

ST MARY'S OLD SWINFORD

Parish Church Magazine

**MARCH 2016
Online edition**



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Parish Church Magazine



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MARCH 2016

50p

SUNDAYS AT ST MARY'S

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Parish Communion and Children Together
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)
Daily:	5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (except Fridays)
Wednesday:	1.30 pm - Toddlers' Group 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 noon - Open Church –refreshments available
Priest in Charge Day Off:	Friday

OTHER REGULAR EVENTS



Bible Study Group:	Monday, first in month at 2.30 pm	01384 379972
Prayer Group	Third Wednesday in month, 10 -11 am	393454
Mothers' Union:	Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm	392951
Music Group Practice:	Second Saturday at 10.00 am	375167
St Mary's Walking Group:	Last Saturday of the month.	Depart 9.30 am

Reader:	Mrs Kanthi Ariaraj	395115
Church Wardens:	Mrs Judy Hall	377349
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
Organist / Choirmaster:	Mr Robin Walker	01905 353939
Treasurer:	Mr Russ Fowler	442684
PCC Secretary:	Miss Katey Fletcher	378182
Magazine Editors:	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
	Miss Gemma Sutton	0121 360 0933

Church Hall and		
Coach House: - Bookings	Parish Office	441003
Parish Administrator and		
Publicity Officer:	Mr John Sutton	441003
Parish Office:	Open 9.00 am -12.00 noon Monday to Friday	441003
Church website address:	www.stmaryschurcholdswinford.org.uk	
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Facebook:	www.facebook.com/stmaryschurcholdswinford	
Magazine e-mail address:	stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk	

ENQUIRIES ABOUT WEDDINGS, BANNS OF MARRIAGE, BAPTISMS.

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

DIARY FOR MARCH 2016

Tuesday 1	11.30am Holy Communion at Hollycroft 7.00 pm Lent Course at St Thomas', Stourbridge.
Thursday 3	10.30 am Holy Communion in Church
Friday 4	Stephen's day off.
Saturday 5	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour 2.00—4.00pm Messy Church
SUNDAY 6	FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT– MOTHERING SUNDAY
Monday 7	1.30 pm Visit by Ham Dingle School
Tuesday 8	2.15 pm Mothers' Union Meeting in the Coach House 7.00 pm Lent Course at St Michael's, Norton
Thursday 10	Copy date for April magazine 10.30 am Holy Communion in Church
Saturday 12	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 13	THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT– WORSHIP TOGETHER
Monday 14	Open the Book Team visit to Oldswinford Primary School. 1.30 pm Visit by Ham Dingle Primary School.
Tuesday 15	2.30 pm Tea at the Coach House 7.30 pm Lent Course at Holy Trinity, Amblecote Magazine Committee Meeting
Thursday 17	10.30 am Holy Communion in Church 7.30 pm PCC Meeting at the Rectory
Friday 18	Stephen's day off
Saturday 19	10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 20	PALM SUNDAY
Monday 21	10.00 am Chrism Service at Worcester Cathedral
Tuesday 22	2.00 pm Tuesday Tea in the Narthex
Wednesday 23	10.00 am Primary Schools Unity Service 7.30 pm Coach House Committee Meeting
Thursday 24	10.30 am Mothers' Union Corporate Communion in Church 2.00 pm Old Swinford Hospital Easter Service 7.30 pm Service in Church
Friday 25	10.00 am Procession of Witness starting from St John's URC 2.00 pm Devotions at the foot of the cross 7.30 pm Choral service in Church
Saturday 26	9.30 am St Mary's Walking Group Decorate church for Easter 10.00 am Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 27	EASTER SUNDAY
Monday 28	Bank Holiday—Parish Office closed this week
Wednesday 30	11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge 7.30 pm Baptism Preparation
Thursday 31	10.30 am Holy Communion in Church 7.30 pm Coach House AGM

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

Over the next few weeks a small group of us will be travelling on pilgrimage to the Land of the Holy One, sometimes called the Holy Land, sometimes Israel, sometimes Palestine. Each one of those titles has in the background a political agenda, and perhaps the first title is the least political. The difficulty in naming our destination is perhaps a reflection on the challenge which faces any traveller when they go to that part of the world.

I know that over the years many of you have visited the land which helps to bring the stories of the Bible to life, and in your travels there you will have experienced many different emotions: some of you will have experienced awe and wonder at the sights, some will have experienced affirmation of your faith as the stories which you have known for so long took on a real and geographical dimension, some will have had their faith challenged by this place of contradictions and a few may have been left unmoved by their experience. There is no doubt that our pilgrimage will come with challenges; for some of those challenges we may be prepared, and for some we will not.

As the group of pilgrims return from their visit and we prepare to go into Holy Week, (that week when we remember the last days of Jesus' earthly life), the sights, sounds and smells of the pilgrimage will be very much in our minds; and the disturbing nature of the Land of the Holy One will only add to the disturbing nature of the Passion of Christ. For anyone who has travelled through the Middle East the stories of the Bible are changed, and they take on a new significance, a significance which is not always comfortable.

At the centre of our faith are a series of contradictions about the ordinary and commonplace becoming extraordinary, about the divine becoming human, about goodness being rewarded with crucifixion, about hope arising from despair and the human becoming divine. In this week of challenge and transformation we have the opportunity to reflect on the fact that life is not always what it seems. Situations and people can be transformed; that is the fundamental message of the Bible as it proclaims a God who is constantly seeking to draw us from where we are to become more like Him.

I am sure that our visit to the Land of the Holy One will change us in some way. I also believe that the story of Holy Week and Easter can change us if we engage with it fully, after all that story changed the world for all time 2000 years ago.

May you know the blessing of God as we come to celebrate Easter with all the hope it brings.

Stephen Agnew

SERVICES IN MARCH 2016

6 March The Fourth Sunday of Lent. Mothering Sunday	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Exodus 2. 1-10	Luke 2. 33-35
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 40. 27-41	2 Timothy 4. 1-18
13 March The Fifth Sunday of Lent	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am	WORSHIP TOGETHER	
	6.30 pm Evensong	2 Chronicles 35. 1-6, 10-16	Luke 22. 1-13
20 March Palm Sunday	8.00 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 am Parish Communion	A Reading of the Passion Narrative	
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 5. 1-7	Luke 20. 9-19
27 March Easter Day	7.45 am Holy Communion		
	10.00 pm Parish Communion	Acts 10. 34-43	John 20. 1-18
	6.30 pm Choral Evensong	Isaiah 43. 1-21	1 Corinthians 15. 1-11

COACH HOUSE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Coach House Committee wishes to provide advance notice to all interested parties that the Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Thursday 31 March 2016. You are very welcome to attend.



HOLY WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Father in heaven, as your people prepare once more to follow the events of this Holy Week, may we be led by your spirit to deeper insights into your love and saving grace; that we may love you more and serve you better, for the sake of him who died for us and rose again, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Sunday 20 March PALM SUNDAY

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Parish Communion to include a reading of the Passion narrative. This service begins in the Church Hall with palm procession into Church.

6.30 pm Evensong with sermon

21, 22, 23 March

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

6.30 pm Meditation on the Passion with Compline.

Thursday 24 MAUNDY THURSDAY

10.30 am Holy Communion.

7.30 pm Service of Holy Communion in Church

Friday 25 GOOD FRIDAY

10.00 am Walk of Witness from St John's.

2.00 pm Devotions at the foot of the cross.

7.30 pm Service of readings and music in church.

Saturday 26 HOLY SATURDAY

9.00 am Church decoration.

10.00 am Open church and vestry hour.

Sunday 27 EASTER DAY

7.45 am Holy Fire. The lighting of the Easter Candle.

8.00 am Holy Communion.

10.00 am Parish Communion.

6.30 pm Choral Evensong with sermon.



O Jesus, Master Carpenter of Nazareth, who on a Cross with wood and nails has wrought our salvation, wield well your tools in the workshop of your world, so that we, who come to you rough-hewn, may by you be fashioned according to your will; for the sake of your tender mercy. Amen

OPEN THE BOOK

Open the Book is an initiative now adopted and directed by the Bible Society which aims to provide for Bible stories to be told in an interactive, engaging and fun way to primary school children.

For several years a group of committed people from St Mary's have regularly visited Oldswinford Church of England Primary School. With simple props, costumes and bucketsful of enthusiasm and conviction in what they are sharing, stories from the Bible are read to the children in special assemblies.

Usually, a narrator leads the development of the story as characters in appropriate costume act out the events as the children watch and listen, with many of them actively involved in the presentation of the story. Simple sets and scenery are used to help with understanding and to invoke the imaginations of the children as they absorb stories that have been told for hundreds of years.

The programme provides a valuable link between church and school and between the generations. It supports schools in meeting their statutory collective worship obligations and is a completely free service offered by churches to local schools. For those who open the book to the children it serves as a much enjoyed means of sharing God's care for the world.



The St Mary's Open the Book Team is diverse, each individual offering what time and skills they can. At the beginning of each term the team meets to plan the programme and then, after each presentation, during a short meeting over coffee, roles are allocated and props planned for the next assembly.

The team has already visited Ham Dingle School and hopes to extend this link and perhaps develop others in the future. If you would like to be part of this team, to contribute to this very special and rewarding way of sharing the Good News of the Bible, please contact the Parish Administrator, John Sutton, 01384 441003, e-mail: st.mary.os@btconnect.com.

Sue Tatford

MEMORIALS IN THE BLACK HILLS OF DAKOTA

A visit to the USA during Autumn 2015 found me in the Black Hills of Dakota, a place that has been in my consciousness since I was a young boy. Having always been interested in the Native American culture this was an opportunity for some investigation at close quarters.

The Black Hills region has been described as an island of trees in a sea of grass. The landscape is predominantly clothed by Ponderosa Pine, a species with particularly dark grey-green foliage that in certain light gives the impression of being black. Regrettably, in recent years the forests have become infested by Red Band Needle Blight which causes defoliation and frequently tree mortality. Infected areas have become severely disfigured, leading to a loss of both aesthetic and commercial value. Whilst there I witnessed many square miles of needleless trees.

Between 1927 and 1941, with the help of over four hundred workers and political support, a memorial was carved on a mountainside to recognise the history of America and is known the world over as Mount Rushmore. The memorial depicts the heads of four previous presidents, Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson and Roosevelt. About the time of completion, Korczak Ziolkowski, a sculptor, was approached by the Oglala Sioux tribe asking him to consider carving a giant edifice dedicated to the American Indian. They particularly wanted the white population to realise that 'the red man has great heroes too'. Ziolkowski loved the idea and was inspired to devote the rest of his life to the project.

Tribal leaders chose the Sioux warrior Crazy Horse to be the subject and identified Thunderhead Mountain as the preferred site. Crazy Horse was born in the Black Hills and is partially credited with General Custer's defeat at the battle of The Little Bighorn. The design shows him astride a stallion with his arm and pointing hand stretched out over the horse's mane. The 563-foot-tall memorial will dwarf the four presidents on Mount Rushmore, with the horse on its own being the equivalent of twenty two storeys.



However progress has been slow. Work began in 1948 and so far only the face of Crazy Horse has emerged from the mountainside. The sculptor spent several decades alone on the task, drilling and blasting the likeness of the great leader from the granite rock. He was later assisted by Ruth, his wife, and seven of their ten children, but work was hampered by lack of money as the memorial is funded solely by private donations managed by a non-profit making organisation.

Ziolkowski died in 1982 and Ruth in 2014, but work goes on, overseen by their surviving children, thereby exemplifying the total commitment shown by one family to see the project through. As construction continues new challenges arise. Seams and cracks in the rock requires a different approach. Lasers and a carefully developed strategy involving the use of explosives have replaced chisels and drills.

The sculpture was dedicated in 1998, some fifty years after it was begun. Understandably there is a reluctance to estimate when it will be completed, but people that I spoke with were not expecting it to be finalised within the next fifty years based on the current rate of progress. The Sioux Nation will have to wait a little longer for their monument!

Rod Jukes

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP

Twenty two intrepid walkers set out from The Swan in Blakedown for a six mile walk around Blakedown, Stakenbridge and Churchill. The landlord had previously offered to open up for us to use the facilities and to place our lunch orders.

Leaving the Swan car-park we crossed over the A456, taking the footpath opposite Churchill Lane up to Hunter's Lodge.

Turning left here we followed the Monarch's Way past pools and paddocks before crossing the Belbroughton Road. Maintaining our course with the wood on our right hand side, we eventually crossed over the A456 again, passing by Harborough Farm and continuing to the road. Passing under the railway bridge we then took the path between the barn conversion and the pool, emerging by Brake Mill Farm.

We then left the Monarch's Way and turned instead on to the North Worcestershire Path to head up hill before turning left and down to another lane.

Here we had our "coffee stop" although true to January tradition, we all enjoyed a warm helping of Gluhwein.

Pressing on, we crossed the lane and climbed a muddy path before leaving the North Worcestershire Path to follow the field ridge with splendid views over the surrounding countryside. While walking the sky darkened and we did have a very few flakes of sleet, but this came to nothing.

Crossing the Churchill road, we passed through four stiles before arriving near to Churchill church. Climbing the hill the wind was really cold, so we quickly moved on following the waymarker, over a stile and down a cobbled cart track to the road. Turning off we then walked alongside Churchill and Blakedown Golf course and back to the Swan.

We had six more visitors for lunch and everyone agreed that the weather and the food had made for another very enjoyable walk.

Malcolm Frost

FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Easter



MOTHERING SUNDAY

Each year on Mothering Sunday children say a special "Thank You" to their mothers, often giving them a gift of flowers. Many years ago this was a day when young people working 'in service' would be given the day off to visit their mothers. Today it is an important occasion when we thank our mothers for all the care and help they give us.

You could make a greetings card for your Mum



To Mummy,
With Love



Colour this picture of Jesus riding on his donkey

PALM SUNDAY

This is the first day of Holy Week when we celebrate Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Crowds of people came out of the city to greet him, throwing down palm branches on the road.

In churches all over the world people will be given a cross made from a folded palm leaf.





On **Maundy Thursday** we remember when J _ _ _ _ sat down to eat a P _ S _ O _ E _ meal and ate B _ _ _ and drank W _ _ _ with his disciples. These days this is called the L _ _ _ S _ _ _ _ . This was when Jesus told his followers they should **Love and Serve One Another**.

During the days of Holy Week Jesus had been preaching in the temple. Some of the High Priests and leaders thought he would take away their power and they planned to get rid of him.

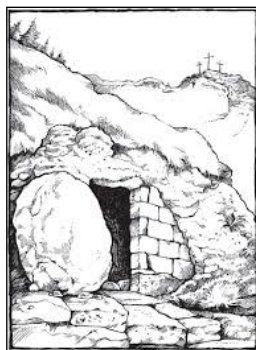


Jesus was arrested during the night of Thursday when he was praying on the Mount of Olives. He was sentenced to die on the cross. This happened on what we now call **Good Friday**, a sad day, a day of mourning, when we remember how Jesus died for us.



EASTER SUNDAY

This day is the most important day of the Christian calendar, the day on which Jesus rose from the tomb. Mary and others found the tomb empty and later saw Jesus alive again.



Children are given Easter Eggs, usually made of chocolate, as a sign of new life to celebrate the **RESURRECTION**.



This year Mothers' Union celebrates the 140th anniversary of its founding by Mary Sumner. Mary had found motherhood difficult and was reminded how she felt as she watched her eldest daughter also find it a burden. She decided to hold a meeting of young mothers from different social classes and enable them to provide support for each other. This mutual support was under-pinned by prayer. Mary strongly believed in being a good example to children, and keeping prayer central to the life of the family.

Mary and her husband are both buried in the graveyard to the south-east of Winchester Cathedral. In September the National AGM will be held in Winchester with a celebratory service being held in the cathedral

Mothers' Union remains the greatest memorial to Mary Sumner, with 4 million members in 83 countries continuing to support marriage and family life through diverse community and development projects.

In the diocese of Worcester the projects include:

- Teenage Mum project. - we support an NHS project which involves family nurses helping local teenage mums. We provide safety equipment and in some very needy cases we have provided new Moses baskets and baby clothes.
- Womens'Refuge Project. We support victims of domestic violence particularly with household goods when they move to new homes.
- Away From It All - families within the diocese are given holidays or family days out for families within the diocese. We provided three family days out in the Dudley area last year.

In our own branch two members represent the wider congregation by providing support at baptisms and presenting a knitted teddy and a card to each child being baptized. For the first 3 years following the baptism each child receives a baptism anniversary card. This year 120 cards will be delivered.

Several members of the branch provide refreshments, including a hot lunch, for those attending the two marriage preparation days held each year. This involved sixteen couples last year.

We support the diocesan projects by collecting toiletries for the Teenage Mums and Refuge projects. We are very grateful to all members of the congregation who help with this by donating items such as shampoo, shower gel, tooth brushes, tooth paste, sanitary towels, deodorant etc in the box at the back of church. During the last twelve months we have delivered over 50 toiletry bags to the appropriate place and already have enough products to make up several more. Thank you for your generosity.

Our branch also supports the Top Church Training scheme by collecting non perishable items of food which are used to prepare meals at the TCT café in Brierley Hill.

Membership of the Mothers' Union is open to anyone who has been baptized and who will support the aims and objectives. You don't have to be a

mother you just have to believe in the importance of strengthening family life within society. If you would like more information please ask or look at the MU noticeboard at the back of church.

Sally Frost

OVARIAN CANCER

The month of March has been identified as a time to raise awareness of Ovarian Cancer, this is often seen as a silent killer. The symptoms of ovarian cancer are:

Persistent pelvic or abdominal pain
Increased abdominal size/persistent bloating
Difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
Urinary symptoms



If a symptom is new for you and happens more than 12 times in one month, make an appointment to discuss your symptoms with your GP. Occasionally there are other symptoms including: changes in bowel habit, extreme fatigue, unexplained weight-loss and loss of appetite.

Thank you for being there

Printed below are two short extracts from a letter sent by a Project Worker with the Children's Society to Wendy Tranter in acknowledgment of the proceeds from our Christingle service.

Dear Miss Tranter,

*Thank you so much for your gift of £172 raised by everyone at **St Mary's Church, Old Swinford** during your Christingle celebration. I cannot tell you how grateful we are for the time and dedication you put into planning your event.*

There's nothing better than helping to change for the better, even a little bit. I know that what I am doing is making a difference to someone's life.

We acknowledge with gratitude and admiration the immense potential for 'making a difference' that has been provided in the past forty seven years through Wendy's leadership of our Christingle services and collections. Thank you Wendy.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN STOURBRIDGE WALK OF WITNESS

You are warmly invited and encouraged to share in the Walk of Witness along Stourbridge High Street on the morning of Good Friday. We meet at 9.45 am at St John's United Reform Church and starting at 10.00 am we walk in silence behind the cross through the bus station and down the High Street to the Town Clock where a short service with the Easter narrative takes place. You may join and leave the procession as you wish.

A FEBRUARY BARN DANCE

What a wonderful evening of quality family fun it was that engaged the participants at the Barn Dance on Saturday, 6 February. With over seventy people in attendance, ranging in age from six to sixty (and a bit more!), the church hall was filled with friends who had come to enjoy themselves whether as experienced followers of barn dancing practice or as spectators enjoying a rare evening out.



John and Eve Evans are legends in the world of such entertainment, a much loved couple who share their talents and fun-loving natures in a manner which is much appreciated and guarantees enjoyment, involvement and the sharing of laughter. With a mix of their singing, the musical lead of John and the always amusing instructions provided by Eve, the majority of those present rose to their feet each time we were called to the next dance. A few days later

there may be some doubt as to the names of the dances or whether they could be reproduced without Eve's direction, but there is no doubt of the fun shared and enjoyed by all on the night in question.

The social committee had organised the evening with a fish and chip supper which was served half way through, followed by a range of delicious and mostly home-made desserts. The generous contributions of all those who had given time and effort to the preparation of and clearing away after the event was acknowledged with warm applause....and some much valued assistance to replace the furniture in its store.

Thank you to all involved.



CHOIR NEWS

The Choir is very pleased to be able to report three recent promotions. Lily Butcher and Emma Smithson have both completed the workbooks for the Light Blue ribbon and these were presented on the last Sunday in January.

The following Saturday, Lily Croft took her Dean's award examination in Worcester. She was successful and was lucky enough to have her Dean's award ribbon and medal presented by the Dean of Worcester, The Very Revd Peter Atkinson, on the occasion of his visit to preach at St Mary's the following day. Lily will receive her certificate later in the year at the Diocesan Festival. Presenting the award away from the cathedral was a first for the Dean!

The Choir congratulates all three girls on the successes!

Robin Walker

QUINQUAGESIMA

‘Sunday next before Lent’ (Common Worship) or ‘Quinquagesima’ (Book of Common Prayer) is the Sunday before the forty days of Lent, or fifty days before Easter.

On Sunday, 7 February we were delighted to welcome to our 10.00 am service, the Very Reverend Peter Atkinson, Dean of Worcester. The Dean came to preach and to celebrate the Eucharist with us, but the service began with yet another special event, with the presentation to Lily Croft, of St Mary’s Choir, of her Green Ribbon of the Dean’s Music Award. Lily had completed her examination for the award on the day before and it was particularly appropriate that the Dean was able to make the presentation in the presence of the St Mary’s congregation. Lily’s achievements were warmly applauded in recognition of her personal gain and of the dedication to choral singing that is the valued contribution of all members of the choir.



The readings for this Sunday were Exodus 3, Moses and the Burning Bush and John 12, where Jesus speaks of the significance of His approaching death on the cross, through which many will be drawn to Him.

The Dean began his sermon with reference to the beaming smile of pride and achievement on the face of a man in a photograph who had just grown an enormous onion. The onion was described as the size of a small elephant and the smile was in similar proportions. Our facial expressions reflect very clear messages. So it had been with Jesus when he allowed his three disciples to witness his change of face and the dazzling white of his countenance in the presence of Moses and Elijah and for them to be told ‘This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!’

The Dean described how, in these circumstances, the three disciples had seen something of the Glory of God, in a way, something perhaps similar to the reflection viewed by Tim Peake, astronaut, as he looked out of the windows of the Space Station at the view of the Earth illuminated by the reflected light of the Sun.

The Glory of God could be seen reflected in the face of Jesus just as it may have been reflected again in the faces of the disciples. So too may we be glorified when we look to Jesus. If we are true followers of Christ we may shine with the glory of God, something we may again reflect and share with others when we truly lead our lives in a way that reflects our knowing and following of Our Lord. As we view and share in our care for the many needs of the sick, the homeless, the lonely, the hungry and the afraid, so we may reflect into their lives something of the love of God.

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

MIMOSA EGGS

Cookery writer Marguerite Patten, the author of more than 170 books, died last year aged 99.

She was famed for her no-nonsense approach to home economics, and was employed by the Ministry of Food during the Second World War to advise Britons on how to make the most of their rations.

I have two of her books and I taught myself to cook from one of them, the Everyday Cookbook, published in the sixties. Last year, to celebrate her life, myself and some of my foodie friends cooked something out of one of her books. I was spoiled for choice as I must have cooked nearly everything in the book over the years but settled on a very retro starter that I used to make when entertaining and thought would make a simple Easter starter or light lunch dish.

6 hard boiled eggs
2 tablespoons of mayonnaise
100g (4oz) cooked prawns
Seasoning
Salad to garnish

Halve the eggs lengthways, remove the yolks. Mix the mayonnaise with prawns chopping the prawns if too large. Season the whites lightly then fill with the prawns. Rub the egg yolks through a coarse sieve so they fall over the top of the eggs like mimosa flowers. Present the eggs with the salad garnish



Ann Jennings

AND FOR THE WINE...

I'm sure there is as much skill in sieving egg yolks to fall as mimosa petals as there is in pouring the perfect glass of fizz! To cut through the mayonnaise and egg textures it is in the sparkling wine direction we should go. As a starter in an Easter celebration meal we might want a glass of Champagne; but whether we choose Champagne or an alternative sparkler, the quest is for a bright clean dry drop.

Of the three Champagne grapes, Pinot Noir brings a weight of fruit which is not really what we want here. Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label is the popular choice in this style. Best pass it over on this occasion - and incidentally don't drink it at all until it's had time for that Pinot Noir fruit to develop. Pinot Meunier is present in most Champagnes, but omitted generally from deluxe bottlings. The key is the elegant clean notes of the other major Champagne grape: Chardonnay - Laurent Perrier and Perrier-Jouet are the names that spring to mind first. In this respect a Blanc de Blancs would suit well too.

Elsewhere in the fizz family, Prosecco lacks sparkle and clean cut; Cava and Franciacorta would be OK, but the bold ripe fruit of new world examples would not be right here; nor would a tangy Riesling Sekt. Oh, for an inexpensive English sparkler!

Otherwise, it's back to France for a Cremant wine ; 'de Bourgogne' and 'du Jura' will feature Chardonnay, 'de Loire' - Chenin Blanc, whilst the less frequently encountered 'd'Alsace' comprises Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris and Auxerrois. Of France's other sparkling specialists, Limoux from the Languedoc is a very good Chardonnay option, but take care with the sweetness level in the Loire sparklers: Vouvray, Saumur and Montlouis. Now, bubbles - glass - slow pour!

Enjoy your wine-sipping.....

Richard W. B. Ryan

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

The storm 'Imogen' had left destruction and havoc in Southern Britain on Monday 7 February but by the time of our meeting on the 8th the weather, though cold, was bright, sunny and calm. Pat Whalley led our service and reminded us that life could be full of many storms and dangers any time but we could find a safe harbour of calm through confidence, prayer and faith through our trust and anchorage in Christ as we see in St Mark, Chapter 4, v 35-41, when he calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee. We are sure of His love and care.

We welcomed our speaker, Revd David Knight, chaplain at Mary Stevens Hospice. He explained the founder of the modern hospice movement, Dame Cecily Saunders, promoted the principles of dying with dignity. Death is a natural process we all face but it can be eased by sensitive nursing and effective pain control. She founded St Christopher's Hospice, Sydenham and this showed an holistic approach in medical, mental and spiritual care. Different people can help if patients require or ask for care for their particular needs.

Chaplains are primarily concerned with spiritual care which has three elements to share, hope, companionship and peace. David gave instances of this care. The most important aspect is for carers to listen. Then to have patience and to show love to all as their lives end.

David was thanked for his thought-provoking talk especially as we remembered our family and friends who had experienced this special care.

Next meeting: Tuesday 8 March, 2.15 pm in the Coach House.

Lent Meditation - Speaker, Revd Tom Fish, Christ Church, Lye.

All are welcome

Dawn Nex

CHILDREN'S PAGE ANSWERS

Maundy Thursday..... JESUS, PASSOVER, BREAD, WINE, LAST SUPPER.

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

7 February

Madeleine Joy Lowe

Weddings

No weddings this month

Funerals

25 January

Elizabeth Faulkner

Aged 82

1 February

Richard Ryan

Aged 87

8 February

Richard Davies

Aged 64

10 February

Sylvia Lloyd

Aged 62

AT HOLLAND HOUSE.... The Easter retreat begins on Maundy Thursday concluding on Easter Sunday and is co-led by author, scholar and activist **Alastair McIntosh**. Alastair is a Quaker and Research Fellow at the School of Divinity (New College) in the University of Edinburgh. In a world deeply concerned about religious-based violence and increasing fear, the theme will consider both how the cross might be a cause of liberation from violence, and also how it might itself need liberating from being used or understood in a violent way.

Revd Ian Spencer will share the retreat with Alastair, with Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday worship offered within a contemplative framework during the retreat.

Cost : £340 including all meals and refreshments

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COME AND HEAR SIR EDWARD ELGAR'S TAKE ON THE FIRST PENTECOST, AND SUPPORT CHRISTIAN AID IN THE PROCESS!

On **Saturday 30th April** (two weeks before Pentecost), at Hereford Cathedral starting at 7.30 pm, Bromyard Choral Society and Ledbury Choral Society present a performance of **Elgar's oratorio *The Kingdom***, with additional support from the Senior Chamber Choir from Hereford Cathedral School. **After meeting the costs of staging the concert, all proceeds will be passed to Christian Aid.**

This is a "must be there" concert, presenting Elgar's greatest mature oratorio in the city where it was written and in the 110th anniversary year of its première. As well as the choirs, the other performers are also all from the local area.

More details from <http://bromyardchoral.x10host.com/event/elgars-the-kingdom>.

Tickets can be obtained from the Courtyard Theatre Box Office, 01432 340555, <http://www.courtyard.org.uk/events/elgars-the-kingdom/>.

LETTER FROM THE ARCHDEACON OF WORCESTER

A friend was talking about another friend from his university days who he described as a 'heavy Christian'. I think he meant the rather intense believer who witnesses readily, but sometimes puts people off. It got me thinking about the ways in which I was or wasn't a 'heavy' Christian myself!



We sometimes make heavy weather of what we call Good News. It can feel as though it is all down to us rather than God. The truth is that we don't have to save the whole world, but simply play our small part in responding to God's love.

Prayer is all about noticing what God is doing. Anthony de Mello, a Jesuit, collected stories of faith, including this one: 'Master, is there anything I can do to make myself more enlightened?' The master replies, 'Do as little as you can to make the sun rise in the morning.' 'But master, of what use then are the spiritual exercises you prescribe?' 'To make sure you are not asleep when the sun rises!'

Our Christian traditions and disciplines – worship and prayer, study of scripture – are to make us more aware of God's presence in the world and to be more present ourselves.

Feeling good about ourselves and God doesn't need to be selfish. Many of the great social activists have been people who spent time in contemplative prayer and learned to notice what was happening - people who could see the wood for the trees, as we say. Once you become attentive you notice more. So, for example, you notice that refugees aren't simply an issue to be dealt with but are families, people who are refugees. Or, the issue of homosexuality, with which the church struggles, is about people who are gay.

Karl Barth, a great Twentieth Century Swiss theologian, whose life spanned two world wars, said: 'To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.' Ours is a social gospel, and we all have our part to play. So often it starts from attentiveness, learning to be present.

Later this month we celebrate Holy Week and Easter, when Jesus enters the depths of what it means to be human. You might say it was a small event on the world stage: the press would probably have been stalking the corridors of power, rather than the municipal rubbish dump outside the city wall. But it was not just another crucifixion – it was the main event, along with what happened three days later, for those who had eyes to see. Let us learn to be attentive then, to make sure we are not asleep when the sun rises.

The Venerable Robert Jones

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