

St. Augustine and St. Aidan Tonge Moor and Hall i'th' Wood

PARISH PAPER

“Tier 4 Edition 9” - January 2021



Happy New Year! And may it *be* a happy year. 2020 is surely a year to be wished: “Good Riddance”, and I for one will be seeing the Old Year out more sincerely than ever previously. If my street is anything to go by, the old tradition of seeing the old year and the new year in has all but vanished. For those who wish to recover it, see later in this magazine.

2020 did have some positives: the outpouring of local self-help and volunteering; the knowledge that building projects (eg Nightingale Hospitals) can be accomplished very quickly indeed if there's a will; and research will come on by leaps and bounds if enough resources and political will are behind it.

The new vaccines, especially the Oxford/AstraZeneca one, promise a brighter 2021. No doubt we will still need to exercise caution in our gatherings, and the frequency with which vaccines will have to be administered has not yet been ascertained. But the more people who are vaccinated, the more chance there is of beating the coronavirus. To assist with that, do not share anti-vax conspiracy theories on social media, and do not give them credence in other areas of life either.

The work of scientists often goes unnoticed by the general public, although it goes on day-by-day, week in week out, and scientists themselves have often been regarded as geeks or nerds, caricatured as wasting public money on silly projects. The pandemic has shown just how essential scientists and scientific endeavours are. Hopefully

one of the benefits of the pandemic will be restoration of science and scientists to their proper place in the respect of society.

The same goes for care workers and hospital staff. People enter a vocation because they love the work they feel called to do, but this vocational commitment has been taken advantage of by successive governments, who find such areas easy targets for funding cuts when money is tight - as it often is.

Our renewed value of care workers and hospital staff in particular must be reflected in our willingness for them to be paid more - not just to remunerate them more adequately, but also to encourage more people to enter those professions. The Government does not have a magic money tree: all the money borrowed during the pandemic has to be paid back.

In reality, the only money the Government has available to spend on the care and health sectors comes from me and you: the money we pay in taxes. If we want their remuneration to increase, we must be prepared to have our taxes rise slightly. We are a family, not only as a nation, but also as human beings, all created in the image of God.

We are called by the Gospel to care for the vulnerable and those whom society neglects. Medical unions may be fairly strong, but those for care workers are certainly not. And if society has in the past neglected those we now recognise as Essential Workers, we share that responsibility, since we each together comprise that very society.

2021 promises - tentatively - great hope, but some will find it more difficult than others. We each have a responsibility to help make it less difficult for them. May we welcome 2021 with open arms, and rejoice in both the opportunities and the responsibilities it presents us with.

With my love, prayers and very best wishes for 2021,

Fr Tony

SEEING-IN THE NEW YEAR

Do you still see in the New Year, and see the old one out? Although too late for it to be of use this year - and in any case it's unlikely that you'd have had many guests! - it can still be used next year, so keep it handy.

All the males gather outside the front door waiting for the New Year to begin. This isn't sexist: it's simply ensuring that the ladies don't get cold. OK, maybe it is, but in a good way!

At midnight they re-enter the house bringing the New Year with them (having to kiss the female members of the household on their way is an added bonus!) and - importantly - continue through the house through the back door, taking the Old Year with them. Then it's time for party poppers, and whichever celebratory drinks you choose.

Tradition varies across the country as to which symbolic items to carry with you, but take a crucifix too, symbolising our desire to have Jesus with us throughout the coming year.

Happy New Year!

Fr Tony

MISSION COMMUNITIES

Readers of this *Parish Paper* may be aware that the Diocese of Manchester has decided to amalgamate the present 27 Deaneries into 7, each one having a full-time, paid Area Dean: the current plan is to have this come into effect by July 2021: our own Walmsley deanery is to be amalgamated with the Deane and Bolton deaneries to create the larger and new Deanery of Bolton.

Another big initiative is Mission Communities, which has two drivers: the desire to create groupings of parishes which are large enough to share resources and personnel for effective mission; and the need to manage the large projected reduction in stipendiary clergy.

Everyone is invited to join a Zoom meeting to discuss and comment on the proposals for Mission Communities: the one for our Bolton Archdeaconry is on **Wednesday 27th January, 7.00pm-8.30pm**. I would encourage all our parishioners to take part: it can be accessed by going to tiny.cc/missionZoom.

The Diocese have published a briefing document which all members of the congregation should read. Go to the Manchester Diocesan website and search for "Mission Communities". The maps at the back of the document are for purely illustrative purposes. One of the biggest impacts the proposals will have on our parish is the likelihood that the number of stipendiary priests in the area covered by the present deanery Walmsley will reduce from 7 to 3 or 4.

Other concerns will include the relationship between the "Missional Leader" in the Mission Community and the other clergy, particularly those holding incumbent status; the building-up of laity to take on more roles with both the parish and wider Mission settings (especially in areas lacking professional people; whether resources will be allocated where there is an existing vibrant community, or where the congregation is struggling and perhaps most in need.

These are issues that will affect us here in Tonge Moor, and I would encourage us all to take part in the Archdeaconry event on the 27th January.

Fr Tony



1st Jan: The naming of Jesus

Matthew and Luke tell how the angel instructed that Mary's baby was to be named Jesus - a common name meaning 'saviour'. The Church recalls the naming of Jesus on 1st January - eight days after 25th December (by the Jewish way of reckoning days). In Jewish tradition, the male babies were circumcised and named on their eighth day of life.

For early Christians, the *name* of Jesus held a special significance. In Jewish tradition, names expressed aspects of personality. Jesus' name permeated His ministry, and it does so today: we are baptised in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), we are justified through the name

of Jesus (1 Cor 6:11); and God the Father has given Jesus a name above all others (Phil 2:9). All Christian prayer is through 'Jesus Christ our Lord', and it is 'at the name of Jesus' that one day every knee shall bow.

Have you ever wondered where the name 'Jesus' comes from?

The name Jesus is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, 'Yehosua', or Joshua. There is also the Hebrew-Aramaic form, 'Yesua'. In Greek, it became 'Ἰησοῦς' (*Iēsoûs*), and in Latin it became 'Iesus'.

The meaning of the name is 'Yahweh delivers' or 'Yahweh rescues', or 'Yahweh is salvation'. No wonder the angel Gabriel in Luke (1:26-33) told Mary to name her baby Jesus: "because He will save His people from their sins."

6th Jan: Epiphany

On 6th January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the Wise Men to the baby Jesus. But who were these Wise Men? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were called kings - by a church father, Tertullian.

Another church father, Origen, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given. Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things. Since the 8th century, the Magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.

Where did the Wise Men come from?

Magi from the East - it isn't a lot to go on. The Magi had originally been a religious caste among the Persians. Their devotion to astrology, divination and the interpretation of dreams led to an extension in the meaning of the word, and by the first century the Magi in Matthew's gospel could have been astrologers from outside of Persia. Some scholars believe they might have come from what was then Arabia Felix, or as we would say today, southern Arabia.

It is true that in the first century astrology was practised there, and it was the region where the Queen of Sheba had lived. She of course had visited Solomon and would have heard the prophecies about how one day a Messiah would be born to the Israelites and become their king.

Matthew's gospel (chapter 2) is clear that the Magi asked Herod: 'Where is the One who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.' So it is possible that

in southern Arabia the Queen of Sheba's story of how a Messiah would one day be sent to the Israelites had survived. Certainly, there are a number of other early legends that connect southern Arabia with Solomon's Israel.

To many people this makes sense: that the ancient stories of a Messiah, linked to later astrological study, prompted these alert and god-fearing men to the realisation that something very stupendous was happening in Israel. They realised that after all these centuries, the King of the Jews, the Messiah, was about to be born.

One more interesting thing that gives weight to the theory that the Magi came from southern Arabia is this: if you study any map of Palestine as it was during biblical times, you will find that the old Arabian caravan routes all entered Palestine 'from the East'.

What about the gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh?

The story of the coming of the Magi grew in the telling. By the 6th century they had acquired names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. By medieval times they were considered to be kings. Whoever they were, we do know from Matthew that they brought three gifts to Jesus.

What about their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh? While we cannot know for sure what was in the minds of first century Magi, one Victorian scholar has offered a possible explanation as to the

significance of their gifts. He was the Rev John Henry Hopkins, an American Episcopalian minister, who in 1857 wrote his much-loved Christmas carol, 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

Gold, said John Henry Hopkins, was a gift that would have been given to a king. Frankincense had traditionally been brought by priests as they worshipped God in the Temple. Myrrh was a spice that the ancients used in preparing bodies for burial.

If that is true, then you could say that the Wise Men, in choosing their gifts for this infant, honoured Jesus with gold because He was King of the Jews, with frankincense because He was to be worshipped as divine, and with myrrh, because He would also become a sacrifice and die for His people.

The Wise Men were the very first gentiles ever to worship Jesus. What faith they had! They travelled for months over difficult terrain, they never saw any evidence of Jesus' kingship, His divinity or His sacrificial death. They worshipped Him through faith in God's promises about Him. Isaiah foresaw this response to Jesus: 'Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.' The Magi's eyes of faith saw clearly and far into the future.

25th Jan: Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the

greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then, on his way to Damascus, Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed.

Saul changed overnight. He was given a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ. He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote epistles to the young churches that he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: Paul was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in 64AD, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many hundreds of millions of people down the centuries.

Compare that with the High Priest and religious leaders whom the Wise Men saw in Jerusalem when they first arrived. These head priests knew all about the prophecies of their own coming Messiah, but NOT ONE Jewish religious leader travelled to look for Him in Bethlehem. And it is only six miles down the road!

St Paul, the first Christian intellectual

This month, on 25th January, the Church celebrates probably the most famous conversion of all. At least, what happened to a young man called Saul on the road to Damascus has become a byword for all instant conversions - what is known as a 'damascene' moment. Saul was a devout Jew, a Pharisee, a student of Gamaliel and a fierce critic of the followers of Jesus, then a very new sect on the religious scene.

On his way to Damascus to start a purge of Christians in that city, he was blinded by a bright light and heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' He asked the identity of the voice, and was told: 'Jesus, whom you are persecuting'. Stunned by the experience, he followed further instructions which led him to a Christian man in Damascus, who prayed with him. As he did, Saul's sight was restored.

The experience convinced Paul that Jesus - crucified in Jerusalem four or five years earlier - was in fact the Messiah and had risen from the dead. After a period of instruction, Saul was baptised and took the name Paul. At first, some Christians were wary about the reality of his conversion, but over a period of time he was accepted and indeed eventually recognised as an 'apostle', a 'special messenger' of Jesus Christ.

His intellectual stature and leadership gifts quickly marked him out, and within a few years he became a leading figure in the emerging Christian Church, preaching and founding churches all over the Middle East, largely of Gentile converts. He was eventually martyred in Rome, probably in 65AD.

Paul was the first intellectual of the Christian Church, the man who was able to set the events of the life and teaching of Jesus, and especially His death and resurrection, into a coherent theology, with its roots very clearly in the Jewish faith of his own upbringing.

Many people think of Paul as a rather negative, narrow misogynist, but even a quick reading of his letters actually reveals a person of great warmth, who evoked enormous affection and devotion from others. 'You would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me!' he writes to the Christians at Galatia. As for the charge that Paul disliked women, even a quick read of his letters will reveal how large a role women played in his churches. In terms of the first century, St Paul was a dangerous liberal! So, all in all, the amazing Paul of Tarsus deserves a bit of celebrating on 25th January.

HOW MANY MORE WAVES?

As the days are dark, and winter still stretches ahead, many of us find the prospect of more restrictions for months to come even harder than when we first went into lockdown.

After nine months of coronavirus, we are emotionally drained. We are financially drained. We are lonely, depressed, frightened, and

facing deep uncertainty, from job losses to health problems to relationship breakdown. We are running out of steam, and the virus is still going strong.

There is a strong parallel in all this with the ancient book of Job and his experience of loss and pain. Like Job, we are discovering that we are not always entitled to health, wealth, and happiness; and like Job our suffering inexplicably goes on and on. Like the irritating moralising of Job's comforters, the constant critique of the media only seems to make things worse. And, like Job, our minds are incapable of totally grasping the meaning of all this suffering. We need hope.

Job was deprived of everything, yet even in his despair he never lost his belief that God was there. Occasionally an indestructible hope burst forth like a ray of light in the darkness of his pain. "I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God.' (Job 19:26).

But the truly transformative moment for Job came when, instead of seeing his situation in front of God, he finally *saw God in front of his situation*. Then, even in the intensity of his suffering, the greatness of the Almighty eclipsed the problem. That is the revelation we need.

In this sad and weary time lament is therapeutic, and we can be completely real with our Father in Heaven. Yet in our lament, the

path to rekindling true hope lies in the possibility of focusing on the character and immensity of God. Greater is He that is in us than the pandemic that is in the world.

Join in with the ancient words of Psalm 42: 'Why are you downcast O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, my Saviour and my God.'

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The pandemic has impacted just about every area of life. The following snippets may help to give you an overview of some of the common problems many now face.

Counting the cost of coronavirus

Happy New Year! It's good to begin a new year with hope, but few of us have left 2020 unscathed by the pandemic.

For example, nearly half of us, 48 per cent, put on weight during lockdown. (According to a recent survey by King's College London and Ipsos MORI).

Millions of us turned to alcohol or drugs. Public Health England reports that one in five of us aged 45-74 are now drinking more than 21 units a week. The Royal College of Psychiatrists expresses alarm at the rapid rise in patients whose alcohol or drug use led to a decline in their mental health in 2020.

Children have suffered. Childline had nearly 43,000 calls from young people March and October. Cyber bullying has soared, with one in three children being bullied during the pandemic, according to the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

For millions of pensioners, Covid-19 'hit the fast-forward button on ageing', according to Age UK. Lockdown left old people frightened and losing their confidence, mobility and even functions such as memory.

Suicidal thoughts soared during lockdown, with the number of people seeking help tripling, to stand at more than a quarter of a million. The Royal College of Psychiatrists warn that mental health services are now 'overflowing' with patients struggling to cope with anxiety, psychosis and depression. Many charities fear that a 'second pandemic' of mental health problems.

So - what do we do as January 2021 dawns? Each one of us CAN do something to make things better, if only in a small way. How about these for your New Year Resolutions?

Firstly, just get regular exercise. As one professor said, "Exercise creates a virtuous circle of physical and mental well-being. You move more, you eat better, you feel positive." On the other hand, only a couple of weeks of lying around the house will leave your cardiovascular systems less effective, your musculoskeletal system weaker, your metabolic rate affected, and your immune system lowered.

Secondly, adopt the right mental attitude. Studies of Holocaust survivors found that those who recovered best had certain character traits of resilience: optimism, self-esteem, acceptance and above all, spirituality. A faith in God gave them purpose and meaning, even in the midst of fear and death.

Thirdly, make an effort this year to keep in touch with your friends and keep an eye out for vulnerable neighbours. Be willing to act as a safety net for others, if only to show compassion and a willingness to listen to them.

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As many people start diets in January, this may be of interest.

Food, glorious food!

Did you eat too much over Christmas? Or is that your lifestyle choice, year-round?

Almost half of the world's population will be overweight by 2050, if current eating trends continue, according to recent research. That means that more than four billion people could be overweight in just 30 years' time, with 1.5 billion of them obese.

The research was done by the Germany-based Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. The authors warn of a looming health and also environmental crisis, due to the surge in global food demand, which would push the environment past sustainable levels. Food production already takes up three quarters of the world's fresh water, a third of its land, and it accounts for up to a third of greenhouse gas emissions.

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Open that window

Here is an easy resolution for the New Year: open your windows at home for 'short sharp bursts' of 10 to 15 minutes at a time, several times a day.

The government's public information campaign says that regular fresh air can cut the risk of Covid transmission by more than 70 per cent.

So, either leave a window open a small amount continuously, or open it fully on a regular basis throughout the day, especially if anyone has come to visit you in your home. Coronavirus is spread through

the air by droplets and smaller particles known as aerosols. They can hang in the air for hours and they build up over time.

Smokers stubbing out

Smoking is on the decline. The number of people who successfully quit smoking last year was the highest in a decade,

Action on Smoking and Health (Ash) reckons that more than a million people in the UK stopped smoking during the lockdown period. By the end of last year, smoking prevalence in England was at an all-time low: 13.9 per cent.

That made it the most popular lifestyle change of the year, according to Public Health England. There was also a significant surge in smokers who are trying to quit.

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Plants in your front garden

What's in your front garden? If it is sparse, why not consider adding some plants this year? Apparently, the presence of greenery can

lower your stress levels as much as two months of mindfulness sessions. Plants can also help you to feel happier.

A recent trial study by the Royal Horticultural Society found that people who introduced ornamental plants such as juniper, azalea, clematis, lavender, daffodil bulbs and petunias had a significant lowering of the stress hormone, cortisol, and many reported that they felt 'happier'.

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Doing housework can help you live longer

If you spend half an hour a day tidying the house, going up and down your stairs, and doing household chores, you are reducing the risk of an early death.

So says recent guidance from the World Health Organisation, as it urges people to maintain regular moderate exercise on a daily basis, of up to at least 150 minutes a week. It also recommends vigorous exercise of at least 75 minutes a week.

The WHO recommendation was published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, and is part of the new global guidelines on physical activity.

WHO also warned that those who stay sedentary for 10 or more hours on a regular basis will have a "significantly heightened risk of death."

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Why parking your car is getting more difficult

Have you noticed that it is getting harder to park your car? And that when you finally do get parked, you can barely get the door open enough to squeeze out?

It is not your fault. Modern cars have grown so big that many drivers now have as little as 21cm of room to spare in a parking space.

A recent study has found that the country's most popular cars are as much as 55 per cent larger than they were in the Seventies, while the standard parking space has not grown at all. No surprise, then, that millions of drivers scrape their cars each year trying to park in cramped spaces.

The biggest grower is the Mini Hatch, which is now 55 per cent bigger and takes up to 22 per cent more of a parking space than the original did, back in 1959. The Honda Civic of today is 1.8m wide, an increase of 44 per cent. It now takes up nearly three quarters of a standard parking bay.

CarGurus, who carried out the research, has urged the authorities to update the guidelines for parking bays. The current size of a parking bay is 2.4m by 4.8m, and has not changed in 50 years.

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Who does the allotment in your family?

As men take on more domestic household chores, here may be a surprise result: more women are tackling the family allotment, and often taking the children along to help out.

Nationally, half of all allotment holders are now women. This is up from two per cent in 1973, and 20 per cent in 2003. It is thought that the example of celebrity gardeners, especially Charlie Dimmock, may have helped.

The average age of holders is 57, with men typically older than women. Demand for allotments has quadrupled since 2006, with the average waiting list in London now five years.

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100 CLUB NEWS

The ninth monthly draw was via a Zoom meeting at 12.00pm on Sunday 13th December 2020.

Pam and Fr Tony were in charge of the drum containing the numbers at the vicarage.

Ruth Taylor had list of numbers and names.

First Prize Number 62 – Katherine Taylor wins £25

Second Prize Number 6 – Brenda Loftus wins £15

Third Prize Number 119 – Mike Cheetham wins £10

If you are not a member and would like to join it is just £1 a month, contact David or Ruth Taylor.

The tenth draw will be Sunday 10th January 2021, probably again via Zoom, watch for details.

Churches Together in Tonge Moor

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18th-25th January 2021.

There was a meeting on 17th December to plan for this and we are to record the service via zoom on Thursday 21st January and this will be available on YouTube shortly afterwards. Do let us know if you want us to send you a link to the zoom meeting.

We also looked at a Social Media Policy and discussed Lent Study for 2021.

The next meeting is Thursday 4th February and we will be looking at planning a service for Holy Week. Do let us know if you want to be involved in the planning or taking part in this.

Ruth Taylor

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families



There are still no signs of MU meetings being allowed in person at the present time. Please be assured that prayers and Mass continued to be offered for The Mothers Union, its members and objectives.

MU membership subscriptions are due now, payable by cheque, bank transfer or cash. If you need more details, please contact Ruth Taylor or myself.

This month's Thursday prayers, on 14th January, will be on YouTube at 12pm - theme Epiphany.

Mothers Union office and shop re-open on 4th January via email and phone. All shop orders to be sent to shopmothers@gmail.com.

The Lockdown Poetry Booklets are still available to order from the shop.

For our members for whom I have an email address, I will continue to forward to them all the information which I receive by email.

If you have access to the internet or social media, Mothers Union are continually adding more information and resources for you to view and use.

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy 2021

Elsie Hollinrake



Walsingham News

It has recently been announced that the Shrine is to reopen for residential stays and will welcome visitors from 11th January, initially for individuals or households in Tiers 1 and 2. The accommodation will open Monday to Friday for a maximum of 60 pilgrims and there will be a limited Church programme including daily Evening Prayer, Mass and Shrine Prayers. They are working towards re-opening Norton's Café Bar before too long. Things will be reviewed as the vaccine programme is rolled out and restrictions change in line with Government guidance. The Shrine is hopeful that, from April onwards (COVID restrictions permitting), they will be able to take group bookings.

Like so many pilgrims, neither Sr Angela or Sr Carol have entered the Shrine church since March and so it was excellent to see Sr Carol post on Sun 13th December that she had been able to attend Shrine Prayers. During December Sr Angela celebrated the 43rd anniversary of her Profession and Sr Carol the 6th.

Another thank you to all who bought calendars and notelets to for Tariro, the Priory's charity of the year. Our total amount crept up to £145, which is truly wonderful.

Traditionally in our parish, the Society of Our Lady of Walsingham subscriptions have been collected at Candlemas and taken down to the Shrine at the Partnership Weekend. Although this year that won't happen, we would still like to collect our Cell members' subs in good time - preferably before the end of the month. It would be very helpful if all members who don't pay directly to the Shrine would put the appropriate money in an envelope marked 'Walsingham Subs' and pass it on when you come to church. The rate of £10 for an individual & £15 for a couple remains the same. Cash is fine or by cheque made payable to 'Walsingham Fund' please. If any reader

would like to join the Society and support the work of the Shrine in this way. please contact Elsie for the appropriate form.

We look forward to the time when we can meet again as members and friends of our Cell of St Nicholas and begin to anticipate our booked August Pilgrimage.

Elsie Hollinrake and Linda Parkington

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

An aspect of church life that I know many of us have missed over the last nine months is being able to sing as part of our worship. It is a very communal activity and indeed a very physical thing.

You will have your favourite hymns - some perhaps very traditional, others more modern or even a contemporary so called "Praise Song". I have favourites from all genres. The words of our hymns are much loved and, in some cases, very familiar, but very often, what people recall first is the tune. No matter how profound the words of a hymn, a complimentary tune makes it memorable.

Think of *Guide me, O thou Great redeemer* or *To God be the glory*. Hymn tunes - and I mention this for those who may not know - usually have names. Now, there are books and articles which tell the origin of hymns but finding the origin of the names of the tunes is not always so clear and sometimes requires a little detective work.

A Victorian writer of tunes that I greatly admire is the Revd John Bacchus Dykes (1823- 1876). He spent much of his ministry at St Oswald's Church in Durham and it was there that he wrote many of his hymn tunes, indeed he was a major contributor to the original 1861 edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

In terms of names of tunes, Dykes is an interesting case study. Here are a few examples. The definitive Trinity Sunday hymn is probably ***Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*** and the tune is ***Nicaea***, after the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) at which church leaders began to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity. Another hymn which is lodged in the collective consciousness of church goers is ***Eternal Father, strong to save***, the so-called seafarers hymn. That familiar tune is called ***Melita***, which is the Roman name for the Island of Malta, where St Paul was shipwrecked on his journey to Rome. The Roman name came from the Greek which meant 'honey sweet' for the island was known for its honey. The words of ***Praise to the Holiest in the height*** come directly from John Henry Newman's poem, *The Dream of Gerontius* and so Dykes called the tune quite simply ***Gerontius***.

Believe it or not, he composed over 300 hymn tunes and many had understandably simple names; the names of local villages; of saints; the tune ***Hollingside*** was the name of his cottage outside Durham.

We express our faith in a variety of ways, but for many people, music plays an important part. Indeed, it can play a very intimate part; think of the importance of selecting just the right hymn for a wedding or the funeral of a loved one. One final story - Dykes was schooled near Wakefield and knew the nearby village of Horbury. His tune for the hymn ***Nearer my God to thee*** by Sarah Adams is called ***Horbury***. But there is an interesting post script; there are three other tunes to the words. A much-debated question - which tune was played as the Titanic sank?

Geoffrey Lowson

The Rectory

St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren

You may have had several years of intensive training on biblical interpretation, preaching and church history, but that doesn't cover the really important matters in parish life: how to evade disgruntled parishioners, run a brisk Summer Fete and, in your case at present, deal with correspondence, either by letter or email.

My regular practice, which I recommend to you as a New Year Resolution, is to read all the letters/emails you receive and then discard them. If the matter is truly important, you will receive a second message, to which you respond; more likely, the sender will either have forgotten all about his first letter/email after the second month or will write to some other cleric instead. In either case, you will be saved a great deal of trouble.

You only need two folders for your filing system, either for post or emails. The first is for complaints; they are to be filed and ignored, no matter how many duplicates you are sent. Should you be confronted personally, you simply say that the matter has been passed on to the bishop. Those truly dogged complainants who

pursue the matter will eventually receive an episcopal reply saying he knows nothing of the matter, for which you then blame the postal system/spammed email. After letters and emails have ricocheted round the country for many months, the person complaining will either have lost energy to pursue the matter, or the will to live.

The second file receives all other correspondence/emails chronologically. The earliest letters and emails will be at the bottom of the pile and the most recent on the top. In my experience, the postal file only needs attention when it reaches a height of about two feet and becomes unstable. The practice then is to discard the lower six inches and allow it to continue its steady growth. If the stack is kept in the church vestry, then mice usually attend to the papers on the bottom of the pile.

Sadly, your own church, with its electronic systems for filing, sorting and retrieving correspondence and with your parish secretaries, removes all of these blessings at a stroke. You have therefore no excuses for not dealing instantly with every note that comes your way. As ye sow, so shall ye reap.

May I also remind you that not even St Paul, that unflagging letter-writer, ever ended one of his letters with a request for a prompt reply. Need I say more?

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Church flock grows 20-fold after a switch to the old prayer book

A CHURCH of England parish has boosted its flock 20-fold after adopting traditional services abandoned by most Anglicans.

By 2010, St Marylebone in central London had seen its regular congregation fall to just six people.

But since the Rev Canon Dr Stephen Evans began to conduct services from the 500-year-old Book of Common Prayer attendance has risen. It now stands at 100-plus, despite virus restrictions. Dr Evans says the old prayer book's 'rich liturgical and linguistic heritage'

By **Steve Doughty**
Social Affairs Correspondent

clearly still has wide appeal. Phrases which originated in the Book of Common Prayer include 'till death us do part', 'land of the living', 'at death's door', 'all my worldly goods', 'the upper hand', 'fire and brimstone' and 'peace in our time'.

Only a small minority of churches have used it since 1980, when a modern language version was introduced. Since the 1970s Sunday Church of England congregations have slumped by around half.

David Harrison

TIME TO SMILE!

The cat

A vicar and his wife were going out for the evening, and carefully set the security lights and put the cat out. But when they opened the door to go to the taxi, the cat slipped back in and disappeared upstairs. Irritated, the vicar followed it.

The wife waited with the taxi driver. Not wanting him to know that they were leaving the parsonage empty, she said: "My husband is just upstairs for a quick word with my mother."

A few minutes later, the husband arrived, breathless. "Sorry I took so long" he said, "but she put up a fight! Stupid old thing was hiding under the bed and I had to poke her with a coat hanger and grab her by the scruff of the neck to get her out."

**

Films adapted for Wales

It is said that the Welsh film industry has spent lockdown planning to remake numerous well-known films, but this time with a Welsh flavour. The following have been suggested as sure winners:

- * 9½ Leeks
- * The Lost Boyos
- * Dai Hard
- * The Eagle has Llandudno
- * The Magnificent Severn
- * Haverfordwest Was Won
- * Austin Powys
- * Independence Dai
- * The Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch That Time Forgot
- * The Bridge on the River Wye
- * The Welsh Patient
- * Look You Back in Bangor
- * Evans Can Wait
- * A Fishguard Called Rhondda
- * Where Eagles Aberdare
- * Dial M For Merthyr

**

Sign on the tomb of an atheist:

Here lies an atheist. All dressed up and sadly no place to go.

Church

My grandson, Justin, watched a live streaming service with his dad one Sunday morning. His mum wanted to know how it went. He said, "The music was nice, but the commercial was too long."

**

Numbers

When the minister announced the first hymn on Zoom, "Ten thousand times ten thousand!" the little boy turned anxiously to his father. "Does he want us to work that out?"

**

Choir

Two choir members recently got married. They met by chants.

**

Advert seen in a church magazine:

Car engine for sale by curate slightly cracked.

**

Not comfortable

The vicar was praying for the sick and said: “We must remember Mrs Goodwin in our prayers. She recently had all her teeth taken out and a new gas stove put in.”

**

Response

The mother of a lively youngster was struggling to get him into his pyjamas one night. “Jamie, lift up your arms!” she said. To which the child promptly replied: “We lift them up unto the Lord!”

**

Driven

You never really learn to swear until you learn to drive.

You never learn to pray until your kids learn to drive.

**

From a church magazine in Hampshire: We badly need more sinners for our choir.

**

In a recent study, 9 Out of 10 husbands agreed that their wives were ALWAYS right!

The 10th husband has not been seen since the study concluded

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

There were no Occasional Offices this month

PARISH DATES

Fri 1st	Mary, Mother of God: no mass
Wed 6th	EPIPHANY: 7.30pm Mass
SUN 10th	6.30pm: Evening Prayer and Benediction
Thur14th	7.30pm: PCC meet via Zoom
SUN 23rd	6.30pm: Joint Service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on YouTube
Wed27th	Open Meeting on Zoom re: Diocesan plans for Mission Communities
SUN 31st	12.15pm: Holy Baptism

Calendar and Intentions for January 2021

Fri	1	MARY, MOTHER OF GOD: The Parish and the People of God
Sat	2	Ss Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen:
SUN	3	SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	4	feria: The mentally ill and those who care for them
Tue	5	feria: Those who are housebound, self-isolating or shielding
Wed	6	EPIPHANY OF THE LORD: The Parish and the People of God
Thu	7	feria: The work of local hospitals and hospices
Fri	8	feria: Confessors and their penitents
Sat	9	feria: The Bishops of Beverley, Ebbsfleet and Richborough
SUN	10	BAPTISM OF THE LORD: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	11	feria: The homeless, the unemployed and the lonely
Tue	12	feria: Our local Councillors and Borough officials
Wed	13	S Hilary: All who seek to counter unorthodox teachings
Thu	14	feria: Our PCC and Church officers
Fri	15	feria: The Unity of Christ's church
Sat	16	feria: The fire, police and ambulance services
SUN	17	2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	18	feria: The work of ACS and Vocations to the Sacred Priesthood
Tue	19	feria: Our local tradespeople
Wed	20	feria: The work and mission of the Mother's Union
Thu	21	S Agnes: All who suffer persecution rather than deny their faith
Fri	22	feria: The Churches Together in Tonge Moor
Sat	23	feria: The work of Social Services
SUN	24	3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	25	CONVERSION OF S PAUL: The Parish and the People of God
Tue	26	Ss Timothy and Titus: For the faithful correction of innovators
Wed	27	feria: The Bishop of Manchester and his staff
Thu	28	S Thomas Aquinas: All who teach the Christian faith
Fri	29	feria: Walmsley Deanery, its churches and congregations
Sat	30	feria: The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham and its Priests Associate
SUN	31	4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God

CHURCH WARDENS

David & Ruth Taylor: 31 Wisbeck Road. Tel: 01204 396409

OFFICERS AND ORGANISERS

email addresses can be completed by adding "staugustinestm.org.uk"

PCC Secretary: Katherine Taylor Tel. 01204 531053 - email: pccsec@

Treasurer: Sue Loftus Tel 01204 302051 - email: treasurer@

Walsingham Cell: Elsie Hollinrake Tel: 07486 982586

Church Flowers: Cath and Ted Hale Tel: 01204 533745

Child Protection: Margaret Mullen Tel: 01204 695964 - email: cpo@

Brownies: Nichola Smith Tel: 07748 188215

Sunday School: Ruth Taylor Tel: 01204 396409

Mothers' Union: Elsie Hollinrake Tel: 07486 982586

Organist: (St Augustine's) Mike Cheetham Tel: 01204 391963

Organist: (St. Aidan's) Peter Pemrick Tel: 01204 527699

Parish Hall Bookings: Sandra Anderson Tel: 01204 383158 - email: bookings@

Wednesday Morning Coffee Shop: John Harrison Tel: 01204 792691

Caretaker - St Aidan's Hall: Andrew Settle Tel: 01204 450321

Parish Paper: Mike Cheetham - email: magazine@