gracious Master, infuse in our hearts the spotless light of Your Divine Wisdom and open the eyes of our mind that we may understand the teachings of Your Gospel. Instil in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, so that having curbed all carnal desires, we may lead a spiritual life, both thinking and doing everything to please You. For You, O Christ, our God, are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies; and to You we render glory. Amen.

My precious and crucified Lord, I offer You this Lent. I offer it to You with total abandonment and trust. I offer You my prayers, sacrifices and my very life this day. Do with me, Lord, as You will. I pray that this Lent will be fruitful. I know You have much to say to me and much to do in my life. May this Lent be a time through which Your mercy is poured in abundance into my soul. Dearest Lord, give me courage and strength to confess my sins, and to turn from them with all my heart. Keep me faithful to my Lenten promises, and bring forth new life through these sacrifices of love. Amen.

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus while before Your face I humbly kneel and, with burning soul, pray and beseech You to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity; true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment. While I contemplate, with great love and tender pity, Your five most precious wounds, pondering over them within me and calling to mind the words which David, Your prophet, said to You, my Jesus: "*They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have numbered all My bones.*" Amen.

While fasting with the body, let us also fast in spirit. Let us lose every bond of iniquity; let us undo the knots of every contact made by violence; let us tear up all unjust agreements; let us give bread to the hungry and welcome to our house the poor who have no roof to cover them, that we may receive mercy from Christ our God. (*Byzantine Vespers*)

Look with favour, Lord, on your household. Grant that, though our flesh be humbled by abstinence from food, our souls, hungering after you, may be resplendent in your sight. (*St. Pius V Pope*)

Come, my Light, and illumine my darkness. Come, my Life, and revive me from death. Come, my Physician, and heal my wounds. Come, Flame of divine love, and burn up the thorns of my sins, kindling my heart with the flame of thy love. (*St. Demetrius of Rostov*)

God, may Your light guide my day, and your Spirit bring me peace. Amen.

Home advice

Gill Cox writes:



In these days of trying to economise and keep warm here are some excerpts from a household manual entitled "*I have a House*", aimed at the newlywed housewife.

Preface to chapter one: "For nothing lovelier can be found in woman than to study household good, and good works in her husband to promote." Milton, *Paradise Lost*

"Coal economy. Put an old tin in the centre of the fire, it will get red hot and it saves the coal. A tin lasts three or four days. When there is a good fire, place a quantity of chalk at the back - this will last and give a good heat."

"Fire - to light. Leave a cold cinder all night in a jar of paraffin. When lighting the fire, place the cinder on some paper with small coal or wood round it and then light. A pint of paraffin should last about three weeks."

"Beds - to warm without bottles. In an emergency, for a casualty or sudden illness and without enough hot water bottles, heat bricks in the oven and wrap in warm material for the bed. Sandbags are very useful too, made about ten inches long, filled with clean sand, baked hot. Both these hold the heat for a considerable time, more evenly than hot water bottles."

The next piece of advice applies to old fashioned solid fuel washing boilers. **PLEASE DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!!!**

"Boiler to light. If boiler is near gas stove, much nervous strain can be avoided by having a gas lighter with a tubing sufficiently long to reach from stove to boiler. Remove a gas ring and fix end of tubing on to gas holder. Set fire in boiler, putting lighter underneath. Then turn on gas and light lighter. The fire is certain to go."



From the Book of Common Prayer

Candlemas: *ALMIGHTY and everliving God, we humbly beseech thy Majesty, that, as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in the substance of our flesh, so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts, by the same thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Jesus was presented in the Jerusalem Temple at the age of forty days, according to the requirement of the Law of Moses for a first-born male child. There he was greeted by both Simeon and Anna and thus there was a meeting of the five - these two, Mary, Joseph & Jesus.

From the fourth century, this event has been commemorated in the Church by a festival which was first simply called in Greek, Hypapante (the Meeting). Later in the Latin West it has been called “*The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*” and “*The Presentation of Christ in the Temple.*” The word, “Candlemas” is a northern European name for the festival because there had long been a procession with lighted candles at the mass on this day.

The Gospel reading describes the bringing of Jesus by Mary and Joseph to the Temple and their offering of a sacrifice as required by the Law (Leviticus 12:8; Luke 2:24) after the birth of a first-born son (Exodus 13:2,15). It continues by presenting Simeon, a devout Jew, who was waiting to see the Messiah of his people. On seeing Jesus, he knew that he was looking at the Messiah and so taking him in his arms, he praised God and uttered the prayer we now call “*Nunc dimittis.*” Then Simeon turned to bless Mary and Joseph and prophesied concerning the messianic vocation and work of Jesus. This small group was then joined by Anna, a godly widow, who also was waiting for the advent of the Messiah. After she had seen Jesus and also recognised him as the Messiah, she thanked God and spoke of him as the Messiah to many people.

The Epistle reading from the prophecy of Malachi speaks of the Messiah coming to the Temple of the Lord to purge and to save. *“The Lord whom you [Simeon & Anna] seek shall suddenly come to his temple...”*

The reason why there has been a profuse use of candles in the keeping of this festival over the centuries is simple. It is to proclaim by visible sign the words uttered by Simeon concerning Jesus, *“a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.”*

The Collect in The Book of Common Prayer is ancient and comes from the Latin. True to the original intention of the Feast, the whole emphasis in this prayer is upon Jesus, who was the centre of attention in the Temple on his fortieth day. It is the commemoration of the first appearance of the Lord of the temple in the temple, that temple which he came to love, from where in his boyhood he found it so difficult to tear himself away, and the very temple that he honoured so highly as to cleanse twice during his ministry (John 2:13-18 & Matthew 21:12-13).

Of course, Mary, his mother, is there in the background, for after all she had given birth to the Messiah and, as a faithful Jewess, she had to offer sacrifice for her own ritual purification after giving birth to her first-born son. This is why in the West the feast has been also named for her.

Let us now turn to the actual content of the Collect. *“Almighty and everliving God, we humbly beseech thy Majesty.”* God the Father is both all-powerful and all-alive. He is not merely everlasting but everliving. And he is *“Majesty,”* a most appropriate word here as what is being remembered actually happened in the temple of Jerusalem, the LORD’s earthly palace in the time of the old covenant. He is the *“great King over all the earth”* (Psalm 47:2). Did not Isaiah see *“the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up”* with the train of his robe filling the whole temple (Isaiah 6:1)?

“That, as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in substance of our flesh.” As Jesus is the Incarnate Son of God, divine and human, he is both of one substance with the Father and also of one substance with us. He shares our human nature, our flesh and blood—but Simeon and Anna were given eyes to see also that he is the Son of God.

“So we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts.” We fervently ask the Father for the sake of his Son and by his Holy Spirit to assist us in our self-examination and penitence that we may know his forgiveness and cleansing, and thus approach him with purified hearts.

As the festival occurs in Epiphany, the season wherein the emphasis is upon the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, at his Baptism, and in other ways, it fits into this theme, being his earliest manifestation inside the house of his heavenly Father.

The Rev’d Dr Peter Toon (+2009)

Feast of the month: St. Valentine, Martyr

14 February

Let's start with some surprising facts about St. Valentine:

1. *There are about a dozen St. Valentines, plus a pope.* - The saint we celebrate on Valentine's Day is known officially as St. Valentine of Rome in order to differentiate him from the dozen or so other Valentines on the list. Because "*Valentinus*"—from the Latin word for worthy, strong or powerful—was a popular name for many centuries, several martyrs have carried this name. There was even a Pope Valentine, though little is known about him except that he served a mere 40 days around 827. To further the confusion, at least three different Saint Valentines, all of them martyrs, are mentioned in the early martyrologies under the date of 14 February. One was a priest in Rome, the second one was a bishop of Interamna (now Terni, Italy) and the third St. Valentine was a martyr in the Roman province of Africa.

2. *St. Valentine is the patron saint of beekeepers and epilepsy, among many other things.* - Saints are certainly expected to keep busy in the afterlife. Their holy duties include interceding in earthly affairs and entertaining petitions from living souls. In this respect, St. Valentine has wide-ranging spiritual responsibilities. People call on him for interventions regarding beekeeping and epilepsy, as well as the plague, fainting and traveling. As you might expect, he's also the patron saint of engaged couples and happy marriages.

3. *His relics are in Rome.* - The flower-adorned skull of St. Valentine is on display in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Rome. In the early 1800s, the excavation of a catacomb near Rome yielded skeletal remains and other relics now associated with St. Valentine. His relics are also venerated in the Czech Republic, Ireland, Scotland, England and France.

4. *English poet Geoffrey Chaucer may have invented Valentine's Day.* - The medieval English poet Geoffrey Chaucer often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. In his work "Parliament of Fowles" (1375) he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day—an association that didn't exist until after his poem received widespread attention. The poem refers to 14 February as the day birds (and humans) come together to find a mate. When Chaucer wrote, "*For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day / Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate,*" he may have invented the holiday we know today.

Legends... and his life

On 14 February, around the year 270, Valentine, a holy priest in Rome in the days of Emperor Claudius II, is said to have been executed. Under the rule of Claudius the Cruel, Rome was involved in many unpopular and bloody campaigns. The emperor had to maintain a strong army, but was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. Claudius believed that Roman men were unwilling to join the army because of their strong attachment to their wives and families.

To get rid of the problem, Claudius banned all marriages and engagements in Rome. Valentine, realising the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death. Valentine was arrested and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. Generally speaking, this is most of what we know about the real St. Valentine with any certainty.

Legend also has it that while in jail, St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine"... In truth, the exact origins and identity of St. Valentine are unclear.

The Saint of love

Legends vary on how the martyr's name became connected with romance (see above). The date of his death may have become mingled with the Feast of Lupercalia, a pagan festival of love.

Shepherds outside the city walls waged a constant battle against hungry wolves and prayed to the god Lupercus to watch over their flocks. Every year in February, the Romans would repay the god's vigilance with a festival, which doubled as a celebration of fertility and the onset of Spring. Newlywed women would be whipped by februa (strips of goat skin and the derivation of our word February) to purify their bodies in preparation for childbirth.

One of the highlights of Lupercalia came on February 14 with a tribute to Juno Februata, the goddess of feverish love. The names of maidens were drawn at random by young men and the resultant couple would become partners at the feast and even for life. The festival was extremely popular.

After Constantine had christianised Rome, the Church tried to eliminate pagan activities and Lupercalia was an obvious target. Pope Geladius

needed to find a suitable replacement for the wolf god Lupercus and chose a bishop who had been martyred 200 years previously: Valentine.

St. Valentine and medieval England

Young ladies in England would write the names of prospective lovers on slips of paper, before rolling them in clay and placing them in a bowl of water. Whichever name rose to the surface first, would be their Valentine. The name of your Valentine was then worn on your sleeve for the remainder of the day.

It was not just a day for humans, either. In the Middle Ages, it was believed that birds chose their partners on St Valentine's Day and poets often rejoiced in the link between lovebirds and lovers. According to the historian Peggy Robbins, many superstitions were related to birds seen by maidens on Valentine's Day. If she saw a blackbird, she would marry a clergyman (after the Reformation); a goldfinch, a millionaire; a redbreast, a sailor; a crossbill, a quarrelsome man. A wryneck would condemn the poor lady to the fate of an old maid.

To improve their chances of finding true love, single girls could run round a church twelve times without stopping; lay bay leaves sprinkled in rosewater on their pillow; or even eat a hard-boiled egg at midnight, shell and all. A lady approaching old-maid status was advised to try all of the above.

St. Valentine's Day cards are another very ancient custom; one of the oldest examples, sent in 1477 by Margery Brews to her fiancé, John Paston, addressing him as "*my Valentine*", can be seen in the British Museum

Finally, "*Sailors Valentines*" were also a popular choice for this day. These beautiful mosaic-like pictures are made of seashells arranged in exquisite patterns inside frames (sometimes in hinged frames that close like large locket). The seashells and other bits of things found in nature are arranged to form words, flowers, designs, nautical themes, etc.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, they were made in the West Indies and sold to sailors to give to their sweethearts back home.



Our Caribbean Cruise 2023

Jeanne James writes:



Chris and I were lucky to be able to spend 8 days on a Caribbean Cruise in January. This was our first cruise and hopefully it won't be our last. (We messaged Eve whilst away to say we had been "bitten by the cruise bug". She was quite worried and said she hoped we didn't feel too ill with it!)

We flew from Gatwick to Bridgetown, Barbados on a 9 hour flight. We boarded the ship and got to know where everything was. We sailed overnight and all the next day. There was plenty on board to entertain us.

The next day we arrived at Road Town, Tortola which has ancient rain forests, beautiful botanical gardens and opal white beaches. We were taken around the island on a very smart jeep type vehicle and had some wonderful views of the neighbouring islands. We had a very good tour guide who made us all laugh constantly. (I could

smell marijuana (ganja) while on the jeep and it must have been coming from the tour guide. No wonder we were all in good spirits! Apparently ganja is smoked by Rastafarians as a sacrament.)

The next stop was Philipsburg, St Maarten. Two flags rule over this tiny island, the French and the Dutch. Philipsburg is the Dutch capital and Marigot is the French capital. The sea is so green and clear and very warm so we just had to sit down and admire it with a rum punch.



The next stop was Basseterre, St Kitts. Like lots of Caribbean Islands, a cultural tug of war takes place in St Kitts. The island has been ruled by both the French and the British and evidence of both countries' time in power attracted our attention. The Circus, modelled on London's Piccadilly and the former French sugar estates which are hidden away in the countryside. We were shown around St Kitts in an open air bus.



The following day we went to Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe. This is where French and African influences fuse. The 2 main islands are Basse-Terre and Grande-Terre which together form the shape of a butterfly. We visited the Botanical Gardens which were absolutely stunning with flamingos and many plants that we would only see indoors in England. The beach at Deshaies was delightful albeit a little too dangerous for non-swimmers. I am sure you can remember how the sea at Brighton beach draws you under. It was a wee bit like that

(only warmer and greener and sandier and prettier!).



The next trip was to Bequia, St Vincent and The Grenadines. We had a tender boat to take us ashore. This tiny island has golden beaches that are backed by cedar and palm forests. We stayed a while on Princess

Margaret Beach which was very small but very enchanting. We wandered slightly further inland and saw the pretty, crayon coloured houses and shack-like restaurants.

We sailed back to Bridgetown overnight and boarded the plane back to Blyth where it had been snowing! Welcome home.



We say it's cold...

Liz Evans writes:

The following pictures were sent by Lesley Van Dorsten from Canada. Lesley has been a member of St Paul's from the age of 4. She was confirmed, married and had both children baptised in our church. She was a chorister from the age of 7 until she went to Canada aged 19.

She sent these photos of Bow Lake and Banff ice carvings from this past week. Beautiful but cold...





The Psalms

Psalm 25: Make me to know thy ways

This Psalm of lamentation—the prayer of a pensive soul earnest in its piety—has been chosen by the Church for two Sundays in Lent as Introit so it is rather providential we meditate on it just as we began to prepare for this holy season.

Psalm 25 was probably used in the Temple of Jerusalem during the Covenant Festival and it is the prayer of one who is alone, who has been—or at least feels—abandoned by men and whose only strength, comfort, companion is the Lord.

Verses 1-3 — The opening verses give the Psalm its overall tone: only in God can we trust. The reassurance is double: both faith and the personal experience of the psalmist affirm this truth. This is the point when the Psalm stops being its writer's personal prayer and becomes the prayer of every person who put their trust in God's faithfulness; and the sacred text reassures them: none of them "*will ever be put to shame.*"

Verses 4-6 — To avoid the temptation of self-righteousness, the faithful is reminded by these verses that a pious, religious, righteous, or godly life is not the fruit of personal effort and accomplishment but is purely God's gracious gift. Just as a body is in daily want of food, so the soul needs to be lifted up to God day by day in order that it may obtain from him as a gift true understanding, perseverance, faithfulness, obedience, and most importantly salvation.

The Psalm teaches us further that not only the reception of these gifts is God's gracious and free act but their permanence in us as well. The gifts of divine grace and mercy which "*have been from of old*" continue only because God is faithful.

Verse 7 — This grateful recognition of God's gifts in our lives comes inevitably with the admission of our sinfulness. Three times (verses 7, 11, 18) the Psalmist asks God to forgive him his sins, the number and weight of which he does not hide either from himself or from God.

As he searches his own heart, the sins of his youth, committed under the pressure of a heedless and unrestrained passion, appear before him together with the deliberate transgressions of his adulthood. And only the lovingkindness of God, who seeks the sinner, and is ready to forgive, is able to restore the broken relationship between God and man.

Verses 8-10 — The Psalmist confesses again that the only foundation on which his life is established in an unshakable way is God who is “*good and upright*.” This is because firstly, God does not allow to perish those who trust in him and he guides them on the right path through his commandments; secondly, he also helps them to walk and to persevere on that path. In both these activities God remains faithful to himself, to his own lovingkindness. This is what is really meant by *covenant*.

What the Psalmist says in this verse—“*All the paths of the Lord are lovingkindness and faithfulness for those who keep his covenant*”—is paraphrased, if you will, by St. Paul in Romans 8,28: “*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*”

Verses 11-14 — Prayer for forgiveness of sins (and of guilt) and the importance of fear of God follow. However, in a beautiful turn, this fear of God is coupled with the friendship of God: “*In communion with the Lord live those who fear him.*” A beautiful picture is thus being offered to us: God, as Teacher and Leader of man, instructs him in moral knowledge, guides and keeps him on the right path which leads to his promised inheritance. The soul which fears God—fears him in this rich, beautiful sense of the word—“*shall abide in what is good.*”

Verses 15-21 — These last verses begin with a reaffirmation of trust in God and culminate in a number of petitions. Oppressed by his enemies, but perhaps even more so by the weight of his own sins, the Psalmist in his loneliness takes refuge in the gracious God and asks for protection and deliverance. Verse 17 contains an especially beautiful image: “*make wide the narrowness of my heart.*” Sin makes our heart narrow, squeezing out life of it.

Verse 22 — The last verse is only loosely connected to the rest of the psalm; it is a prayer for the redemption of the people of Israel. It was clearly added much later to the Psalm to make it more apt for communal worship. We know this because in the original Hebrew version each verse of the Psalm starts with a different letter but in alphabetical order. This order is completely disregarded in the last verse.

This, however, makes the last verse even more important because it indicates in a striking fashion, that to a large extent the worshipping community lives by the fruits for which its individual members have wrestled in their prayers. In other words: my prayers and the graces and gifts given to me build up and enrich the whole community just as theirs do the same for me and everyone else—but it also means that my shortcomings, my unfaithfulness in prayer affect, in a negative way, the whole community.

Catechism (ninth lesson)

The Son of God made man (for children)



The Son of God made man is Jesus Christ. As the Christmas story tells us: he was born in a stable in Bethlehem from Mary, his Mother. Shepherds and wise Kings came to visit him, bringing gifts to the newborn Jesus. Jesus grew up in Nazareth with Mary and St. Joseph. He gave us a splendid example of prayer, honest work, obedience, and goodness.

Q. Who is Jesus Christ? *A. Jesus Christ is the Son of God made man.*

Q. Why was the Son of God born as man? *A. The Son of God was born as man to save and to redeem us.*

Jesus himself was born very poor. Indeed, he loves the poor. To show your love for Jesus, help the poor whenever you can. Pray to Jesus every day for all children who are poor, who suffer hunger or cold. Learn this prayer and say it often: *Mother Mary, with your Son, bless us each and everyone. Amen.*

On the Holy Ghost and his descent upon the Apostles (for adults)

94. Who is the Holy Ghost? *The Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.*

95. From whom does the Holy Ghost proceed? *The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.*

96. Is the Holy Ghost equal to the Father and the Son? *The Holy Ghost is equal to the Father and the Son, being the same Lord and God as they are.*

97. On what day did the Holy Ghost come down upon the Apostles? *The Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles ten days after the Ascension of Our Lord; and the day on which He came down upon the Apostles is called Whit-Sunday or Pentecost.*

The Holy Ghost, being a pure spirit without a body, can take any form He pleases. He sometimes came in the form of a dove; so when you see a dove painted in a church near the altar, it is there to represent the Holy Ghost. "Whit-Sunday," or White-Sunday; probably so called because in the early ages of the Church converts were baptized on the day before, and after their Baptism wore white robes or garments as a mark of the soul's purity after Baptism. "Pentecost" means the fiftieth day, because the feast comes fifty days after the resurrection of Our Lord.

After Pentecost St. Peter preached to the people. He spoke only in one language, and yet all his hearers understood, for each heard his own language spoken. (Acts 2:6). This was called the gift of tongues, and was given to the Apostles when the Holy Ghost came upon them.

In the first ages of the Church, God performed more miracles than He does now, because they are not now so necessary. These miracles were performed only to make the Church better known, and to prove that she was the true Church, with her power and authority from God. Those who heard St. Peter preach, when they went back to their own countries told what they had seen and heard, and thus their countrymen were prepared to receive the Gospel when the Apostles came to preach it.

98. How did the Holy Ghost come down upon the Apostles? *The Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire.*

99. Who sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles? *Our Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.*

100. Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost? *Christ sent the Holy Ghost to sanctify His Church, to enlighten and strengthen the Apostles, and to enable them to preach the Gospel.*

“Sanctify,” to make more holy by the grace which He would give to the members of the Church.

“To enlighten.” The Apostles did not understand very well everything Our Lord taught while He was with them; but after the Holy Ghost came upon them they understood perfectly, and remembered many things which Our Lord said to them, and understood the true meaning of all.

“Strengthen.” Before the Holy Ghost came the Apostles were timid and afraid of being arrested, but afterwards they went out boldly, and taught all they had learned from Our Lord. They were often taken prisoners and scourged, but it mattered not—they were firm in their faith, and could suffer anything for Christ after they had been enlightened and strengthened by the Holy Ghost. Finally, they were all, with the exception of St. John, put to death for their holy faith. St. John lived the longest, and was the only one of the Apostles who was not put to death, though he was cast into a large vessel of boiling oil, but was miraculously saved.

Certainly by dying for their faith the Apostles showed that they were not impostors or hypocrites. They must really have believed what they taught, otherwise they would not have laid down their lives for it. They were certain of what they taught.

101. Will the Holy Ghost abide with the Church forever? *The Holy Ghost will abide with the Church forever, and guide it in the way of holiness and truth.*

“Abide” means to stay with us.

Vicar

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Parish Hall & Activities

*With enquires about **hiring the Parish Hall, joining the Munch Club or the Choir**, please, contact the Parish Office.*

A priest is always available for Confession, spiritual direction, or for a simple chat half an hour before every Service, or at any other time by appointment! For service times and other information about our churches and services (including weddings and funerals), please visit our website:

www.stpaulsweymouth.org