

PARISH MAGAZINE

MARCH 2022

St. Augustine and St. Aidan



Tonge Moor and Hall i' th' Wood

30p



Parish Priest - Father Tony Davies

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CHURCH WARDENS

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

OFFICERS AND ORGANISERS

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Parish Hall Bookings: Sandra Anderson Tel: 01204 383158
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Dear friends

As the deadline for this edition of the *Parish Paper* arrives, tension at the border between Ukraine and Russia show no signs of diminishing: in fact, they are rising with each passing day. Despite now-discredited assurances that their troops were returning to base, Russia's build-up along its border with Ukraine - both in Russia itself and in Belarus - continues.

It seems quite clear that the people of Russia are hearing only what their political masters want them to hear, and so believe Mr Putin's outrageous claims of genocide by the Ukrainians against Russian-speakers in the east of Ukraine; and that Mr Putin cares little for what the rest of the world thinks.

As Mr Putin appears determined to recover at least part of what was lost of the Soviet Union three decades ago, the prospect of war in eastern Europe looks more and more likely, despite the medium-strength sanctions imposed by the US, UK and Germany in recent days. Should Mr Putin succeed in invading Ukraine, other authoritarian states will feel emboldened to do likewise: think particularly of China and independent Taiwan.

Yet Western reprisals by the West (at present only sanctions are being mentioned) will undoubtedly result in counter-reprisals by Russia. These may well make life a little harder for us in the west. We must remember, though, that our difficulties will be as nothing to the difficulties that would be experienced by Ukrainians under foreign occupation.

Christianity preaches a Gospel of freedom - freedom from sin and from the fear of eternal death, but also freedom from oppression. All people are made in God's image, and deserve to be free to live their lives peaceably. In another context, Christ said: "Blessed are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your

reward will be great in heaven.” Being faithful to Christ may bring us hardships, which we must endure joyfully, for we suffer them for Christ.

When we stand up to bullies in the classroom or playground, we may also suffer, in the short-term; but we know we are doing the right thing. In resisting the bully in the Kremlin, our democratic governments are also doing the right thing, in supporting our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, whether Christian or non-Christian.

It is likely that any retaliatory action by Mr Putin will affect all of us in some way. As Christians, we should bear these hardships, too, with joy and equanimity, knowing that we are doing the right thing.

As Christians we should also of course pray: pray for the people of Ukraine; pray also for Mr. Putin; pray that war may be averted, and pray for all those who will be most affected if war does come to Ukraine.

With my love and prayers

Fr Tony

[*Russia invaded Ukraine at 3am GMT, 23rd February]

LENT 2022

As mentioned in last month’s *Parish Paper*, Lent this year almost completely fills the month of March. Lent is always an important season in the Church’s year, as we prepare ourselves to celebrate afresh the wonderful life-giving sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus on the Cross, and his subsequent Resurrection to glorious and new life.

To help us in this preparation the church encourages us to do three things: to renew our resolve to pray regularly and renew our spiritual life; to fast (ie, the give up those things which draw

Calendar and Intentions for March 2022

Tue	1	S DAVID: The people of Wales
Wed	2	ASH WEDNESDAY: The Parish and the People of God
Thu	3	feria: Those receiving the Blessed Sacrament in their homes this month
Fri	4	feria: For a faithful keeping of Lent
Sat	5	feria: Those picking litter in the parish today
SUN	6	1ST SUNDAY OF LENT: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	7	Ss Perpetua, Felicity and companions: All who suffer for their Christian faith
Tue	8	feria: The Bishop of Manchester and his staff
Wed	9	feria: The new Mission Communities in the diocese
Thu	10	feria: The work of local hospitals and hospices
Fri	11	feria: Our Sunday School and the Schools in the Parish
Sat	12	feria: Those attending our Messy Church today
SUN	13	2ND SUNDAY OF LENT: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	14	feria: Those suffering from Covid-19 and Long Covid
Tue	15	feria: The work of The Society and Forward in Faith
Wed	16	feria: The social life of our Parish community
Thu	17	S PATRICK: The people of Ireland
Fri	18	feria: Our local Councillors and Borough officials
Sat	19	S JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF BVM: The Parish and the People of God
SUN	20	3RD SUNDAY OF LENT: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	21	feria: All parishes in interregnum
Tue	22	feria: Our PCC and Church officers
Wed	23	feria: Bolton Deanery, its churches and congregations
Thu	24	feria: Our local tradespeople
Fri	25	THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD: The Parish and the People of God
Sat	26	feria: The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham and its Priests Associate
SUN	27	4TH SUNDAY OF LENT: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	28	feria: The Unity of Christ’s church
Tue	29	feria: Those developing and administering Covid vaccinations
Wed	30	feria: The Bishop of Burnley, and all Bishops of The Society
Thu	31	feria: The work of ACS and Vocations to the Sacred Priesthood

PARISH DATES

Wed	2nd	ASH WEDNESDAY: Masses 10.30am and 7:30pm
Fri	4th	7.30pm: Stations of the Cross
Sat	5th	10.30am: Litter Picking in the parish
Sun	6th	6.30pm: Evensong & Benediction
Tue	8th	7.00pm: PCC Standing Committee
Wed	9th	7.30pm: Lent Group (St Matthew's, Little Lever)
Fri	11th	7.30pm: Stations of the Cross
Sat	12th	11.00am: Messy Church
Sun	13th	6.30pm: Evensong & Benediction
Mon	14th	1.30pm: Crafts Afternoon (Parish Hall)
Wed	16th	2.00pm: Mothers' Union mass and Lenten Devotion 7.30pm: Lent Group (St Matthew's, Little Lever)
Fri	18th	7.30pm: Stations of the Cross
Sat	19th	1.00pm: St Patrick's Day Social
Sun	20th	3.00pm: Baptism Preparation Class 4.00pm: Marriage Preparation Class 6.30pm: Evensong & Benediction
Tue	22nd	7.30pm: Mass and PCC meeting
Wed	23rd	7.30pm: Lent Group (St Matthew's, Little Lever)
Fri	25th	6.30pm: Stations of the Cross 7.30pm: ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD: Sung Mass
Sat	26th	10.45am: Churches Together in Tonge Moor
Sun	27th	6.30pm: Evensong & Benediction
Mon	28th	1.30pm: Crafts Afternoon (Parish Hall)
Tue	29th	2.00pm: "Blue Talk" Saving the Oceans (Manchester Cathedral)
Wed	30th	7.30pm: Lent Group (St Matthew's, Little Lever)

us away from God and his love, and to take up things that draw us closer to him); and to give alms, willingly and generously.

I will be saying the Daily Office in St Augustine's each morning at the revised time of 9am (excluding Sunday and Mondays, and Saturday 19th March), and each evening at 5.30pm (excluding Mondays and Saturday 19th and 25th March) - and 6.30pm on Sundays. Please join me if you can. Bible Reading notes can be bought online or from the Isaiah 53 Bookshop on Crown Street in Bolton.

Fasting not primarily about "giving up chocolate for Lent", even less so things we don't usually have or use much anyway. There may be activities or practices, for example, that prevent us from coming to receive the Sacraments at church as often as we ought, or which squeeze out time for prayer. In addition, we can also take things up, such as attending the Lent Groups, being held this year at St Matthew's, Little Lever (BL3 1HH). The Stations of the Cross is a devotion of approximately 45 minutes, beginning at 7.30pm each Friday evening, which considers the various stops ("stations") made by Jesus on his way to Calvary. The Office of Evensong, incorporating the wonderful Sacramental devotion of Benediction, takes place each Sunday during Lent. It would be wonderful to see more people share in this act of worship.

Almsgiving, both to the Church and to the needy, is an important aspect of Christian discipleship. Throughout Lent, we invite you to support the work of the Additional Curates' Society, which provide financial support enabling poor parishes to have curates. You may have your own favourite charities which help the poor and needy both in this country and abroad. And of course, there's the Church: have you considered recently whether or not your giving to the Parish is realistic and sacrificial?

Our drawing closer to God and to his love may alert in us areas where we have fallen short in our discipleship, or where we become conscious of having hurt other or indeed God himself. God has provided his Church with the wonderful healing

sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), in which we can bring before God, in total confidence, those areas of our lives for which we desire his healing and forgiveness. I will be available to hear Confessions in the Lady Chapel on Saturday 9th April at 6.00pm, Tuesday 12th April at 7.00pm. And at other times by mutual arrangement.

The season of Lent culminates in Holy Week, the high-point and climax of the Christian year. Elsewhere in this magazine there is a letter from Bishop Philip, who is providing pastoral and spiritual oversight to the Parish until such time as a new Bishop of Beverley is appointed. Do take to heart his appeal to join with me in Manchester Cathedral on Holy Tuesday 12th April for the annual Chrism mass.

The major liturgies of Holy Week are ones which all Christians ought to attend and be part of: the Maundy Thursday Liturgy at 7.30pm; the Good Friday Liturgy at 10.30am; and the Easter vigil at 8.30pm on Saturday evening. Please put them in our diaries. They form a special single liturgy, the Triduum, and lead us through the passion, death and Resurrection of Jesus, that won our freedom from sin, and gained our eternal life.

Fr Tony

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

There will be a sung mass at St Augustine's at 7.30pm on Friday 25th March, as we celebrate the angel's message to Mary that she had been chosen to bear the Saviour of the world, and her acceptance of that invitation as Christ is conceived in her womb.

The Annunciation is a Solemnity (a major Festival) of the Church, and having a sung, rather than said, mass is an expression of its importance. It would be good to have full congregation present, both reflecting the fact that the Christian faith is lived each and

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

HOLY BAPTISM

January 30th	Oliver Jones
February 13th	Louie Paul Knowles Dylan Thomas Greenhalgh

ADMISSION TO COMMUNION BEFORE CONFIRMATION

February 6th	Evie Ruth Watson
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CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

February 2nd	William Alfred Fairclough (89)
4th	Doris Smith (98)
8th	Dorina Mary Wallace (65)
15th	Mavis Smith (90)



What did your mum need to know about your dad before she married him?

1. His last name.
2. She had to know his background, like has he put anything too disgusting on Facebook?
3. She needed to check out his bank account, to make sure he could buy her clothes.

Why did your mum marry your dad?

1. My dad makes the best spaghetti in the world. And my mum eats a lot.
2. She got too old to do anything else with him.
3. My grandma says that no one will ever know.

Who's the boss at your house?

1. Dad is, because mum says so. She just helps by reminding him what to do each day.
2. Mum. You can tell by room inspection. She sees the stuff under the bed.
3. Dad was, until Mum found what he had written on Facebook about Granny.

What's the difference between mums & dads?

1. Mums work at work and work at home and dads just go to work at work.
2. Mums know how to talk to teachers without scaring them.
3. Dads are taller and stronger, but they panic when the dishwasher overflows.

every day, not only on Sundays, and also giving the lie to those who consider non-Sunday worship to be unimportant. (Stations of the Cross will be at the earlier time of 6.30pm.)

Fr Tony

A LETTER FROM BISHOP PHILIP

Dear Friends,

This comes with my love and prayers as you keep the holy season of Lent. In these forty days we prepare ourselves through prayer, fasting and penitence to renew our baptismal promises at Easter. The privilege of refreshing our baptismal commitment to serving Jesus and following him is the highlight of the church's year and a joy for us all.

During Holy Week I will be inviting your priest to dedicate his life anew to priestly service at the Chrism Mass. Surrounded by his fellow priests, he will make again the promises of Ordination in order to be prepared to serve you through Holy Week and then for the rest of the year. At the same Mass the oils which are used for ministry are blessed.

Without God's people, there is no point in priesthood, and so I am writing in the hope that at least a few of you from your Parish might be able to attend the Chrism Mass to pray for your priest as he takes this important step. The Chrism is a joyful celebration and a wonderful chance to join together with fellow Christians at the start of Holy Week. It will also give us an opportunity to pray together for the appointment of a wise and holy new Bishop of Beverley.

The Chrism Mass this year will take place at 11.30am on Tuesday April 12th in Manchester Cathedral (M3 1SX). It is very close to Manchester Victoria station and the shops! It would be really good to see you there.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Christ in his Church.

*Yours,
Bishop Philip*

100 CLUB NEWS

The eleventh monthly draw was in the Parish Hall on Sunday 6th February 2022.

First Prize Number 16 - Elsie Hollinrake - wins £25

Second Prize Number 21 - Marie Stamp - wins £15

Third Prize Number 42 - Ted Hale - wins £10

The twelfth, and final draw for this term will be on Sunday 6th March 2022, in the Parish Hall

**It is now time to renew your number/s.
It is just £12 per number (£1 per month).**

If you are not a member and would like to join or want to take an extra number, please see David or Ruth Taylor.

CHURCH CLEANING

There is a small group of parishioners who give up a morning each month. Apart from the cleaning they have tea/coffee, biscuits and social chat as well,

Why God made mums

These were the answers given by some seven- year-olds...

Why did God make mothers?

1. She's the only one who knows all the passwords we use online.
2. Mostly to clean the house, I think.
3. To help us out of there when we were getting born.

How did God make mothers?

1. He used dirt, just like for the rest of us.
2. I've heard it was some amazing experiment on men that got out of hand.
3. God made my mum just the same like He made me. He just used bigger parts.

Why did God give you to your mother, and not to some other mum?

1. We're related.
2. God knew she likes me a lot more than other kids' mums like me.
3. Other mums wouldn't understand about me being afraid in the dark.

What kind of little girl was your mum?

1. My mum has always been my mum and none of that other stuff.
2. I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.
3. They say she used to be nice.

Leprosy thrives in poverty-stricken areas and Ethiopia is no exception. In 2020 there were over 2,500 new cases of leprosy diagnosed in Ethiopia; and it's so sad that nearly 400 of these were children.

The fighting between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has been ongoing since November 2020. It escalated in October 2021, causing widespread damage and destruction in the northern regions of Amhara and Afar. The recent atrocities in this country have severely impacted people affected by leprosy, disability, and other vulnerable groups such as women and children. Ethiopia really needs our prayers.

Many who had to leave their homes and walk hundreds of miles to reach a safe neighbourhood, are now slowly returning to their villages. Thankfully fighting on the ground has decreased, but those returning home find what little they had has been damaged or destroyed. In addition to physical injuries and material loss, they are also facing immense psychological trauma. Please join us in praying for these people, who are living a life of fear, hunger, and pain. Pray that God will put a hedge of protection around their communities, placing His army of angels to guard against further attacks.

and the ability to cope with the immense loss that they are experiencing.

Your prayers are vital in supporting the people we serve around the world. Thank you for partnering with us in prayer.

Yours in Christ

Sarah



The next date for cleaning is
21st March 2022.
Meeting at 10.00am.

Many hands make light work!

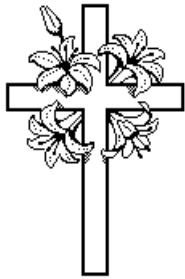
The date/time could be subject to change, but usually decided by the Sunday, the day before, and is coordinated by Lilian Schofield 01204 303137. Check with the church's Facebook group.

BOLTON BUS PRESERVATION GROUP

presents
An Evening Slide Show
of
UK TROLLEYBUSES
and
BUSES TO THE SEASIDE
to be held in
St Augustine's Church Hall

Monday 7th March 2022
7.30pm
Admission £5.00
Including refreshments

All proceeds to the continued work of the BBPG



The Grand Easter Draw

Thank you to those who have already pledged or given prizes for the 2022 Grand Easter Draw, to be drawn after the 10.30 Mass on Easter Day 17th April.

The 1st prize will be £100 Cash,
2nd Prize Bottle of Whisky and
3rd Large Easter Egg.

We would be happy to have contributions towards the cash prize and also any other pledges/donations of prizes.

Tickets are just 50p each (£2.50 for a book) and will be available shortly.

Please let David or Ruth Taylor know how you can contribute towards the Draw



Save the date! *Saturday 23rd*
April.

Watch out for details of the
St George's Day Social!

course do flower arrangements for the stage, and our sidesmen would greet the campers as they arrived. We would provide a full choral Evensong on Friday night, to help set the tone for the weekend. When the farmer gasped something about heavy metal, I was able to reassure him. "Heavy metal? We're doing that Saturday morning from about 6am, when our bellringers will give a three-hour exhibition of change ringing." The farmer pleaded something about singing, and I was able to reassure him on that point as well: "On Sunday we'll do a Songs of Praise, and not to worry, your campers can choose their favourite hymns from 'Ancient and Modern'."

I was thanked profusely, but the following week, our dear farmer wrote to tell me he had decided to graze sheep on his field after all. Shame about that.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



This month we're praying for Ethiopia, a country which for many years has been gripped by famine. Although the standard of living has risen more recently, and the mortality rate in children and mothers has decreased, Ethiopia is still one of the poorest countries in the world. A third of the population lives below the poverty line. There are not enough doctors, and access to healthcare and safe water are still poor.

On how to sabotage a music festival

The Rectory
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

It seemed such an innocent suggestion. A local farmer announced he wanted to arrange a Spring music festival. I could already hear Mozart string quartets being played in our Lady Chapel, and arias from Donizetti operas being sung *al fresco* in the Glebe field, while we sipped champagne in the warm Spring sunshine and admired the flowers.

Unfortunately, our farmer was thinking of a heavy metal weekend in one of his fields. The teacups began to rattle when village talk turned to portable lavatories, mobile catering vans and using the churchyard for overflow camping space. Then the police arrived to discuss crowd control and drug policy. At James the Least of All we tend more towards congenial dinner parties, with drugs labelled Bollinger or Glenfiddich.

That was the point when Colonel Trubshaw began to search out his old shotgun. His wife even stopped serving coffee after Mattins, in order to patrol the perimeter of their estate with their arthritic spaniel. On the other hand, Miss Little went a little mad. She exchanged her usual tweeds and brogues and pearls for a red bandana, long patchwork dress and peace beads. She must have enjoyed the 1960s.

It was time to take action, so I told our farmer that St James the Least of All would support him to the hilt. Our ladies would of



SEEING IS BELIEVING!

The last Messy Church had us finding out about a sermon and blessings

The next session has us finding out about
The Transfiguration.

Find out more

**Saturday
12th March
2022**

11am - 1pm



St Augustine's Parish Hall

- Whatever your age – come and enjoy being creative!
- Join us for activities, crafts, and a short period of worship then a simple meal.
- There will be no charge for this event.
- Children will need to be accompanied by an adult at all times.

NB the Messy Church is a week earlier than usual, as there is a St Patrick's Day Social on 19th March.

Also note that April Messy Church will also be a week earlier Saturday 9th April, as 16th April is Holy Saturday.

The Pianist

*Like the blackbird, over the misty greenness
Surveys his landscape of the waking world,
So she sits, with poised hands and head
Over her black and white kingdom.
Hear this morning melody in the clear
Washed air of dawn – this early oblation
Before the noise of day.
Listen now to the pebble round sound
Of water, limpid, liquid, flowing free.
Be aware of lark's ecstatic soaring song
Deep chords of pasture in the heat of day
And cuckoo calls in haze of summer noon,
Passion slow beating louder then
Soul sings in unison.
Dear Heaven – how can this sound hold all
But yet it does, for in this stream of notes
This sea – this ocean roar – is swift
Encounter with the isles of God.
Still evening comes with bell tones
Sweet agony of harmony – these nightingale notes
That touch the intangible.
Dusk deepens, darkness falls and then above
Staccato brilliance of the evening stars
Dazzle the spirit into joyous song.
Sound then silence – the last note dies away
These hands that recreate your world are stilled
Wood dove sleeps – and the flow tide of peace
Washes over the shore.*

Jocelyn Darbyshire

ACS ensures that the Christian faith is proclaimed in poor and densely populated parishes by encouraging vocations to the priesthood and funding assistant priests. It asks people to pray for the mission of the church in addition to providing literature to broaden their vision and awaken an interest in the priesthood.

ACS was founded by a Christian layman, Joshua Watson, in 1873. It continues to exist because of the enthusiasm, faithful prayers and generosity of people throughout the country. As the Society acknowledges, times are difficult but says 'Every penny donated will help to provide priests for parishes'.

The Society has sent individual collecting boxes for our use and it is hoped that, during Lent, you will feel able to contribute whatever you can. If you are a tax payer, you can gift-aid your donation thereby increasing its value to ACS.

Thank you for your support which is greatly valued.

Ken Fisher

My son made the mistake of telling me I was being over-dramatic. So I just changed the wi-fi password. We'll see who is being over-dramatic in about six minutes!

Vicar said, "If anyone thinks they are perfect, come and stand here". Presently, a man got up from the congregation and went and stood there. The Vicar said, "So, you think you are perfect, do you?" The man replied, "Yes, I am standing here as a representative of my wife's first husband!"

27th March: Mothering Sunday, 4th Sunday in Lent

There is an old Jewish saying: *God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.*

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families, which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed, and in many ways now resembles the American Mother's Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.

Additional Curates Society 2022 Lenten Appeal

We have been asked by the Additional Curates Society (ACS) to support its Lenten appeal, as we have done in previous years.

Keep Tonge Moor tidy!
Join us on the first Saturday of
each month



We will meet after the 10am Mass
approx 10.30am in St Augustine's
Parish Hall.
Grabbers, bags
High viz jackets provided.
Do as much as you feel able!
Meet back at The Parish Hall for Brew
& Bikkies approx 11.30am

The Litter Pick for April will be Saturday 2nd April



Thank you to Fr. Tony for our MU Mass last month and also to Linda Parkington for leading the Crafternoon Tea after the Mass.

This month we meet on Wednesday 16th March at 2,00pm, when Fr. Tony will lead our Lenten Devotion. Our meeting following this Mass will discuss Transforming Mothers Union and how our Branch can move forward.

Our Walmsley Deanery is now amalgamated into the Bolton Deanery. As a means of getting to know each other the new Deanery is to hold an Afternoon Tea at St. Augustine's in May. It is hoped as many members as possible will attend.

Craft afternoons this month will be on Mondays' 14th and 28th March starting at 1.30pm

Elsie Hollinrake



Walsingham News

Well done and thank you to everyone who paid their Society subs. Elsie was able to hand over an almost complete set of payments to the Membership Secretary, with a promise of the few outstanding ones to follow before Easter.

It was great to share some social time together after the Sung Mass on Candlemass and enjoy cake and scones with tea or

Christian Fellowship, for whom he did speaking tours. It was on one of these tours that he was taken ill, and sadly died in Liverpool in 1929. He was only 46.

His compassion and generosity in the face of the horrors of the Western Front was immortalised in the song 'Absent Friends': "Woodbine Willie couldn't rest until he'd/given every bloke a final smoke/before the killing." He himself had once described his chaplain's ministry as taking "a box of fags in your haversack, and a great deal of love in your heart."

25th March: Lady Day or The Annunciation

This beautiful event (Luke 1:26-38) took place in Nazareth, when Mary is already betrothed to Joseph. The Archangel Gabriel comes to Mary, greets her as highly favoured, tells her not to be afraid, that she will bear a son Jesus, and that her elderly cousin Elizabeth is already pregnant (with John the Baptist).

The church calendar is never quite as neat as some would like it. To celebrate the Annunciation on 25th March does indeed place the conception of Jesus exactly nine months from His birth on 25th December, but the latter part of March almost inevitably falls during Lent. But the birth and death of Jesus are intrinsically linked - He was born to die, and thus fulfil God's purposes.

The Annunciation is a significant date in the Christian calendar - it is one of the most frequent depicted in Christian art. Gabriel's gracious strength and Mary's humble dignity have inspired many artists. Certainly, Mary's response to the angel has for centuries been an example of good faith in practice - humility, enquiry of God, and trusting acceptance in His will for her life.

and classics at Trinity College Dublin, he'd studied for ordination at Ripon Clergy College, and served his curacy at Rugby.

By the time war broke out in 1914, Studdert Kennedy was vicar of St Paul's Worcester. He soon volunteered to go to the Western Front as a chaplain to the army. Life on the front line in the trenches was a desperate affair, but soon Studdert Kennedy had hit on a way of bringing a few moments of relief to the stressed-out soldiers: as well as good cheer he gave out copious amounts of 'Woodbines', the most popular cheap cigarette of the time.

One colleague remembered Kennedy: "he'd come down into the trenches and say prayers with the men, have a cuppa out of a dirty tin mug and tell a joke as good as any of us. He was a chain smoker and always carried a packet of Woodbine cigarettes that he would give out in handfuls to us lads. That's how he got his nickname. He came down the trench one day to cheer us up. Had his Bible with him as usual. Well, I'd been there for weeks, unable to write home, of course, we were going over the top later that day. I asked him if he would write to my sweetheart at home, tell her I was still alive and, so far, in one piece... years later, after the war, she showed me the letter he'd sent, very nice it was. A lovely letter. My wife kept it until she died."

Kennedy was devoted to his men, so much so that in 1917 he was awarded the Military Cross at Messines Ridge, after running into no man's land in order to help the wounded during an attack on the German frontline.

During the war, Kennedy supported the British military effort with enthusiasm, but soon after the war, he turned to Christian socialism and pacifism. He was given charge of St Edmunds in Lombard St, London, and took to writing a number of poems about his war experiences: *Rough Rhymes of a Padre* (1918) and *More Rough Rhymes* (1919). He went on to work for the Industrial

coffee. As is our custom, we shall do the something similar after the 7.30pm Sung Mass on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord on 25th March.

Elsie and I have just returned from Walsingham after the annual Partnership Weekend. It was almost the last event the Shrine hosted in 2020 as the 1st Lockdown began shortly afterwards and of course it didn't happen last year. We usually go a day early and this Thursday journey proved to be exceptionally speedy so we had time to walk the stunning snowdrop trail in the Abbey grounds and have delicious coffee and cake in the new Epiphany tea-room before we booked into the Shine accommodation. Notice of the Abbey grounds closure the following day, in light of the expected high winds and possible tree damage, was already up.

Currently there are 345 active Partners, each of whom may bring one guest. We are usually over a hundred including about a dozen locals, but sadly due to Storms Dudley and Eunice a few had their travel plans totally disrupted and others came a day late. Still, 90 of us was a very pleasing number.

The programme follows a regular pattern but is always different in content. Friday supper was followed by an exceptionally entertaining and fascinating talk by The Revd Dr Robert Beaken who is a parish priest in the Chelmsford Diocese and a regular pilgrim to the Shrine. He has written several books on prayer and liturgical matters but this talk was about researching and writing his books on Cosmo Lang (who was Archbishop of Canterbury in the interesting years between 1928 and 1942) and the diaries of Alan Don who was his chaplain as well as being chaplain to the King and the Speaker during a similar timespan. The final part was a very amusing recount of his meeting with the Queen Mother a while after her 100th birthday. He had been promised just 15 minutes to see her but very unusually it turned into not much

short of an hour. Fr Robert's delivery was superb and he proved to be an inspired choice.

After breakfast on Saturday Fr Kevin introduced Fr Ben, spoke about the last two years and reminded us of the Guardians' Mission Statement, which is on the Shrine web-site - and worth a look if you haven't seen it. The carousel of speakers gave us a summary of what's happened (or not) at the Shrine in the last two years, we heard of the next stage in improvements and mission and indulged in some nostalgia about the Shrine's history in this Jubilee year. We also heard how the new(ish) sacristan's former roles at Bath Abbey and Bristol Cathedral (to name but two) helped to lead him to England's Nazareth. Glynn told us he will be looking for volunteers to assist with some work in St Augustine's Library in the not-too-distant future. Sounds right up my street! The afternoon visit out was to Holt but three of us gave that up to host a Priory Conservatory drop-in sale of crafts and cards on Saturday afternoon when we raised an amazing £232.50 for the Priory Charity of the Year. The Saturday evening formal dinner was excellent and entertainment by the Fakenham Ukes followed - a band of ukulele players, who were so much fun and went down an absolute storm.

Of course there were opportunities for worship and devotions with Mass in the Shrine Church and at St Mary's as well as Benediction and Sprinkling. Over 20 of us went to Shrine Prayers on Sunday, which as usual was led by Sr Carol.

Elsie shared our Cell's programme card with others, including Keith Tuck whose role and profile as Pilgrim Engagement Officer figured in the latest *Review*. There also seemed to be a parish magazine swap going on so we shall definitely be part of that next time. It's a very useful way to see how Cells across the parishes go about things from their advance notices. I wonder how many get a regular article...

A good time to admit you are sorry

Have you done something which haunts you? Which makes you feel restless and defensive, every time you think of it? Why not deal with it this month, and put it behind you? Whatever your mistake has been, consider what the Bible has to say to you:

'I have not come to call the virtuous but sinners to repentance' (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55.7)

'Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.' (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to Him this Ash Wednesday. What a wonderful offer! Make the most of it and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

8th March: Woodbine Willie, bringing love with cigarettes and the Bible

Here's a 'saint' that the Church of England remembers from the 1st World War - the Revd Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy MC, or 'Woodbine Willie', as everyone knew this popular, much-loved army chaplain on the Western Front.

Studdert Kennedy (27th June 1883 - 8th March 1929) had been born in Leeds as the seventh of nine children. After reading divinity

19). Ash Wednesday became known as either the 'beginning of the fast' or 'the day of the ashes'.

The collect for today goes back to the Prayer Book, and it stresses the penitential character of the day. It encourages us with the reminder of the readiness of God to forgive us and to renew us.

The Bible readings for today are often Joel 2:1-2, 12-18, Matthew 6: 1-6, 16 - 21 and Paul's moving catalogue of suffering, "as having nothing and yet possessing everything." (2 Corinthians 5:20b - 6:10)

The actual custom of 'ashing' was abolished at the Reformation, though the old name for the day remained. Today, throughout the Church of England, receiving the mark of ashes on one's forehead is optional. Certainly, the mark of ashes on the forehead reminds people of their mortality: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return..." (Genesis 3:19)

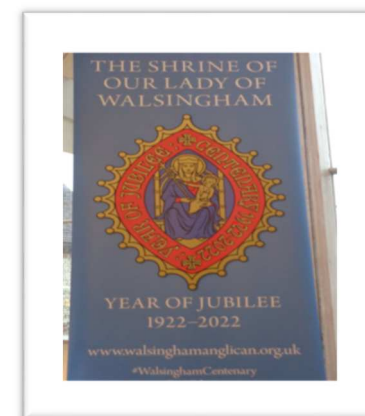
The late medieval custom was to burn the branches used on Palm Sunday in the previous year in order to create the ashes for today.

The Collect for Ash Wednesday is:

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All too soon it was time to return north on Monday. We met our very good friends from Chesterfield, Cheltenham, Cornwall and Derby and also got to know others from Leeds, Rotherham and Abingdon. Members of the Partnership are spread far and wide but know that the weekend will be well worth the travel for however many days they can manage. Very well done to Keith and Stuart Grout who planned and co-ordinated everything, and thanks to everyone concerned for such a great event.

Linda Parkington



Thought for the day

Do bees have knees and, if so, why are they the best?

Did you hear about the policeman who found a man trying to
get through the back of a wardrobe?

When the policeman asked him what he was doing the man
replied, 'It's Narnia business!'

1st March: Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day

Ever wonder why we eat pancakes just before Lent? The tradition dates back to Anglo-Saxon times, when Christians spent Lent in repentance and severe fasting.

So on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the church bell would summon them to confession, where they would be 'shriven', or absolved from their sins, which gives us *Shrove* Tuesday. At home, they would then eat up their last eggs and fat, and making a pancake was the easiest way to do this. For the next 47 days, they pretty well starved themselves.

Pancakes feature in cookery books as far back as 1439, and today's pancake races are in remembrance of a panicked woman back in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire. She was making pancakes when she heard the shriving bell calling her to confession. Afraid she'd be late, she ran to the church in a panic, still in her apron, and still holding the pan.

Flipping pancakes is also centuries old. A poem from Pasquil's Palin in 1619 runs: "And every man and maide doe take their turne, And tosse their Pancakes up for feare they burne."

Some people have noted that the ingredients of pancakes can be used to highlight four significant things about this time of year: eggs stand for creation, flour is the staff of life, while salt keeps things wholesome, and milk stands for purity.

Shrove Tuesday is always 47 days before Easter Sunday and falls between 3rd February and 9th March.

2nd March Ash Wednesday: Mourning our sins

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why 'Ash' Wednesday? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally came to their senses, and saw their evil ways as God saw them, they could do nothing but repent in sorrow. They mourned for the damage and evil they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head, and even rending your clothes, was an outward sign of their heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of sin. (See Genesis 18:27; 2 Samuel 13:19; Job 2:8, 30:19; Isaiah 58:5; Jeremiah 6:26; Jonah 3:6)

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly 'class' of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time, and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom, and to do so at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to 'rend your hearts and not your garments' (Joel 2:12-