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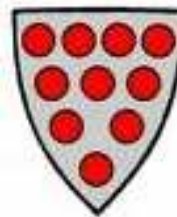
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ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD



Parish Church Magazine



RECTOR: The Revd Canon Greville Cross, The Rectory, Old Swinford, Stourbridge, DY8 2HA Tel: 01384 395410
E-mail: canon.cross@btinternet.com

CURATE: The Revd Ruth Atkinson, 58 Arlington Court, Old Swinford, Stourbridge, DY8 1NN Tel: 01384 373286
E-mail: home@riatkinson.plus.com

July / August 2010

40p

SUNDAYS AT ST MARY'S

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Parish Communion
6.30 pm	Evensong
10.00 am	(second Sunday) Worship Together

WEEKDAYS AT ST MARY'S

Daily:	9.00 am - Morning Prayer (except Fridays and Saturdays) Morning Prayer on Thursdays will alternate between St Mary's and St Thomas'
Daily:	5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (except Fridays)
Wednesday:	1.30 pm - Noah's Ark at St Mary's (term time) parents & toddlers
Thursday:	10.30 am - Holy Communion in Lady Chapel
Thursday:	7.30 pm - Bell ringing Practice
Friday:	Choir Practice and Youth Groups (in term time)
Saturday:	10.00—12.00 am - Open Church –refreshments available
Rector's and Curate's Day Off:	Friday

OTHER REGULAR EVENTS

Bible Study Groups:	Tuesday, last in month at 2.30 pm	(Tel: 379972)
Mothers' Union:	Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm	(Tel: 422677)
Outreach Group:	Occasional meetings	(Tel: 01562 851491)
Music Group Practice:	Second Saturday at 10.00 am	(Tel: 441003)
St Mary's Walking Group:	Last Saturday of the month.	Depart 9.30 am

Reader Emeritus and

Parish Publicity Officer:	Mr Roy Peacock	379972
Reader:	Mrs Kanthi Ariaraj	395115
Church Wardens:	Mr Edward Haden	378104
	Mrs Marjorie Ferguson	393454
Organist / Choirmaster:	Mr Robin Walker	01905 353939
Treasurer:	Mr Richard Harris	395760
PCC Secretary:	Miss Katey Fletcher	378182
Magazine Editors:	Miss Gemma Sutton	825983
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661

Church Hall and

Coach House: - Bookings	Parish Office	441003
Coach House - Enquiries	Mrs Pamela Green	371415
Parish Administrator:	Mr John Sutton	441003
Parish Office:	Open 9.00 am -12.00 noon Monday to Friday	441003
Church Website Address:	www.stmaryschurcholdswinford.org.uk	
	Email: st.mary.os@btinternet.com	

Magazine website stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk

ENQUIRIES ABOUT WEDDINGS, BANNS OF MARRIAGE, BAPTISMS.

Please come to the Church on Saturday morning between 10.00 and 11.00 for Vestry Hour. You will be warmly welcomed. Tea and coffee will be available.

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP

The weather forecast for 29th May (Bank Holiday weekend) was correct. We awoke to grey skies and rain. We half hoped that nobody would be waiting to join us for the walk, but we were wrong. Eight of us caught the 9:49 train from Stourbridge Junction to Olton where we joined the towpath of the Grand Union Canal. We walked for about two miles admiring the young waterfowl (nineteen ducklings, seven goslings and two moorhen chicks). On leaving the canal, there was a stretch of road walking, broken by a short coffee break in a small wooded area. We passed the Jaguar Land Rover site and then took to footpaths across farmland. In places the grass was very long so our boots and trousers quickly absorbed the rainwater.

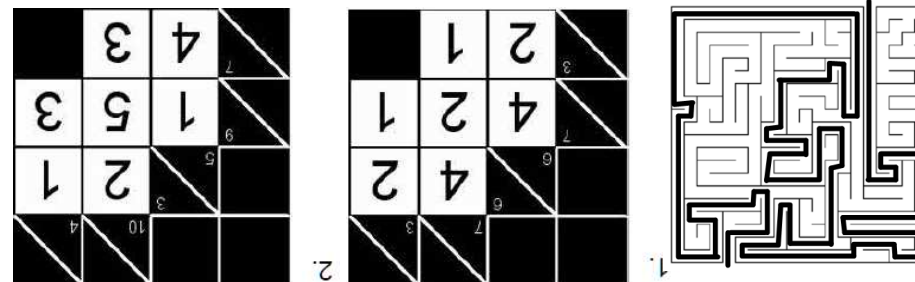
In sight of the NEC we could hear aeroplanes taking off from Birmingham Airport passing directly overhead, but the cloud was so low that we could not make out their logos. We had another refreshment stop and noticed about six swallows (or were they swifts?) flying very low over the field. The very busy M42 was then crossed by a footbridge level with the field and we continued on our way into Hampton in Arden, where we caught trains home, changing stations in Birmingham.

It was still raining but, as we were all holders of Centro pensioners passes, it had been a very economical day!

Cliff and Chris Day

Why not hope for real summer sunshine, give yourself or the whole family some exercise and join Janet and Mike Blaxland on the July walk in the Church Stretton area on Saturday, 31 July. Ring 01384 390537 for more details. There is no walk in August. Look out for the programme of walks for the coming twelve months in the September issue of the Parish Magazine.

Children's Page Answers



PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

16 May	Ruby Elizabeth Patrick
23 May	Jonathon Bramwell Price Mark Anthony Corfield Laura Charlotte Harris

Weddings

21 May	Samuel Turner and Kathryn Winning
22 May	Eliot-Scott Clifton and Leanne Pagett
29 May	Michael Joyce and Susan Chandler
12 June	James Bedford and Lucy Haden

Funerals

24 May	Vera Camm	aged 78
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100 YEARS AGO

It seems that there is some truth in the idea that history repeats itself, especially concerning difficult economic challenges as this extract from the 1910 archives shows.....

Faced with demands from the Board of Education for improvements to the Cloak Room, improved lighting and ventilation and large additions to the outside sanitary offices, the School Managers were compelled to appeal to the parishioners and owners of the property for financial support to the tune of at least £250. Should this money not be found the Managers believed the school would be closed and the consequence would be to place the whole burden of elementary education in the parish on the ratepayers. This would incur the cost of building a new school at a cost of between £6-7000, the entire cost having to be met by the ratepayers of the area served by the school.

DIARY FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2010

JULY

Thursday 1	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 3	St Thomas 10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour 2.00 pm Ordination of Priests in the Cathedral
SUNDAY 4	THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 10.30 am Ordination of Deacons in the Cathedral 7.30 pm Holy Communion. First Celebration for Ruth
Monday 5	7.30 pm First Tuesday Fellowship at the Rectory
Tuesday 6	10.30 am Holy Communion
Thursday 8	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
Saturday 10	THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 11.30 am Holy Communion at Hollycroft
SUNDAY 11	7.30 pm PCC at the Rectory
Tuesday 13	10.30 am Holy Communion
Thursday 15	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
Saturday 17	THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 2.00 pm Family Fun Day
SUNDAY 18	7.00 pm Old Swinford Primary School Leavers Service
Wednesday 21	St Mary Magdalene
Thursday 22	10.30 am Mothers' Union Corporate Communion
Saturday 24	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 25	ST JAMES THE APOSTLE 12.00 noon Parish Picnic
Wednesday 28	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge
Thursday 29	10.30 am Holy Communion
Saturday 31	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour

AUGUST

SUNDAY 1	THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 10.30 am Holy Communion
Thursday 5	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
Saturday 7	THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (N.B. 10 am Parish Communion, not Worship Together)
SUNDAY 8	Copy date for September magazine
Tuesday 10	10.30 am Holy Communion
Thursday 12	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
Saturday 14	THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 10.30 am Holy Communion
SUNDAY 15	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
Thursday 19	THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY St Bartholomew the Apostle
Saturday 21	Mothers' Union Corporate Communion
SUNDAY 22	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
Tuesday 24	THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 9.30 am Standing Committee at the Rectory
Thursday 26	
Saturday 28	
SUNDAY 29	
Tuesday 31	

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

July begins with ordinations. This year the Bishop has decided to ordain Deacons and Priests separately although both services are to take place in the Cathedral. We are looking forward to Ruth's ordination as a Priest on Saturday 3rd July at 2.00 pm and to Philip Bradford being made Deacon on Sunday 4th July at 10.30 am. He is to serve as curate at St Martin's on the London Road in Worcester. I hope as many as possible will be able to support them on these occasions. Ruth will celebrate her First Communion at St Mary's on Monday 5th July at 7.30 pm to which all are most warmly invited. The Bishop's charge to those being ordained priest includes these words:

Priests are called to be servants and shepherds among the people to whom they are sent. With their Bishop and fellow ministers, they are to proclaim the word of the Lord and to watch for the signs of God's new creation. They are to be messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord; they are to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for his family, to search for his children in the wilderness of this world's temptations, and to guide them through its confusions, that they may be saved through Christ for ever. Formed by the word, they are to call their hearers to repentance and to declare in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins.

This is hugely demanding and those of us who are ordained know that we can only begin to fulfil this calling with the prayerful support of the people we are called to serve. Please pray especially for Ruth and Philip at this very particular time of their lives.

As you will see later in this edition Helen Plaice, who has been our Parish Administrator for the last six years, has moved to a full time post in a local school. I am immensely grateful for the contribution she has made to the running of our parish and the tremendous help she has been to me and wish her well for the future. I'm very pleased that John Sutton has been appointed as our Administrator and he will start in the middle of August. Please bear with us in the meantime.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Greville

AND FOR THE WINE.....

Earlier in the year [March to be precise] we were treating ourselves to a red-fruited trifle cake. I remarked at the time that medium-sweet red wines can be a tricky area and suggested concocting a Chambord/Champagne cocktail. Since then, I notice that Tesco now stock a mini Chambord [250ml] promoting exactly this drink. And lo and behold the likes of Budgens and Londis now sell a Zibibbo Rosa [yeah, they do, do they?!!] Zibibbo is in fact one of the Muscat family. Brown Brothers from Australia specialise in reviving obscure grape varieties and may have scored a hit here in a market dominated by Asti. A rose-scented medium-sweet sparkler - bring on the warm sunshine and ripe fruits for our summer trifle! As summer advances and our tomato plants slowly ripen, we wait..... So why not follow Ann's example and press a tin of tomatoes into service? Where the dish contains chickpeas, courgettes and garlic we tend to think 'rustic' and wisely opt for an inexpensive wine. Normally a white wine works best with such flavours : a Verdelho perhaps. Tomatoes add a touch of sweetness and chillies a palate-numbing effect, so we might go for the fruits of a Cotes de Gascogne. Commonly off-dry it is the wine they make from Armagnac grapes with some Petit Manseng added : back to those obscure grape varieties eh? Enjoy your summer sipping



Richard W B Ryan

EMAIL CONTACTS SOUGHT

Our partner church, St Augustin's in Magdeburg, is looking for young people connected with St Mary's to correspond by e-mail. If anyone would like to take up this opportunity, please contact Philip Bartram on philbartram@btinternet.com.

Tobias E. (boy, 17)

Ulrike M. (girl, 17)

Ingrid Z. (girl, 18)

Melissa Noack (girl, 18)

Lisa Tretrop (girl, 17)

Almuth Bartels (girl, 17)

Paula Hinz (girl, 17)

Daniel Bunk (boy, 16)

Lisa Paschalischwili (girl, 16) Madeleine Magalowski (girl, 17)

Philip Bartram

SUNDAY SERVICES IN AUGUST

Date	Service	Readings		
1 August 9th Sunday after Trinity	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Eccles. 1. 2, 12-14;2.18-23	Colossians 3. 1-11	Luke 12. 13-21
	6.30 pm Evensong	Eccles 1. 2, 12-14;2.18-23	Luke 12. 13-21	
8 August 10th Sunday after Trinity	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Genesis 15. 1-6	Hebrews 11. 1-3,8-16	Luke 12. 32-40
	6.30 pm Evensong	Genesis 15. 1-6	Luke 12. 32-40	
15 August 11th Sunday after Trinity	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Jeremiah 23. 23-29	Hebrews 11. 29-12.2	Luke 1. 46-55
	6.30 pm Evensong	Jeremiah 23. 23-29	Luke 1. 46-55	
22 August 12th Sunday after Trinity	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Isaiah 58. 9b-14	Hebrews 12. 18-29	Luke 13. 10-17
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 58. 9b-14	Luke 13. 10-17	
29 August 13th Sunday after Trinity	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Proverbs 25. 6-7	Hebrews 13. 1-8, 15-16	Luke 14 1, 7-14
	6.30 pm Evensong	Proverbs 25. 6-7	Luke 14. 1, 7-14	

After coffee and a welcome from Greville, Roy Peacock gave a talk on the story of the church highlighting the 14th century tower and 16th century bells, the 1842 nave, 1898 chancel and wonderful refurbishment of today's building. He also explained the work of some benefactors from the Foley family to Ernest Stevens. Over lunch we discovered that that our visiting friends whose parishes are in the Forest of Dean also had direct links with the Ironmaster family of the Foleys – what a small world we live in!

Kanthi, our Lay Reader, led the afternoon service. She spoke on the spiritual journey, purpose and commitment of love and obedience to the Kingdom of God required and given by MU members.

Mrs Betty Taylor had served MU for 50 years and after the service received her long service certificate from Greville. Betty thanked MU for the fellowship and friendship she had valued so much.



Above: Betty receives her certificate from Greville

Farewell refreshments of tea and cake were served and although our visitors had arrived on a very wet June day the sun shone in the afternoon as they journeyed home and our fellowship was renewed.

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 7 July at 7.30 pm: - Diocesan Festival at St James's, Wollaston.
Tuesday 13 July at 2.00 pm: - Branch outing to the Old Palace, Worcester.

Dawn Nex

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

When Christ said 'I was in prison and you visited me', he did not draw a distinction between the guilty and the innocent.

Pope John Paul II

NEWS AND NOTES

Saturday, 5th June: our talented Director of Music travelled to Worcester Cathedral with the choir, there to sing Evensong. On the next day they were involved in yet more services providing the musical lead.

We used to love going to the Cathedral and I felt I would like to be there again. My dear friends Pauline and William Pettit asked if I would like to join them as they were planning to go as well. So off we set with plenty of time to spare.

On reaching Worcester, William parked the car and into this wonderful building we went. To our delight we found a display of children's art in the Cloisters - very innovative and so colourful.

Deciding to visit the Refectory we found the menu was as follows:-

Bishop's Tea - Scone, cream, jam, butter and tea.

Dean's Tea - Toasted Tea Cake, etc

Chorister's Tea - Sponge Cake and Tea.

We chose to 'lord it' on the Bishop's Tea whilst the choir members were tucking in together.

Pauline and I needed cards from the shop. After, we 'popped' across the road into certain shops for a little retail therapy!

Returning to the Cathedral we were in good time to find seats in the choir stalls. Soon after Robin and the Chior processed in and Evensong began. The Choir had worked so hard and with such commitment. Their singing was much appreciated.

Last Saturday morning we found ourselves in the Coach House enjoying coffee, biscuits and chatter. Congratulations on a very happy and successful morning.

Congratulations to Greville and Pauline's son Anthony and Nadia Cross who were recently married in Winchester and to Lucy Haden and James Bedford married at St Mary's on Saturday 12th June.

May both these couples be blessed with long and happy marriages.

Anne Davies

.....

ST MARY'S WITH ST JOHN'S MOTHERS' UNION

Last year our branch visited our former curate Jennifer Doores' parish and we were hosted by members of the Mothers' Union of Cam and Stinchcombe. This year it was a delight to have the joy of hosting their branch at St Mary's and a radiant Jennifer (now Mrs McKenzie) with them.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL CHILDREN All Age Fun Afternoon



The Diocese of Worcester is hosting a Fun Afternoon at St Mary's Church on **Sunday 18th July from 2.00-5.00**. There will be lots of fun with a short all age service, drummers, face painting, bouncy castle, games and activities. The afternoon will finish with a tea party with cake and more fun. Look out for posters

and fliers about the event and bring your Grannies and Granddads, Mums and Dads, Godparents and brothers and sisters and join in the fun. It would be helpful if you could e-mail Ruth, the St Mary's curate, on home@riatkinson.plus.com to say you are coming so that we know how many cakes to make. If you can't e-mail you may leave a note in the tray at the back of church.

OUR MILLENNIUM YEW

It is ten years since I went to Worcester to collect our Millennium Yew, one of 8000 provided to churches by the Conservation Foundation to mark the 2000 years since the birth of Christ. It was just a sprig in a pot, grown from a 2000 year old tree in the south of the country.

It was planted in front of the church after the 10.00 am service on a May morning. A young David Timms performed the planting while the congregation looked on. Here it could be guarded from being pulled up, trimmed down or vandalised in our vast churchyard. Now, ten years on, we have a flourishing young tree as you can see from the front cover picture kindly taken by Philip Bartram.

The Foundation has asked for news of these yews and we have sent proof of the vitality of our tree. As it is now well established we hope to mark it and provide an information label for future generations. What a treasure it will be in another 1000 years!

Doreen Ryan

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT ST MARY'S

The Sunday School goes back a long way in the history of St Mary's.

It is recorded that, in 1785 a Sunday School was commenced, and, later, in 1825 a large elevated building was erected in Glasshouse Hill to accommodate two parochial Sunday Schools, which, by 1832 educated some 400 scholars. In 1859 a new church school was erected in Craufurd Street. Pupils continued to meet there until 1977 when the nineteenth century building was demolished and replaced by flatlets for the elderly.

One is reminded of the words from a hymn "Through all the changing scenes of Life". Yes! Change happens whether we like it or not.

I have had the privilege of working with the children at St Mary's for sixty-six years and it has been a very important and treasured part of my Christian journey. Being with the children has given me the greatest joy.

Wendy Tranter

The editors are keen to present an account of the Sunday School at St Mary's and are seeking the support of anyone who has memories of their personal involvement or knowledge of the Sunday School during past years. Please submit your information by e-mail or written text or, should you prefer, contact one of the editors to arrange a meeting at which you can tell your tale.

.....

THANK YOU

We would like to say a very big thank you to all who supported our fund raising coffee morning in aid of funds to make improvements in the Church Hall. Faced with the need to improve heating and insulation in this much used facility this was the first big step on our journey to raise the necessary money and to make everyone aware of our challenge. We made over £400 on the day, a very encouraging response considering the disappointing weather.

Special thanks to Margaret Woodall for superbly overseeing the event, to all who made cakes and those who came to serve. Also thanks are due to Mike Woodall and Geoff Davies for running the raffle and to those who helped transport tables and chairs to and from the Narthex.

We now look forward and invite you to join us at a Supper Evening with Entertainment on Saturday, 25th September. Look out for details in the weeks to come.....and make a note of the date in your diary.

Ian Ferguson

DUNKIRK – SEVENTY YEARS ON

Seventy years on after Dunkirk brings to mind two men, Donald Lunt and Albert Partridge, who are named on our church war memorial. Both were in the Worcestershire Territorials and were called upon to serve overseas in January 1940. They spent the severe winter of 1940 in trenches on the French border with Belgium during the period known as the 'Twilight War'. When the German army launched its Blitzkrieg attack on France and Belgium on the 10 May, the Worcesters advanced into Belgium to undertake its defence. German strategy, however, had deceived both the French and British High Command and this advance led the troops into an enormous trap. Although quick-moving German tanks swept behind them in a surprise pincer movement, British troops, including the Worcesters, were ordered to hold up Rommel's tanks. Two Companies suffered severely in this attack and immediately orders arrived to retreat to the port of Dunkirk.

About 400 men, the two Companies not involved in the attack, eventually reached Dunkirk and were saved. The two rear Companies, including Donald Lunt and Albert Partridge, did not. Some 250 were killed or wounded and 150 were taken to Germany as prisoners of war. They were among those who delayed the Germans sufficiently for the evacuation of a third of a million men to escape at the cost of their own lives.

Donald Lunt was a Second Lieutenant and the headstone of his grave



suggests the confusion of the retreat. He was buried in Wormhoudt Cemetery together with a soldier of the Royal Artillery and the date of his death is inscribed unusually as 22-26th May 1940. Private Albert Partridge was killed on the 26th May and is commemorated on the Dunkirk Memorial. Both lived in Oldswinford and attended St. Mary's. There is a small brass plate on one of the kneeling desks in the church to commemorate Donald Lunt. He was 22 years of age and was the only son of Albert and Mabel Lunt who lived at Field Cottage, Glasshouse Hill. The family owned a coal delivery business and Mabel Lunt became the first, and only, lady Mayor of Stourbridge. .

Roy Peacock

CHOIR TRIP TO WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

On the weekend of the 5/6th June 2010, St Mary's choiristers were the visiting choir at Worcester Cathedral. The weekend started with a rehearsal at our own church, before a rehearsal in the cathedral to enable us to get used to the feel and sound of the acoustics. After a short break, during which a much needed cup of tea was provided, we sang our first Evensong of the weekend. This service took place in the cathedral chapel, which made the whole service feel more personal. Our music included our much loved responses by Bill Ingley, 'Behold the Tabernacle of God' (William Harris), the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis setting in B Minor composed by T. Tertius Noble, as well as a favourite hymn 'O Worship the King all glorious above'.

We all went to bed that night worn out, but we knew Sunday was going to be even harder! It was an early start for us as we were at the cathedral by 9am ready to practise the morning music before the service. The Eucharist service took place in the main nave of the church, and included the 'Little Organ Mass' by Haydn and 'O Thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray' by Bill Ingley. Everyone was very impressed that we not only performed our own pieces spectacularly, but we also managed to learn the Eucharistic setting that Worcester uses on a weekly basis!

After a couple of hours break for lunch it was back into the cathedral chapel to prepare for Evensong at 4pm. During this service we sang the Ingley responses again, as well as the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis setting in A Major by Herbert Sumson, 'The Secret of Christ' (Richard Shephard) and the hymn 'The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended'. We also sang Ave Verum by Edward Elgar as a special tribute during a small blessing after the service as it was the Elgar commemorative weekend.

We had been anticipating this weekend at Worcester Cathedral for more than a year, and when it finally came around it was extremely hard work, but very rewarding and an excellent experience for everyone in the choir. It was particularly heart-warming to see familiar faces who came to support us at all three services, thank you. We even had a special text from our Rector in Austria wishing us luck!

As a thank you from the cathedral, we received a framed copy of a page from the Worcester Antiphoner, which is displayed in the vestry if you want to have a look.

A special thank you must go to the extra tenors who were drafted in, Spencer Lamb and Peter Sheppard. Also thanks to Richard Hall who played the organ for us all weekend, enabling Robin to wave his arms at us and make sure we were absolutely spot on! Well done to the entire choir, it was a brilliant weekend when we showed that St Mary's Parish Choir is a force to be reckoned with! And finally, thank you so much Robin, for all your hard work and time, and for making the whole event possible. Where are we going next?

Becca Sutton

FAMILY NEWS



Philip Alexander Bartram and his wife Eliane who live in Redhill, Surrey, brought their twelve week-old son, Howard on his first visit to Stourbridge for the Spring Bank Holiday. Philip, 30, works for a commercial solicitors' firm in London and Eliane is on maternity leave from Philips UK, the Netherlands electronics' manufacturer.



CHRISTIAN AID - MAY 2010

My thanks to all those collectors who participated in the 'Knocking on Doors' during Christian Aid Week. Together we collected £2199.73, a pleasing result taking into account the challenging economic times we are facing at present. The above figure includes £415.00 from Old Swinford C of E Primary School. My thanks go to the Headteacher, Mr Pepper, the staff and, most importantly, the children who completed all kinds of jobs to raise money for this worthy cause. Sixty-two contributors took the trouble to Gift Aid their contributions with the result that Christian Aid will benefit by a further £215 from reclaimed tax.

When going from door to door I have on occasions been politely challenged as to what happens to the money. Does it get where it is intended to go? It is worth remembering that the work of Christian Aid is about helping all faiths and none, and does not give money to governments but works directly with local organisations on the ground. Above all, Christian Aid believes in helping people find their own lasting solutions to poverty.

It is so very easy for us to simply take for granted our regular rainfall, safe water on tap, plentiful supply of food and our generally cushioned existence. It is good to know that our efforts through Christian Aid will play a part in helping those less fortunate than ourselves.

Thank you once again.

Stan Williams

More information can be found at christianaid.org.uk

PILGRIMAGE TO OBERAMMERGAU

There are several different dictionary definitions of 'pilgrimage' but in a general interpretation a pilgrimage might be regarded as 'a journey to fulfil a spiritual goal during which one may encounter obstacles, discomforts and suffering on the way towards one's objectives'. The difficulties and hardships endured during the travelling serve as a penitence for one's sins and heightens the anticipation of spiritual joy at the end of the journey.

Our trip to Oberammergau and beyond took on a rather different format and style compared with previous pilgrimages with groups from St Mary's and some regarded it initially as more of a holiday. However the experience of the trip seemed to fulfil all the criteria of a pilgrimage – both in terms of the whole package but also through individual events and activities within the programme. And we were after all travelling under the banner of McCabe Pilgrimages!

To many, any travel abroad is an endurance exercise with threatened disruption from volcanic ash, industrial actions, discomforts of security checks and long waits at the airport. However our travels to Oberammergau were relatively smooth: the greater disappointments and problems arose from the adverse weather which spoilt the enjoyment of the scenery and caused road closures and diversions.

For some, the Passion Play was the real pilgrimage. 'Travelling' through the performance was in itself a marathon only partially relieved by an extended interval. The content was also demanding mentally and spiritually. The play was spoken in German and even with the English translation it was difficult to follow much of the dialogue particularly in the second half when the auditorium was dark. However a knowledge of the story-line combined with spectacular crowd scenes, colourful 'living image' tableaux, wonderful costumes, great choral music and powerful acting penetrated every emotion. Perhaps the most difficult part of 'the journey' through the play was the excessive content of aggression and brutality which I found even more disturbing by the subconscious association of the harsh German language with a more recent brutal dictatorship. Both contexts bore an uncomfortable reminder of the potential of man's inhumanity to mankind. At the end of this pilgrimage relief came in the joy of the Resurrection portrayed in the Passion Play by a splendid 'Hallelujah' anthem with an extended choir and magnificently staged crowd scene finale.

But as in all pilgrimages the Passion pPay experience also left one in deeper thought and reflection through which spiritual enrichment is enjoyed. Despite the physical, mental and spiritual discomforts during the play the enduring memories will be of forgiveness, compassion, hope, faith and love. No doubt other travellers will carry different emotions and personal reactions to the performance and I hope they may be recorded to provide a comparison and different perspective.

To be able to take part in a small, but important ceremony on your first visit to the Cathedral is also something to be pleased about. The annual commemoration of Sir Edward Elgar is very important to a number of people - particularly those in the Elgar Society - and I believe you rose magnificently to the occasion.

Britain has got talent, and there is a healthy dollop of it at St Mary's, Old Swinford. It was a pleasure to sing with you for a weekend and although I live too far away to be able to join you regularly, I look forward to the opportunity of making fine music with you all again in the future.

With every good wish,
Peter Sheppard

Just one of the tributes paid to the St Mary's Choir following their successful performance at Worcester Cathedral—see page 16

A FAMILIAR FACE IN A NEW ROLE



It is reassuring when changes take place smoothly, allowing for continuity within the evolution of inevitable change. The appointment of John Sutton to the role of Parish Administrator has assured us of a smooth transition as we welcome and support John in his new role.

John is a long-standing and devoted member of the St Mary's community, someone who will be very familiar to all who regularly worship at St Mary's. John has voluntarily filled many roles over the years in tasks that support much of the essential work of the parish. He is most well-known as the Tower Captain of the highly regarded St Mary's Bell Ringers and as such the product of his skills will be familiar to a much wider audience, even if, to most, he operates in anonymity. John can be relied upon to be present each year at the Christmas Market and Toy Service in an important role, often carrying a heavy burden for distribution in the hope of bringing festive cheer to all, but especially the young.

The opportunity to engage John in the role of Parish Administrator arose at an expedient time in his own life journey and will enable him to commit to the role with the determination and enthusiasm he promises whilst he reduces his commitment to full-time employment.

We welcome John to his new role and wish him every success and satisfaction in this new challenge which he takes up on 17th August when the office will be open Monday to Friday, 9.00am -12.00 noon.

The Editors

MOVING ON

Our warmest congratulations and best wishes are sent to Helen Plaice as she leaves the role of Parish Administrator, a role she has filled so ably during the past six years. Helen is moving on to more full-time employment in a local school.

The many people who have worked with Helen in her role will appreciate her friendly, efficient and hard-working manner and will, no doubt, each express their appreciation in their own way. These thanks are expressed collectively on behalf of all those in the Parish of St Mary's who have valued and benefitted from the knowledge, advice, support, guidance and understanding Helen has displayed in her work for our mutual good.

The magazine committee is particularly grateful to Helen for her contributions to the production of this magazine each month. We enjoyed her realisation of the recipe of the month when we tucked into Clementine and Chocolate cake last November and had hoped for a repeat delight when the opportunity presented itself. Almost as much, we have valued her eagle eye for misplaced spaces, grammatical errors or omitted essential detail in articles prepared for publication. Above all, our thanks go to Helen for her determination and commitment to ensure the magazine is printed and appears on time each month despite the challenges that have been posed occasionally by the malfunction of a printing machine that is temperamental when the temperature falls.



The Editors

IN PRAISE OF OUR CHOIR

7th June 2010

Dear Choir

I just wanted to write a few lines to thank you all for making Spencer and me feel so welcome during your weekend at Worcester. We both commented on how instead of being viewed as visitors, we felt as if we had been members of your choir for some time.

I think it must have been a very tiring weekend for some of you and it will have required an awful lot of organisation, but I can honestly say that considering this was your first visit to the Cathedral, I was very impressed indeed with the quality of your sound and how you were able to fill the vast space of the building. It's not easy to do I know, so very well done to all of you.



Pilgrimage – Part 2

Our transfer to Maria Alm for the second half of our holiday provided a completely different pilgrimage experience. While we were in Kitzbuhel we had a dramatic – some may say miraculous – change in the weather and we were able to see Austria's mountains for the first time. Our animated guide appropriately described the event as drawing the curtains back to see the scenery. During a lovely service in the village church of Maria Alm, Greville defined a pilgrimage as a slow walk with spiritual fellowship. And how we enjoyed those slow walks on the hills above the village in companionship with friends and nature, marvelling at God's work.

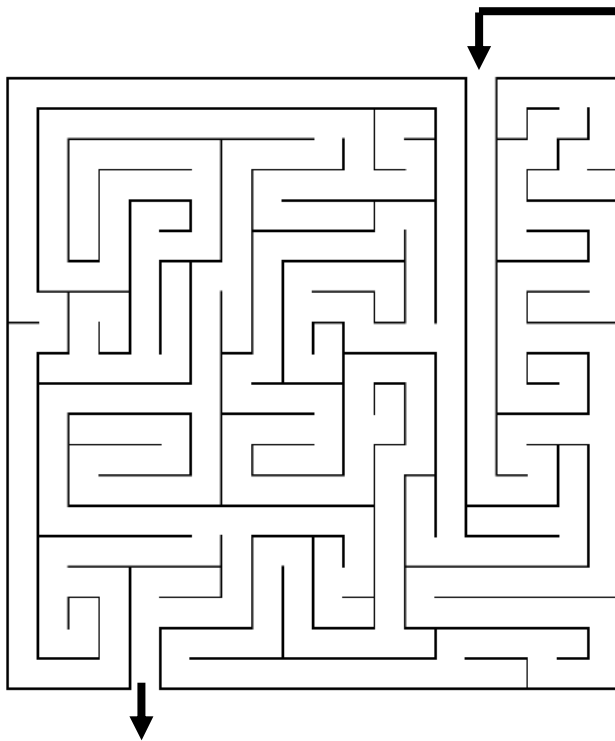
But Maria Alm also had much more relevance in pilgrimage. Our lady guide – an ex-pat from Leicester - told us of a village custom which, like the Oberammergau passion play, also started at the end of the plague. Each year many villagers make the demanding trek over the high pass to Konigsee as an act of devotion. In some years over two thousand people take part. Some of our group followed part of the route but were unable to reach the summit because of screes and ice-fields.

We were also told that the church was a pilgrims' church and it was fitting that the final event of our pilgrimage was a Pilgrims' Eucharist held in the beautiful setting of this church. We appreciated the access and opportunity to worship in this highly ornate building and also the services of the organist and two altar boys who introduced some elements of the catholic tradition into our service. We truly did leave as 'a happy band of pilgrims'.

Alec Beevers

CHILDRENS PAGE

The Summer holidays are finally here and you have 6 weeks until you go back to school; what are you going to do?



Time to go swimming perhaps?
Help these two children find their way to the swimming pool.



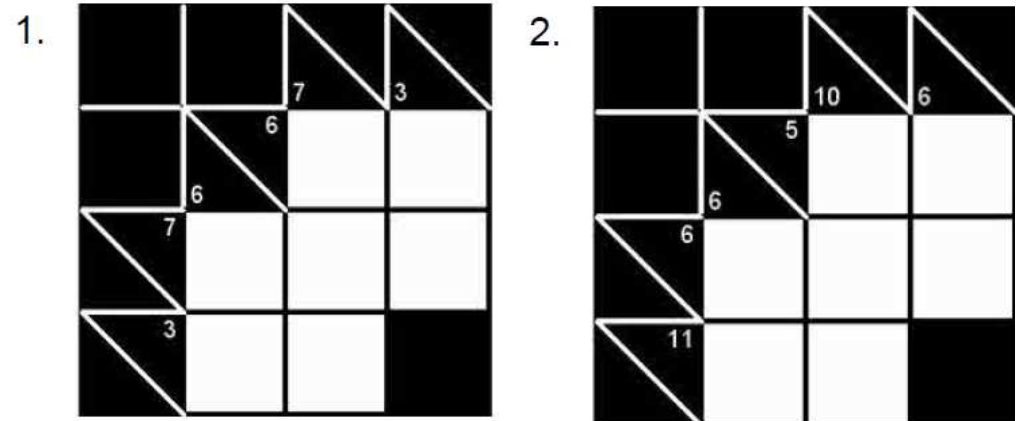
SQUARE WORD

How many words can you make from this square?
Use 3 letters or more.
Move in any direction but do not jump a square or use one letter more than once

K	I	N	G
I	D	E	A
S	L	A	T
S	E	R	E

EVER TRIED A KAKURO PUZZLE?

Kakuro are similar to crosswords in that there are black cells and white cells. In some of the black cells you will find little numbers which refer to the "run" of cells adjacent to them, either across or down. These little numbers are your clues and are the total to which the numbers you will put into each "run" should add up to. You must fill each run with numbers from 1 to 9, using each number no more than once in each run. For example, if the total of a run must be 4, you cannot use 2+2, but must use 3+1. Use logic to work out the order in which you must write in the numbers so that all the runs are correct. Kakuro puzzles are a little complicated to explain, but if you have a go you will be able to work it out!



Do you know my friend Jesus?

God loves you so much that He sent you His Son Jesus.
If you have not asked Jesus into your heart then stop right now and think about it.

Don't miss this opportunity!! You don't know what tomorrow will bring.

It is really easy to become a Christian! The Lord has a wonderful treasure chest of blessings and joy for you to share with Him. They are not material treasures or diamonds and jewels, but they are wonderful treasures that are beyond your wildest dreams. He offers you a life with the certainty of knowing that HE loves you UNCONDITIONALLY!! Even if no one else loves you He does!!!



Want to find out more? Then visit "The Story of the Wordless Book" at

<http://berean.org/bibleteacher/wb.html>