St. Augustine and St. Aidan

Tonge Moor and Hall i’th’ Wood

**PARISH PAPER – MAY 2021**

My dear friends

If all goes well, the Government’s ‘Road Map’ out of the lockdown restrictions suggests that groups of up to 6 will soon be able to meet indoors. This means that it will once again be legally possible to take the Blessed Sacrament to the housebound in their homes. This, of course, does not mean that everyone will be comfortable having someone from outside their household or bubble coming into their homes, and I am in contact with those who may wish to receive Communion at home again to find a way of doing so that everyone is comfortable with.

But this is a step towards us in the Church being able to get back to some sort of normal. Since Easter, we have been taking advantage at St Augustine’s of the opportunity to sing together outside after mass (weather permitting), and pray that from June 21st we will be able, once again, to sing the mass and hymns together inside church.

There will be changes to what has been done in the past. I wouldn’t be surprised if more people continue to receive in one kind only, at least in the short term, and the live-streaming of masses - at least of the main masses - will continue, although the quality both of presentation and of internet connection will need to be addressed.

For many families the ‘new normal’ will be without loved ones., making adjustment even more difficult: please keep them in your prayers. Among our own congregation are those who could not have the funeral for their loved-ones they would have wished, and we will soon begin interring in the Memorial Garden ashes which restrictions on the numbers of people who could gather together have prevented us from doing so previously.

The Feast of Pentecost falls towards the end of this month, on the 23rd May. God’s gift of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and through them to the Church itself, gave new resolve and new courage to the Apostles. Having previously kept themselves to themselves, we were emboldened by the Holy Spirit to go out and tell the Good News of the Resurrection: first to those outside their own front door, and then further afield.

As we are released from keeping ourselves to ourselves, we pray first and foremost that science and common sense will prevail, and that we will not be subject to a Third Wave of Coronavirus. But we pray also that we will be refreshed by the Holy Spirit in our own lives; that our own courage might be strengthened, and our faith in God’s good purposes might be deepened.

We pray that as our nation gradually and carefully opens up again, we will take God’s love, generosity and compassion with us wherever we go, and share all the gifts of the Spirit with those we meet.

With my prayers and best wishes

Fr Tony

**Thy Kingdom Come**

*Thy Kingdom Come* is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

Since its start in May 2016 God has grown *Thy Kingdom Come* from a dream of possibility into a movement. Christians from 172 countries have taken part in praying ‘Come Holy Spirit’, so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

During the 11 days of *Thy Kingdom Come*, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

* Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ
* Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus
* Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness

This praying together has been across the diversity and differences of the Church as every person, household and church are encouraged to pray in their own way. According to an annual survey, an astonishing percentage of people said they were praying for family and friends to come to faith in Jesus.

After the very first Ascension Day the disciples gathered with the Blessed Virgin Mary, constantly devoting themselves to prayer while they waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Like them, our reliance on the gift of the Holy Spirit is total – on our own we can do nothing.

Through the centuries Christians have gathered at that time to pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit. ‘*Thy Kingdom Come*’ picks up this tradition. Over the years more and more worshipping communities have dedicated the days between Ascension and Pentecost to pray ‘Come Holy Spirit’.

It is our prayer that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him. While we may not have a particular program of prayer in the parish during this time, we invite everyone to pray that God’s Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their ‘Yes’ to God’s call.

The Churches Together in Tonge Moor will hold a joint Service for Pentecost on Pentecost Sunday, hosted by St Augustine’s, which will serve as a conclusion to this time of prayer.

**Churches Together in Tonge Moor**

CTiTM are holding a joint Service for Pentecost on Pentecost Sunday, 23rd May at 6.00pm, hosted by St Augustine’s. We will be able to meet in person, but the service will also be streamed later on YouTube for those unable to attend.

It will form the culmination to the 10 days of prayer under the *Thy Kingdom Come* banner, but it will also stand as an act of worship in its own right: do join us, as we gather with our brothers and sisters from St Andrew’s and the Church at the Centre to worship our Lord Jesus on the day he sent his Holy Spirit upon the Church.

Fr Tony

A meeting was held on Tuesday 13th April, when Matthew Ramsden, (The Chairman) confirmed that he was now active on the Group’s Facebook page and also that there was good feedback for the Holy Week service on 29th March, with the Stations of the Cross theme, it was recorded on Zoom and still available to view on YouTube, as are the previous Services.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdqi28fO4Z4pmrgD8JUXkUA/videos

The last meeting was on 27th April 2021, at 7.30pm via Zoom. It was to plan the Pentecost Service that is to be held in St Augustine’s Church at 6.00pm on 23rd May 2021.

*Ruth Taylor*

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

Each year Church of England parishes elect their Church Wardens at the Meeting of Parishioners, and members of the Parochial Church Council at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Normally we hold our meetings one after the other in St Augustine’s, after the main Sunday mass, but last year’s meetings, due to the pandemic, were a mixture of in-person and on-line.

This year we have been informed that since our Annual Meetings fall under the category of business meetings, they must solely be on-line, in line with the Government’s current Covid regulations. They will begin at 2.00pm on Sunday 9th May.

The good news is that even though we are unable to gather together in church, everybody is able to access the Meetings and take part, by using a normal landline phone, a smartphone, a tablet, laptop or PC. People will be counted as “being present” at the Meeting is they can both hear what is going on and be heard by the meeting.

Certain security measures will be in place to reduce the possibility of 'gatecrashers' who might wish to disrupt the meeting from anywhere in the world.

This is how to ‘attend’ these important Meetings. An email will be sent to those members of the congregation whose email addresses we have, which will contain:

* + - * 1. a **hyperlink** which can simply be clicked to connect you to the meeting if using a smartphone, tablet, laptop or PC;
        2. a **Meeting ID and Passcode** to connect you using the same gadgets; and
        3. **UK telephone numbers** to dial if using a smartphone or landline. Obviously, there will be no picture if using a phone, but you will be able to hear, and be heard, and be able to take a full part in the Meetings.

Those who do not have access to email can contact me, and I will pass on to them the appropriate details as outlined above.

Nomination forms for Churchwardens and PCC members are at the back of our churches, as are paper copies of the parish’s Financial Report for 2020 and Reports from the parishes various organisations: electronic versions of these two packs are also on the parish’s website.

These are important meetings in the life of our parish, and I hope as many of our congregation are able to join us and take part.

Fr Tony

**Tell me, Father...**

... why Prince Philip wasn’t honoured with a Requiem Mass at his funeral?

There are probably two answers to this question. The first can be approached by asking the question: What is a requiem mass? When someone dies, we believe as Christians that we will need to give account of ourselves before God, the righteous Judge, with Jesus pleading our cause as our advocate. Just as we pray for each other during life, it is natural that we will wish to continue praying for each other even after death - not to bully God into changing his mind, but because we care for those for whom we are praying.

The Eucharist - the Mass - is the supreme act of Christian worship, when we re-present before God the one and eternal sacrifice of Jesus upon the Cross, when our sins were forgiven. It is therefore entirely appropriate that we commend the soul of a Christian to God in the context of the Mass - the supreme act of Christian worship, recalling the forgiveness of our sins won by Jesus on the Cross.

It follows that a Requiem Mass is appropriate to every Christian soul. More importantly, it should not be seen as ‘an honour’ for those we know and like, still less for ‘the great and good’. A requiem mass was said in the parish for Prince Philip on the day of his funeral, just as I would be happy to say a requiem mass for anyone should I be asked to do so, and why I am more than happy when the families of members of the congregation agree to a funeral requiem.

Which brings us to the second reason why Prince Philip didn’t have a requiem. The beautifully simple service in St George’s Chapel, Windsor, was conducted exactly according to the Funeral Service in the Book of Common Prayer, which powerfully expresses the reality that in death we are each equal before God, whatever our status in life. That Rite does not provide for the Eucharist to be celebrated, and so it wasn’t.

Fr Tony

**Farewell, Walmsley Deanery**

With the restructuring of the Diocese of Manchester, the Deanery Walmsley will cease to exist at midnight on Monday 31st May, and the new and larger Deanery of Bolton will then come into existence. The new Deanery of Bolton will include the present deaneries of Walmsley, Bolton and Deane. All elected members of Walmsley Deanery will continue to serve in the new Bolton Deanery for the remainder of the triennium.

This date of conversion is somewhat sooner than had been expected: the new Area Deans will only be formally appointed six days later. It also means that the last meeting of Walmsley Deanery needs to be brought forward and will now meet on Tuesday 25th May, time and place yet to be confirmed.

Fr Tony

**Marriage Registration**

Those of us who have been married will remember, I am sure, the “signing of the registers”, and someone being entrusted with the safekeeping of the certificate. This is now to change somewhat. From the 4th of May all existing Marriage Registers in the country - at Registrar’s Offices, wedding venues as well as churches - will be formally closed, and a new registration system will come into place.

The registration of marriages will be digital, held by the General Registry Office, and will no longer be paper-based. Under the new system the officiant will prepare a “Marriage Document”, which contains much of the information held in the present registers but will also include space for mothers to be listed as well as fathers - and stepparents and adoptive parents, too.

The couple will sign this single document instead of the paper Registers, and the officiant will then, within a few days, take the Marriage Document to the local Registrar’s Office, who will enter the details online into the electronic register and post out the Marriage Certificate to the couple: this process will be the same wherever the marriage takes place.

There will be no change to the marriage service, and the preliminaries such as Reading the Banns will also remain the same. The couple will not notice any difference, and they will still sign their signatures. The only person who will notice any difference will be the officiant, who will be able to type the details onto the Marriage Document, rather than write the information out by hand into three separate documents.

For those rushing off to their honeymoon before the Registrar’s Office can post out the Marriage Certificates, the Government are producing documents couples will be able to show to suspicious B&B hosts!

One copy of the current paper Register will be retained in the parish for consultation: the other will be transferred to the Registry Office, who will now take on responsibility for issuing all certificates, including copy certificates.

Fr Tony

# **100 Club News**

The first monthly draw was via a Zoom meeting at 12.00pm on

Sunday 11th April 2021.

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 15 – Ted Hale - wins £25**

**Second Prize Number 105 – June Aspinall - wins £15**

**Third Prize Number 63 – Fr Tony - wins £10**

The second draw for the new term will be on Sunday 2nd May 202, again via Zoom, Join the Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82349787107?pwd=S1B2Q1BzTGxHQWdXckkveXdlS1IzZz09>

Meeting ID: 823 4978 7107

Passcode: 158738

**If you are not a member contact David or Ruth Taylor to be allocated a number just £12 a year. Also to renew and/or take on a new number**

**SUMMER FAIR**

**Saturday 10th July 1pm -3pm**

**St Augustine’s Church Parish Hall**

**Admission 20p (There will be a door prize)**

**Attractions include Raffle, Lucky Gift Bags, Chocolate Tombola, Guess my Name? and Lucky £1. There will be Cakes, Craft, Bric a Brac and Book Stalls.**

**If you could provide anything for these stalls please do let David, Ruth or Elsie know, but a box will be at the back of Church for your donations.**

**Also, if you can help to organise or run a stall do let us know.**

**Please support this major fundraising event.**

**We look forward to seeing you there.**

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 **Walsingham News**

Although we are still unable to have our usual Cell meetings in the Parish Hall, there will be Mass followed by the Rosary on Wed 5th May at 7.30pm. Everyone is very welcome – not just members of our Cell of St Nicholas.

The Shrine plans to open for a restricted number of resident pilgrims from Monday 7th June and will extend this as the lifting of restrictions continues. The Hospitality Team is shortly to begin a phased return to work in Reception and understandably will deal with parishes hoping to visit during June and early July first. Clearly, they aren’t in a position to say anything too far in advance as they will be guided by the Government Roadmap for the lifting of restrictions. The Shrine decision makers think far too much of pilgrims to do anything to compromise their safety and so are moving cautiously. Thank you to everyone for your patience as we wait to hear about our visit at the very end of August. As soon as Elsie hears some firm details and confirmation of our numbers she will let everyone know. Our coach from Peelings in Fakenham is provisionally booked so at this point we (and the Shrine) are just hoping things go to plan.

The new and improved technology for live-streaming from the Shrine is now installed. Cameras high up in the Shrine Church give some amazing and previously unseen views. The last live-streamed Sunday Mass at 9am is the 2nd May, after which it will be at 7.30am but also available for later viewing on YouTube. Live-streaming of daily Shrine Prayers at 6pm continues. The National Pilgrimage on Monday 31st May will be live-streamed and details of times and links should be on the Shrine web-site shortly. This year it is taking place in the Shrine Church and gardens and restricted to the Guardians, Shrine clergy and the sisters at the Priory.

group

Readers of the Candlemas edition of the *Walsingham Review* will have seen a photo of the bench given in memory of ‘Dame’ Doris by her family. It is in the tower by the Pilgrim Refectory and I took this view of it alongside the window.

The Shrine gardens looked absolutely stunning in the April sunshine and the stripes on the grass resembled Wimbledon!

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*Linda Parkington*

**St. Augustine’s Flower Group.**

**Annual Report 2020/2021.**

Unfortunately, there doesn’t seem to be a Flower Group at present due to a series of events. Cath assisted by Ted took over the group following the resignation of Doris Willian and have managed to organise flower deliveries and assemble a small dedicated group of volunteers.

However, with Cath and Ted now standing down the group needs a fresh injection of helpers to carry on the work and maintain the standards set by our regular flower arrangers.

Over the past year we have suffered from the restraints of this Covid thing, which has restricted groups of unrelated people meeting for social activities including flower arranging.

The activities of the much-reduced group have been mainly placing pre-made arrangements of artificial flowers around the church and only at significant times.

Over the past few years Cath and Ted have done a magnificent job in keeping the group together and without naming any specific volunteers everyone has worked very hard, together, in setting a certain standard for St. Augustine’s. So, many thanks to all those who have been involved and those who are still involved for the joy their creations have brought to the congregation. Thank you to Katherine Taylor, Linda Parkington and Pam Davies, who had organised the flowers for Maundy Thursday and Easter.

Now let’s hope we can get through this Covid thing and restart the group with some new faces, new ideas and lots of fun.

We now need someone to take over this role. There will be lots of volunteers to help in various ways and there is a flower fund to use to purchase items/goods as necessary.

If you feel you can take over the role to organise the flowers for the church please do speak with Fr Tony or one of the Wardens.

On behalf of the Flower Group

Derek Turner

**1st May - May Day: unbridled merriment**

May is the month when the ancient pagans used to get up to ‘all sorts’! The Romans held their festival to honour the mother-goddess Maia, goddess of nature and growth. (May is named after her.) The early Celts celebrated the feast of Beltane, in honour of the sun god, Beli.

For centuries in ‘Olde England’ the people went mad in May. After the hardship of winter, and hunger of early Spring, May was a time of indulgence and unbridled merriment. One Philip Stubbes, writing in 1583, was scandalised: ‘for what kissing and bussing, what smooching and slabbering one of another, is not practised?’

Henry VIII went ‘maying’ on many occasions. Then folk would stay out all night in the dark rain-warm thickets and return in the morning for dancing on the green around the May pole, archery, vaulting, wrestling, and evening bonfires.

The Protestant reformers took a strong stand against May Day, and in 1644 May Day was abolished altogether. Many May poles came down - only to go up again at the Restoration, when the first May Day of King Charles’s reign was ‘the happiest Mayday that hath been many a year in England’, according to Pepys.

May Day to most people today brings vague folk memories of a young Queen of the May decorated with garlands and streamers and flowers, a May Pole to weave, Morris dancing, and the intricacies of well dressing at Tissington in Derbyshire.

May Day is a medley of natural themes such as sunrise, the advent of summer, growth in nature, and - since 1833 - Robert Owen’s vision of a millennium in the future, beginning on May Day, when there would be no more poverty, injustice or cruelty, but harmony and friendship. This is why, in modern times, May Day has become Labour Day, which honours the dignity of workers. And until recently, in communist countries May Day processions were in honour of the achievement of Marxism.

There has never been a Christian content to May Day, but nevertheless there is the well-known 6am service on the top of Magdalen Tower at Oxford where a choir sings in the dawn of May Day.

An old May carol includes the lines:

*The life of man is but a span, it flourishes like a flower*

*We are here today and gone tomorrow - we are dead within an hour.*

There is something of a sadness about it, both in words and tune, as there is about all purely sensuous joy. For May Day is not Easter, and the joys it represents have always been earth-bound and fleeting.

**1st May - Philip, the apostle with common sense**

Is there someone in church whom you respect for their spirituality and common sense combined? Someone you feel easy about approaching to ask questions? That person’s patron saint should be Philip.

Philip came from Bethsaida and was a disciple of Jesus from early on. He knew how to lead others to Jesus; he brought Nathanael (or Bartholomew) to Him in a calm, kindly way. He knew how to do some financial forecasting: at the feeding of the 5,000 it was he who pointed out that without divine help, even 200 pennyworth of bread wasn’t going to feed that crowd. He was the one whom the Greeks approached when they wanted to ask Jesus to show them the Father, but didn’t quite have the nerve to approach Jesus directly.

People had confidence in Philip’s spirituality, common sense and kindliness. Such a person is a gift to any church! In art, the Apostle Philip has been represented either with a cross, or with loaves of bread.

**Rogation Sunday (Sunday before Ascension)**

Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving away Winter with sticks. They wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.

In about 465 the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic. So Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, ‘beating the bounds’ became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God.

On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route - at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation is said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At some point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for ‘beating the bounds.’ It was still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly, parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them. (Do you know yours today?)

**Ascension Day: 40 Days with the Risen Christ**

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.)*

The Gospels give us little of Christ’s teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving ‘farewell’ in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: ‘When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.’

As Christmas began the story of Jesus’ life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus’ last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection!

Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: ‘While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.’ (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: ‘I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...’ (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: ‘they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.’ (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! ‘I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.’ (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

**May: Day of Pentecost, Whit Sunday**

Pentecost took place on the well-established Jewish festival of Firstfruits, which was observed at the beginning of the wheat harvest. It was seven weeks after Easter, or 50 days including Easter.

A feast day to celebrate the country’s wheat harvest does not sound exactly world-changing, but that year, it became one of the most important days in world history. For Pentecost was the day that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit - the day the Church was born.

Jesus had told His disciples that something big was going to happen, and that they were to wait for it in Jerusalem, instead of returning to Galilee. Jesus had plans for His disciples, but He knew they could not do the work themselves. They would need His help.

And so, they waited in Jerusalem, praying together with His other followers, for many days. And then on that fateful morning there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in many tongues, to the astonishment of those who heard them. The curse of Babel (Genesis 11: 1- 9) was dramatically reversed that morning.

That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell the disciples and followers of Jesus. The Church was born. The Christians were suddenly full of life and power, utterly different from their former fearful selves. The change in them was permanent.

Peter gave the first ever sermon of the Christian Church that morning, proclaiming Jesus was the Messiah. His boldness in the face of possible death was in marked contrast to the man who had denied Jesus 50 days before. And 3,000 people responded, were converted, and were baptised. How’s that for fast church growth!

Of course, Pentecost was not the first time the Holy Spirit had acted in this world. All through the Old Testament there are accounts of how God’s Spirit guided people and strengthened them. But now, because of Christ’s death and resurrection, He could INDWELL them. From now on, every Christian could have the confidence that Jesus was with them constantly, through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

**24th May - John & Charles Wesley, evangelists & hymn-writers**

John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism. Two of 19 children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726). John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a ‘Holy Club’ while still at college. It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works. Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname ‘Methodist’. The name stuck.

Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia. Their time among Indians in America was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression. John summed it up: “I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?”

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians. They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ. Charles was the first to experience this ‘true’ conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21st May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God ‘chased away the darkness of my unbelief.’

Only three days later, on 24th May, 1738, it was John’s turn. As he wrote in his journal:

“In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed.”

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. In doing so, they turned England upside-down. When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners.

His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons. His small ‘societies’ attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as ‘Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.’ In all, he wrote more than 6,000 hymns.

The legacy of the two brothers lives on. As well as Methodism, their teaching has widely impacted the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and the charismatic movement.

**27th May - Augustine of Canterbury, apostle to the English**

Augustine, a 6th century Italian prior, holds a unique place in British history. He became the ‘apostle to the English,’ although it was with great reluctance.

In 596 Augustine was chosen by Pope Gregory to head a mission of monks whom he wanted to send to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons. Augustine was not a bold man, and by the time he and his band of priests reached Gaul, they wished to turn back. But Gregory would not hear of it, and he bolstered their confidence by sending some more priests out to them, and by consecrating Augustine bishop. Finally, the little party, now 40 in number, landed at Ebbsfleet, Kent in 597.

It would be fascinating to have a detailed description of that first meeting between Bishop Augustine and Ethelbert, powerful King of Kent. Whatever Augustine said, it must have been effective, for Ethelbert granted the 40 priests permission to stay in a house in Canterbury. He even allowed them to preach to his people, while he himself considered their message of Christianity. His wife, Bertha, was a Christian princess from Paris, but she does not seem to have played any role in the conversion of Kent.

By 601 Ethelbert and many of his people had been baptised Christians. The mission to the English was well underway. More clergy, some books, a few relics and several altar vessels arrived from Rome. At Gregory’s wise urging, Augustine decided to consolidate the mission in one small area, rather than try and reach all of Kent. So, Augustine stayed in Canterbury, where he built the cathedral and founded a school. He left only temporarily to establish a see in London.

Also, at Gregory’s wise urging, Augustine did not destroy the pagan temples of the people of Kent, but only the idols in them. In this way, familiar rites were taken over and used for the celebration of the Christian feasts. Meanwhile, before his death in 604, Augustine helped Ethelbert to draft the earliest Anglo-Saxon written laws to survive – and so influenced British law for centuries to come.

**30th May - Joan of Arc: saving France from the English**

How far would you go to respond to God’s call on your life? When, as the daughter of a peasant family in Champagne in 1426, 14-year-old Joan heard heavenly voices calling her to ‘save France’ from the English, she decided to obey the call, no matter what the consequences.

Teenage girls who want to rescue their country from foreign troops were considered every bit as crazy back then as they would be now. But Joan eventually came to the notice of the Dauphin (Later Charles Vll) who decided to make use of her obvious ability to inspire people – in this case, the French, to fight. And so Joan, dressed in white armour, rode at the front of the French army when they relieved Orleans in April 1429.

Her presence and belief in her divine calling to get rid of the English, did wonders for the morale of the troops, who loved her even more when she sustained a wound in the breast, and made little of it.

A campaign in the Loire followed, and then in July the Dauphin was crowned at Rheims with Joan at his side, carrying her standard. More battles followed that winter, until Joan was captured and sold to the English. They attributed her success to witchcraft and spells, and imprisoned her at Rouen. She was brought before judges, where her spirited and shrewd defence were outstanding.

But the judges declared her false and diabolical, and she was condemned to die as a heretic. She was burnt at the stake in the marketplace at Rouen on 30 May 1431. Joan died as she had lived; with total faith in God and certainty that she was obeying His will for her life. She died with fortitude, looking at a cross and calling on the name of Jesus. Her ashes were thrown into the Seine.

Joan’s integrity and courage are what shine down the centuries. Here is a patron saint for you if you feel that God is calling you to do something extraordinary: something that is way, way beyond your comfort zone; but something that could right wrongs and make a difference in the world. Are you up for it?

**Trinity Sunday: Celebrating our God who is Three Persons**

Trying to explain the doctrine of the Trinity has kept many a theologian busy down the centuries. One helpful picture is to imagine the sun shining in the sky. The sun itself – way out there in space, and unapproachable in its fiery majesty – is the Father. The light that flows from it, which gives us life and illuminates all our lives, is the Son. The heat that flows from it, and which gives us all the energy to move and grow, is the Holy Spirit. You cannot have the sun without its light and its heat. The light and the heat are from the sun, are *of* the sun, and yet are also distinct in themselves, with their own roles to play.

The Bible makes clear that God is One God, who is disclosed in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit. For example:

Deuteronomy 6:4: ‘Hear O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’

Isaiah 45:22: ‘Turn to me and be saved… for I am God, and there is no other.’

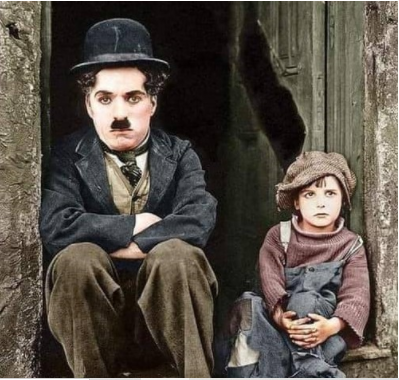
Genesis 1:1-2: ‘In the beginning God created…. and the Spirit of God was hovering…’

Judges 14:6: ‘The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power…’

John 1:1-3: ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.’

Luke 24:49 actually manages to squeeze the whole Trinity into one sentence. Jesus tells His disciples: ‘I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power (the Holy Spirit) from on high.’

In other words, the sun eternally gives off light and heat, and whenever we turn to its brilliant light, we find that the warmth and life there as well.



*Charlie Chaplin lived 88 years*

*He left us 4 statements:*

*(1) Nothing is forever in this world, not even our problems.*

*(2) I love walking in the rain because no one can see my tears.*

*(3) The most lost day in life is the day we don't laugh.*

*(4) Six best doctors in the world...:*

*1. The sun*

*2. Rest*

*3. Exercise*

*4. Diet*

*5. Self-respect*

*6. Friends*

*Stick to them at all stages of your life and enjoy a healthy life...*

*If you see the moon, you will see the beauty of God...*

*If you see the sun, you will see the power of God...*

*If you see a mirror, you will see God's best creation. So believe it.*

*We are all tourists, God is our travel agent who has*

*already identified our routes,*

*bookings and destinations... trust him and enjoy life.*

*Life is just a journey! Therefore, live today!*

*Tomorrow may not be.*

**On the perils of holding a Rose Queen celebration**

The Rectory

St. James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

On reflection, inviting your parishioners to join in our annual Rose Queen celebrations may not have been entirely wise. It was cheering to see that your people arrived on carnival floats, although it was less happy that some of them should have chosen to dress up as coronavirus bugs, full of those nasty spike proteins – that startled some of the timid residents in our community.

Once the procession started, your drivers did not seem to have grasped the fact that the vehicles were expected to tour the village slowly, for the benefit of spectators, instead of treating it as a competitive race. I noticed that numbers on your floats gradually diminished as they were flung off while careering round corners. Those who had a walk of several miles back home while dressed as pirates and ballerinas had my sympathy. Our tea ladies, however, were less sympathetic when one of your hay bales was spun off on a tight corner and went through our Women’s Guild like a row of skittles.

The local police normally use the afternoon to do a little gentle point duty while drinking gallons of sweet tea; this year, the number of tickets issued for speeding, and not social distancing, should boost our constabulary’s figures for the next 12 months.

I must concede that the group who decided to make a *papier mache* swan for one of your floats showed great imagination. It was such a pity that they did not know a 15-foot-high swan would be driven under a 12-foot bridge. The drama of its emergence, headless, was only exceeded by the following float which appeared to have a group of Brownies being savaged by a demented, bodiless, vulture.

I am sure that some of your people’s offers to help this year’s Princesses campaign for election for Rose Queen next year were well-meant. However, I don’t think our parish really wants a full-blown social media campaign for next year’s Rose Queen, and so we will have to decline your offer.

The crowning of the Rose Queen is always a high point to the afternoon, but could I point out that the ‘gold’ crown is only metal foil, and the ‘diamond’ sceptre is only a piece of glass? So, whoever it was in your crowd who walked off with them, please may we have them back before next year?

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

**This is YOUR magazine!**

We work hard each month to prepare a magazine which we hope you find informative, interesting and amusing. It is also an opportunity for you to contribute to the edition by providing anything you may find of interest (articles or photographs).

We have absolutely no idea how many of you read each edition or indeed whether you like it or not! Do you think the content is fine or would you like something different?

We would very much appreciate your comments and/or contributions, which you can submit by email: *magazine@staugustinestm.org.uk*

We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

**Time to smile!**

**Mea Culpa**

A group of lads took a trip to France and decided to attend Mass in a small town, even though none of them understood French. They managed to stand, kneel and sit when the rest of the congregation did, so it wouldn’t be obvious they were tourists. At one point, the priest spoke and the man sitting next to them stood up, so they got up, too. The entire congregation broke into hearty laughter.

After the service they approached the priest, who spoke English, and asked him what had been so funny. The priest said he had announced a birth in the parish and had asked the father to stand up.

**Finding**

The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in the dark.

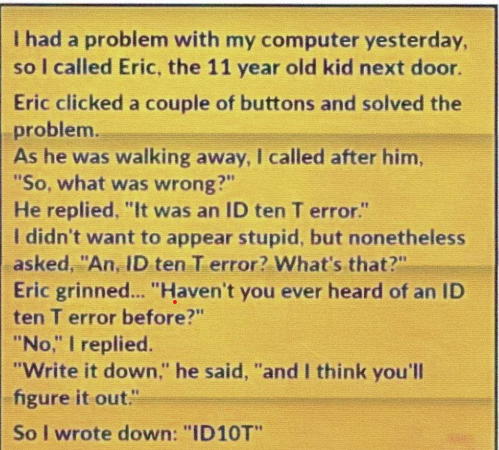
**Coronavirus – warning about vaccine**

This happened recently and is an important lesson for our friends and family in the older age group. A friend had his second doze of vaccine at the vaccination centre. Shortly afterwards he began to have blurred vision and struggled to get home.

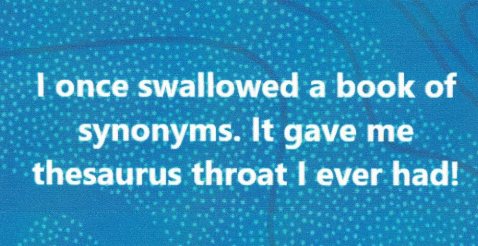
He rang the vaccination centre and asked if he should go straight to the hospital for help. He was told NOT to go to the hospital, but instead to return at once to the vaccination centre and pick up his glasses….

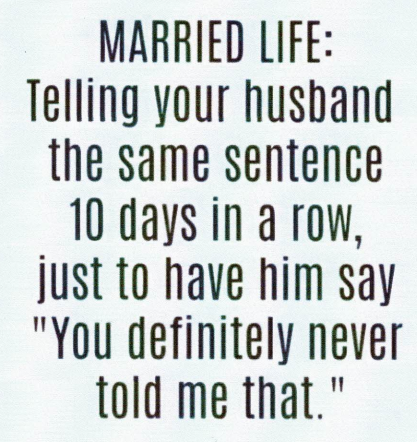
**Gift?**

I asked my mother if I was a gifted child.  She said I must be, because they certainly wouldn’t have paid for me.





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**What did I do with the car?**

As I left a meeting at our church, I could not find my car keys. They were not in my pockets. They were not in the church. Then I thought – I’ve left them in the car! As I burst through the doors of the church, my heart sank: the church car park was empty.

With a heavy heart I called the police, confessed that I had left my keys in the car, and that it had been stolen. Then I made the really difficult call, and told my wife that the car had been stolen. There was a little gasp.  “You did not *have the car*.  I dropped you off.  Remember?”

My heart sang as relief flooded through me. “Of course! Thank God! Well, come get me quick – I am already running late… what is keeping you?”

My wife replied with ominous calm: “What’s keeping me? I’ll tell you what’s keeping me.  The police are here. They think I’ve stolen the car…”

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**The puppies**

A client brought a litter of Golden Retriever puppies to the local veterinary clinic for inoculations and worming.  As the look-alike pups tumbled over and under one another in their box, the experienced vet realised it would be difficult to tell which had been treated and which hadn’t. So, the vet turned on the water tap, wet her fingers and gently moistened each dog’s head as she finished giving it the necessary shots.

After the fourth puppy, the vet noticed her hitherto talkative client had grown silent and was looking rather reverent.  As the animal doctor sprinkled the last pup’s head, the owner leaned forward and whispered, “Thank you so much. I hadn’t realised you baptised them, too.”

\*\*

**How to stay safe this Spring**

Avoid riding in automobiles. They are responsible for 20% of all fatal accidents.  
Do not stay home. 17% of all accidents occur in the home.  
Avoid walking on streets or pavements. 14% of all accidents occur to pedestrians.  
Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water. 16% of all accidents involve these forms of transportation.  
Of the remaining 33%, 32% of all deaths occur in Hospitals. So, above all else, *avoid hospitals.*

BUT:

You will be pleased to learn that only .001% of all deaths occur in worship services in church, and these are usually related to previous physical disorders. Therefore, logic tells us that the safest place for you to be at any given point in time is at church!

A Bible study is safe, too. In fact, the percentage of deaths that occur during Bible study is not even .001%…

So, attend church, and read your Bible *– IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!*

\*\*

**True love?**

I was officiating at a wedding and during the preparations the bride and groom wanted to have two turtledoves on the altar as a symbol of their forever love. I politely said no birds or animals.

They hid the birds in a back room, anyway. Immediately after the service they went outside, each of them with a bird in its cage. They opened the cages in unison. One bird flew out and made a hard right turn. The other flew out and made a hard left turn.

We all stood there watching the symbols of their forever love fly off in opposite directions.

*A true story from the Revd Mark Martin*

**\*\*Miscellaneous observations on daily life:**

You know you’re into middle age when you realise that caution is the only thing you care to exercise.

Some people you’re glad to see coming; some people you’re glad to see going.

You do not need a parachute to skydive – you need a parachute to skydive *twice*.

The only thing to fear is fear itself… and spiders.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

March 23rd Roy Harwarden (80) *(correction)*

25th Minnie Briscoe (90) *(correction)*

April 13th Hilda Catterall Heath (90)

Parish Dates

SUN 2nd 12.15pm: Holy Baptism

2.00pm: 100 Club Draw

Wed 5th 7.30pm: Walsingham Cell mass with Rosary

SUN 9th 2.00pm: APCM (via Zoom)

Thur 13th ASCENSION DAY: Mass 7.30pm

Tue 18th Home Communions in the area

Wed 19th 7.30pm: PCC Standing Committee

Thur 20th 9.45am-3.30pm: Clergy Diocesan Conference (Zoom)

Fri 21st Home Communions in the area

SUN 23rd PENTECOST

6.00pm: Churches Together in Tonge Moor service (St Augustine’s)

Tue 25th Deanery Synod (venue tbc)

Thur 27th 7.30pm: St Augustine’s Patronal Festival

SUN 30th 12.15pm: Holy Baptism

Calendar and Intentions for May 2021

Sat 1 feria: All those preparing for marriage this month

SUN 2 5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER: The Parish and the People of God

Mon 3 **SS PHILIP AND JAMES:** The we may bring others to know Jesus

Tue 4 **THE ENGLISH MARTYRS:** The persecuted

Wed 5 feria: Our Walsingham Cell of St Nicholas

Thu 6 feria: Our local Councillors and Borough officials

Fri 7 feria: Confessors and their penitents

Sat 8 feria: Our local tradespeople

SUN 9 6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER: The Parish and the People of God

Mon 10 feria: Our PCC, Churchwardens and Church officers

Tue 11 feria: The mentally ill and those who care for them

Wed 12 feria: The work of local hospitals and hospices

Thu 13 **ASCENSION OF OUR LORD**: The Parish and the People of God

Fri 14 **S MATTHIAS:** The work of missionaries

Sat 15 feria: The Bishops of Beverley, Ebbsfleet and Richborough

SUN 16 7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER: The Parish and the People of God

Mon 17 feria: The work of Social Services

Tue 18 feria: Those receiving the Blessed Sacrament in their homes this month

Wed 19 feria: The work and mission of the Mother’s Union

Thu 20 feria: The Bishop of Manchester and his staff

Fri 21 feria: The work of ACS and Vocations to the Sacred Priesthood

Sat 22 feria: Religious communities and vocations to the religious life

SUN 23 PENTECOST: The Parish and the People of God

Mon 24 feria: Walmsley Deanery, its churches and congregations

Tue 25 S Bede the Venerable: the pursuit of truth in the lessons of the past

Wed 26 S Philip Neri: Earnestness on prayer

Thu 27 S AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY: The Parish and the People of God

Fri 28 feria: The homeless, the unemployed and the lonely

Sat 29 feria: The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham and its Priests Associate

SUN 30 TRINITY SUNDAY: The Parish and the People of God

Mon 31 **VISITATION OF THE BVM:** All expectant parents

**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: *please contact the wardens for the time being*

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

Brownies: Nichola Smith Tel: 07748 188215 - email: brownies@

Sunday School: Ruth Taylor Tel: 01204 396409

Mothers’ Union: Elsie Hollinrake Tel: 07486 982586 - email: mu@

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: hallbookings@

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@