

We are grateful for the sponsorship of the following businesses.



The Coach House
Rectory Road,
Old Swinford.
Tel: 01384 828890

Available for Hire evenings / weekends. Small parties up to 40. Contact Parish Office—01384 441003

Mobility Homecare
Stairlifts, Scooters, Wheelchairs, Rise & Recline Chairs, Walking & Bathing Aids.
One hour home demonstration and assessment to suit your individual needs. Free delivery and instruction
Call freephone 0800 634 9674

Chiropodist
Rachel Clark MSSCH MBCHA
Visiting Practice
Qualified and Insured.
Registered with Health Professions Council
Tel: 01384 873938 or 07860 771442

H Porter & Sons
Old Church House, 60 South Road, Stourbridge. **Tel: 01384 395048.**
Funeral Directors for over 160 years.

Chris Genner
Forever Living Products. Natural Aloe Vera health tonics, beauty and nutritional products. Free advice, talks and demonstrations. For a more fulfilling and rewarding career see our website at www.genner.net or call Chris Genner **Tel: 01384 371336**

J Vernon Kendrick
Vernon House, Cemetery Road, Lye. DY9 8DB **Tel: 01384 422123.**
Funeral Directors.
Golden Charter Pre-payment Plans.

Davis Memorials Ltd
Monumental and Masonry Contractors
Established 1841 Suppliers of all forms of memorials. 56A Station Road, Old Hill, Cradley Heath, West Midlands, B64 6NU **Tel: 01384 566958**
Fax: 01384 569708 Website: www.davismemorials.co.uk

R B Porter Heating Ltd
For all Central Heating and Plumbing needs.
Servicing , Repairs and New Systems
CORGI Approved
191 Hagley Road, Old Swinford
Tel : 01384 396719

Top Team Tutoring
Maths & English One-to-One Tuition
David and Joanna Evans - a family business providing a personal service.
All Key Stages, GCSE, 'A' Level, 11+ & 13+ Selection. Free advice.
Visit www.topteamtutoring.co.uk or
Tel: 01384 392553

Swinford Pharmacy
90 Hagley Road, Old Swinford.
Tel: 01384 440030. We offer a free collection and delivery service for elderly and housebound patients.

J & J Upperdine
High Class Private and Commercial Painting and Decorating
82 Birmingham St. Stourbridge DY8 1JH
Tel: Day 07969 864131
Evening 01384 827281



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

April 2010

40p

SUNDAYS AT ST MARY'S

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Parish Communion (with OY Group)
11.30 am	Sunday School
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 Editor:	Miss Gemma Sutton	825983
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
Coach House: - Bookings	Parish Office	441003
- Enquiries	Mrs Pamela Green	371415
Parish Administrator:	Mrs Helen Plaice	441003
Parish Office:	Open 9.00 am -1.00 pm, Tuesday to Thursday	441003
	9.00 am - 12.00 noon, Friday	Closed Mondays
Church Website Address:	www.stmaryschurchholdswinford.org.uk Email: st.mary.os@btinternet.com	

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 February walk, on Saturday, 27th, started from Tardebigge Parish Church and the over-riding memory of it is mud, mud and more mud!

From the Car Park, 16 intrepid walkers joined the Worcester and Birmingham Canal towpath, walking past just a few of the locks in this flight of 30 spanning 2.5 miles. The towpath took us past Tardebigge Reservoir, built to supply "top up" water for the canal.

Leaving the canal just after Bridge No 52, we headed off across fields and immediately encountered our first taste of mud. Battling on, we passed some farm buildings and from here, after a slight "detour", we set off again, this time in the right direction.



The notes on the route stated there to be 37 stiles, some in a poor state of repair, some which had been replaced by gates and others that were just missing. It certainly made for interesting navigation! After the recent snow that had by now melted, many of the fields were waterlogged and this all combined to make for difficult walking conditions. It was however a lovely walk over fields with splendid views.

Even the weather was very pleasant until just as we were approaching the final stretch that joined the Monarch's Way when the rain started. It did not dampen spirits though and was followed by lunch at The Tardebigge.

Malcolm Frost.

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

7th March Mia Alice Smith,
Pollyannah Gennard

Funerals

22nd February Patricia Anne Jones aged 70
23rd February Ronald Hill aged 76
2nd March John Ryder aged 77
3rd March Peter Reginald Dorr aged 59

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

Dawn Nex

DIARY FOR APRIL 2010

HOLY WEEK

SUNDAY 28 MARCH PALM SUNDAY

Parish Communion begins in the Church Hall at 10 am

Monday 29, Tuesday 30 and Wednesday 31 March

7.00 pm Compline and Meditation : The Passion in Art

Thursday 1 **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

10.30 am Holy Communion

11.00 am Chrism Service at The Cathedral

7.30 pm Agape in the Church Hall

Friday 2 **GOOD FRIDAY**

10.00 am Walk of Witness from St John's

11.00 am Children's Workshop

2.00 pm At the foot of the Cross

7.30 pm Choral Music and Readings

Saturday 3

9.00 am Church Decoration

10.00 am Open Church

SUNDAY 4 EASTER DAY ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN

5.30 am Deanery Dawn Service on the Clent Hills

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

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.00 am Parish Communion

6.30 pm Choral Evensong and Sermon

Thursday 8 10.30 am Holy Communion

Saturday 10 Copy date for May Magazine

SUNDAY 11 THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Tuesday 13 11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Croft Nursing Home

Wednesday 14 7.30 pm Coach House Committee Meeting

Thursday 15 10.30 am Holy Communion

SUNDAY 18 THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

6.30 pm Evensong followed at

7.30 pm by Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 22 10.30 am Mothers' Union Corporate Communion

SUNDAY 25 THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Tuesday 27 9.30 am Standing Committee

Wednesday 28 11.30 am Holy Communion at Holly Lodge

2.30 pm Mission Committee

7.30 pm Resources Committee

Thursday 29 10.30 am Holy Communion

FROM THE RECTORY

Sharp frosts in the early part of March have delayed the arrival of spring. But there are many signs of the natural world waiting in eager anticipation for the unstoppable life force of a new season of growth. Through the ears of faith we may detect within it the voice of the Creator: "Let there be!" It has happened before and will, no doubt, do so again. But the bursting out from the prison of winter, always a miracle to behold, reminds us that creation is now and not just then. So also that to which we look back in the Easter season marks not just the anniversary of a world changing event but the proclamation of a new "Let there be!". We may have celebrated the resurrection of Jesus many times, but that in itself should remind us that this is an event of the future as well as the present and past. At the heart of our faith there is a loving creator and redeemer who is constantly 'making all things new'. Christian people are inherently in the business of anticipation, of finding hope in the midst of disaster, of confidently awaiting a new dawn for church, society and individual. In the new creation that is the life of resurrection, hope is a fundamental law of the universe. Love has triumphed over evil and hatred and ultimately in Christ it always will.

Thank you Kath! The massive task of redecorating the interior of the Church is nearing completion as I write. It must be at least 30 years since it was last done and the transformation will be stunning. But it has been possible only thanks to a generous bequest from Kath Brooks, who left money specifically to be used on the Church building. I miss her and Eric enormously and often reflect on that last and very poignant occasion when they were able to receive communion together in Church on an Easter morning. To them, (a similar bequest from Eric enabled us to complete other urgent works) and to all who supported our stonework appeal we owe a great debt of thanks. To mark the successful completion of stonework repairs, structural and roof repairs, re-wiring, re-lighting and redecoration we shall be holding a service of thanksgiving on the morning of Sunday 9th May. The Dean of Worcester, the Very Rev Peter Atkinson, has kindly accepted an invitation to preach and dedicate the work on that occasion. Please put this date in your diary.

Open Church has been running for just a year and I would like to thank all the volunteers who have welcomed visitors into church and plied them with coffee, biscuits and friendship. Some Saturday mornings have been quiet, others extremely busy. It has made a huge difference to those coming to book baptisms and weddings and has proved an important way in which the Church can reach out to the local community. Let's keep it going.

With my prayers and best wishes for a wonderful Easter,



Duck is often served with fruit flavours but here is a chance to focus on the prime flavours of the meat. Lentils take us firmly in a red direction, although we don't want anything too tannic or young with either the pheasant or duck option. Le Puy itself is not wine territory but we are not short of drinking possibilities. You can pay a lot of money for a mature red Bordeaux, but a Rhone Valley Syrah from St Joseph or Crozes-Hermitage will not cost a fortune. Further south we meet the Syrah/Grenache/Mourvedre blends. Grenache will add spicy, peppery notes. Perhaps opt for a wine with a hearty dollop of the denser Mourvedre. Enjoy your wine-sipping

Richard W.B. Ryan

EASTER

O strange and unspeakable mystery;
The judge was judged -
He who loosed the bound was bound,
He who created the world was fixed with nails,
He who measures heaven and earth was measured,
He who gives creatures Life was buried,

What is this new creation?

The judge is judged and is silent,
The Invisible is seen on the cross and is not ashamed;
The Infinite is contained and does not complain,
The Impossible suffers and does not seek vengeance,
The Immortal dies and says nothing,
The King of Heaven is buried and endures it.

What is this mystery?

St Melito of Sardis (died AD 190)

COFFEE IN THE NARTHEX

The chill weather did not deter people coming to the Missions' Coffee Morning in February. The Narthex was full of happy, chattering people enjoying coffee and cakes together. The raffle was well supported helping us to raise £440, a sum which exceeded all our expectations. Our thanks are due to Margaret and Mike who organised it and to the many people who helped to set up tables, bake cakes and serve on the day. Thank you to all who came to support us; we hope you enjoyed it.

Doreen Ryan Missions Secretary

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

BRAISED BABY VEGETABLES WITH PUY LENTILS

It's great to have vegetable dishes that can be prepared ahead of time when you are entertaining and just have to be reheated at the last minute. I serve these with roast pheasant, duck or chicken breasts.

1kg Baby New Potatoes
 ½ kg Baby New Carrots
 50g Puy Lentils
 3 chopped shallots
 1 bay leaf
 salt and black pepper
 2-3tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 25g chopped flat leaf parsley

Put the lentils, shallots and bay leaf into a pan, cover with water and cook for approximately 20mins until just tender. Drain in a sieve. Dress the lentils with the olive oil while still hot.

In a large pan add salt, potatoes and water and bring to the boil. Cook the potatoes for 20mins. Add the carrots and continue cooking until the vegetables are tender. Drain, reserving a little water – this makes a little sauce. Combine the lentils and the vegetables, season well and add the chopped parsley.

Ann Jennings

.....
AND FOR THE WINE.....

Herbs and pulses can play more than just a supporting role when it comes to wine selection : it is often said white wines are better suited to herby flavours. I'm a big fan of herby soups : sage with lentil and vegetable; oregano and basil with Mediterranean tomatoand thyme with just about everything else in my house! Thyme and rosemary are the two exceptions, matching better with red wines -lamb and rosemary being a prime candidate for a red from Bordeaux or southern France. Indeed combinations are the key here: the recipe specifies parsley and combined with the chicken, we might reasonably opt for a Chardonnay or a Semillon.

PS Jennifer Doores and Ian McKenzie are getting married at St George's, Cam on Saturday 24th April. We wish them every happiness in their future life and ministry.

Greville

SUNDAYSERVICES IN APRIL

Date	Service	Readings		
4 April EASTER DAY	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Isaiah 65. 17-25	Acts 10. 34-43	Luke 24. 1-12
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 43. 1-21	John 20. 19-23	
11 April 2nd Sunday of Easter	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Worship Together			
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 52. 13-53	Luke 24. 13-35	
18 April 3rd Sunday of Easter	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Zephaniah 3. 14-end	Revelation 5. 11-14	John 21. 1-19
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 38. 9-20	John 11. 27-44	
25 April 4th Sunday of Easter	8.00 am Holy Communion			
	10.00 am Parish Communion	Acts 9. 36-43	Revelation 7. 11-14	John 21. 22-30
	6.30 pm Evensong	Isaiah 63 7-14	Luke 24. 36-49	

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

This tree is my eternal salvation.

It is my nourishment and my banquet....

I have pitched my tent in its shadow,
 and have found a resting-place fresh with dew.

St John Chrysostom

NEWS AND NOTES

SATURDAY 6th MARCH - A SPECIAL SORT OF DAY

William and Pauline Pettel and I were in church that morning—Open Church. We were there to greet and provide coffee for those people who wished to see the Rector re weddings and Baptisms. It proved to be quite a busy time. It was a joy to meet these lovely young couples and their children. They enjoyed the coffee and biscuits provided whilst they waited to meet the Rector who was ensconced in the Choir Vestry.

Robin, our Choir Master and organist was there also. I think some of us felt a little envious when he told us how much weight he had lost.

The decorators were there working hard to complete their task. What gentlemen they are. Michael was also present keeping an eye on progress.

William thought he might Hoover the carpet but was asked to leave the clearing up to the decorators. Although I have not been in church whilst they have worked so diligently they do seem to be an exemplary work force.

A week later our Sunday School leader, Wendy Tranter, was in church with Dorothy Gibson, Janet Beevers, Edward Haden and myself putting together a hundred posies for the Mothering Sunday service. We even enjoyed music whilst we worked.

May I wish everyone A Happy Easter. With love

Anne Davies



FLOWER GUILD

A warm welcome awaits all those who wish to help with the decoration of the church for Easter Day. Please meet at church, 9.00am on Saturday, 3rd March.

Sally Frost

EASTER LILIES



Please send your donations for Easter flowers to Pauline Cross at the Rectory and state the names of those in whose memory you wish to make the donation.

Pauline Cross

SUMMARY OF GENERAL SYNOD MEETING-FEBRUARY 2010

The briefest of summaries of matters discussed is set out below. More detail can be found at:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/generalsynod/agendas/feb2010/index.html>

Going for Growth, the strategy for working alongside children and young people that includes priorities for practical action at parish level.

Mission A presentation on 'Fresh Expressions'. Consideration of research from the Mission and Public Affairs Council into the growth of the 'mixed economy Church' and a motion encouraging the development of pioneer ministers.

TV coverage of religion and ethics An expression of appreciation of the role of those engaged in communicating religious belief and practice through the media whilst articulating deep concern at the overall reduction in religious broadcasting in British TV in recent years.

Legislation -several items of business including a new framework for the making of orders for parochial fees and codes of practice relating to clergy holding office under 'Common Tenure'.

Clergy Pensions -amendments to the scheme and changes to ill-health retirement provision. Also changes to equate the rules re pensions benefits for surviving spouses and surviving civil partners.

Science and religious belief - promoting better understanding of the compatibility of science and Christian belief.

Church buildings –a call on government to substantially increase the repair funding of listed church buildings.

Relations with the Anglican Church in North America –recognition of distress caused by recent divisions within the Anglican churches of USA and Canada and the hope that those who have formed the Anglican Church in N. America will remain within the Anglican family. Report back in 2011.

Motions carried re (i) the potentially damaging effects on young people of some computer games and (ii) the request to dioceses, deaneries and parishes to celebrate and teach the Bible to mark the 400th anniversary of the King James version.

Women Bishops -draft legislation information is to be available for July Synod.

BARN DANCE

On Saturday February 13th St Mary's church hall was overtaken by cowboys (and girls!). How horrifying I hear you gasp! Don't worry though, the occasion was a barn dance with fish and chip supper and no harm was done!

The evening was run by Eve Evans and her husband John, a very talented couple whose passion for the music and dancing was very contagious and got even the shyest of dancers up on the dance floor.

Each dance was taught in segments (to the tune of the Archers!) before being put to music. They were done in sets of two, so there was plenty of time to recharge your batteries before stepping back up onto the dance floor, meaning everyone could get involved as you just did as much as you could manage; you never got too worn out!

The dances were separated by musical interludes from Eve and John including banjo playing, and amusing short songs which all added to the very pleasant atmosphere of the whole evening.

Around 8.30pm our dinner was served, with jelly for dessert should you so desire! After the food had settled in our stomachs it was back up onto the dance floor for more dosey-doeing. The dances were all done in couples, however most of them involved dancing with other partners too, which was a really nice way for many different members of the St Mary's community to meet and say hello, if only briefly! The dance attracted many people who are involved in our church in different ways; people who attend the 8am Sunday service were introduced to young children who are part of our choir; bell ringers met flower arrangers; members of the 6.30pm evensong service were able to interact with families who attend the 10am Sunday service. It was heart warming to see so many people who are connected in the huge family which is St Mary's Parish having the opportunity to enjoy an evening together.

Many thanks to Eve and John for a thoroughly enjoyable evening which brought so many people together. Thanks also to everyone who helped out with the food, tickets and arrangement of the whole evening. And finally, thanks to everyone who turned up and made the night such a success. We are already looking forward to the next one!

Becca Sutton

NEWS OF SASI

You might have noticed a drawing on the Mission Board. That brightly coloured pink flower was drawn by Mark, Sasi's son. There are two photos of them too - recent ones, taken by their hut. The flower is called hibiscus (locally called 'shoe flower' as they polish shoes very well!). These bright flowered shrubs are abundant there, often as a hedge. You can imagine how colourful the hedge looks! Before starting the day, everyone will pick these flowers from their garden and offer to the deity for blessing for that day.

Sasi and Mark are truly, humbly grateful for your contribution. It makes a world of difference to them. It gives them sustenance and security in a steady monthly fixed amount.

The two words I see repeated in every paragraph of her letters are 'Nandri' and 'Asirwatham'. ('thank you' and 'blessings to you' in Tamil).

In her area, roads are being built/repared now that the political problems are somewhat over. Sasi works as a labourer, clearing the side walk of weeds and small stones. She is paid in kind like rice and flour.

Mark is happy at school. He is in grade 1. He won a prize for speech recently. He is good at drawing, as we can see.

Their goat had two male kids. They are delighted as they can sell the kids for a fair price.

Life is hard but better for them. It is due to the love and willingness and generosity of all at St Mary's. Because of you, one widow and her son, far away, have something to eat, something to wear and somewhere to sleep. An arc of God's love from Stourbridge to Sri Lanka.

In Sasi's words 'Nandri' and 'Asirwatham' - thank you and many blessings to you.

Kanthi Ariaraj

.....

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY WELL TAKEN

A special thank you to Tina Timms for sending the beautiful photograph displayed on the front cover that illustrates so aptly, the new life of the year ahead.

A VISIT TO MARSEILLE

A number of years ago I was asked at the last minute if I could join the school's French exchange to Marseille as another member of staff had had to drop out. I had failed miserably at French in school and by the time we went on this first trip I could barely remember that verbs existed never mind what to do with them. The language barrier made life interesting; I was with two of our teachers who taught French for most of the trip but there were occasions when I had to survive on my own.

We had arrived in Marseille on the Friday and on the Sunday we went out for the day. We began in L'Isle Sur la Sorgue a delightful market town with a lovely river and water wheel where we had a picnic. With hot roast chicken bought from the market, crusty French baguettes and lots of salad it was a picnic extraordinaire. There was a near crisis when it was thought that the red wine had been left behind in Marseille until it was located hidden in the space with the spare wheel. We left there to drive to the beautiful Abbaye de Sananque and then up to the village of Gordes. Gordes is one of the many villages which are built on outcrops of like something from a children's book of fairytales. On this last part of the drive I was left with Marie France the Biology teacher who understood slightly more English than I did French. The rock formation in this area looked like limestone and many of the fields were covered in lavender. I had tried to tell her that my father had lavender in his garden and that some of Yorkshire was built on limestone but somehow it all came out the wrong way round and it took quite a lot of unravelling by our staff from England.

In the middle of the week we were invited to a monologue in one of the large churches in Marseille; the tickets had been paid for by a lady who was a senior member of staff at the school with which we were on exchange. She was generally described to me as being a Nun but not quite a Nun, I wonder if she was an oblate of a monastic order. She was extremely kind and extremely religious hence we were all sat in the church. Three hours later having not understood a word I asked for a translation only to be told that it was too boring and one colleague said that she had spent the time wondering if his toupee

Easter provides us with a focus by which we might review how we lead our own lives and how we care for others.

Easter Monday

This day has little religious significance but is probably much welcomed by clergy who have had a particularly busy time during Lent and Holy Week. Easter Monday is a UK Bank Holiday, an opportunity for many to stay at home or to go away with their family. It is also a day on which ancient customs see a variety of games played in villages throughout the land.

.....

A THANK YOU AND A PLEA

The Mothers' Union is very grateful to those who have contributed regularly and generously to their collection of toilet articles for the Women's Refuge. Have you noticed the box and the shopping lists on the table to the right of the west entrance? I'll tell you about them.

A year or two ago we had a speaker from the Women's Refuge in Halesowen. We were appalled and saddened to hear about women (and children) who after long periods of anguish, secret shame and broken assurances finally leave their abusive and/or violent husbands or partners to seek shelter and help. Often they arrive at night with only the clothes they are wearing. The shelter tries to maintain a supply of soap, flannel, shampoo, toothbrush and paste, deodorant - just the basics of cleanliness - to give some feelings of care and self-worth to these devastated women.

Since then we have brought - when a bargain has offered or the house-keeping money has stretched to it - an item or two and put them in the box at the back of church. It has felt good in this small way to give thanks for our own happy homes and offer a bit of consolation for those unfortunates.

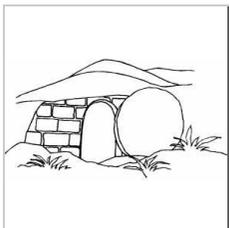
Now, you don't have to be a MU member to take a list from the clip at the side of the box and add an item to your own weekly 'shop'. (You don't have to be female either!) On behalf of homeless, grieving, bruised and beaten women we thank you.

Dorothy Gibson

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR PART FIVE

Easter Saturday

Often a day of few services, this is a time when Christians reflect on Jesus laying at rest in the tomb. It is traditionally a day of quiet meditation as Christians contemplate the darkness of a world without a future and without hope apart from God and His grace and await the resurrection. Communion is not served on this day.



Eastertide is a seven week season beginning at sundown on this day and lasting for seven Sundays until Pentecost Sunday.

Easter Sunday

On this, the most important day of the Christian calendar, Christians commemorate the resurrection. Since the Fourth Century Easter Day has been the joyous celebration of the recognition by his followers that God had raised Jesus from the dead.

Often, Christians gather together early on Easter Sunday for a **Sunrise Service**. This service takes place on a hill side so everyone can see the sun rise. Some Christians take part in an Easter vigil, lighting a new fire outside the church early on Sunday morning. The **Paschal candle**, decorated with studs to celebrate Christ's wounds, may be lit from the fire and carried into the church where it is used to light the candles of the worshippers. All of these actions are symbolic of the triumph of the light of God's grace and salvation over the darkness of death and sin.

The Easter Eucharist is a particularly joyful service. Traditionally it has been a popular time for baptisms and the renewal of baptism vows. Churches are filled with flowers, and there are special hymns and songs that help to leave behind the sombre last days of Jesus' life on earth.



Easter is about celebrating the new life that was made possible by the resurrection and this is reflected in the Easter Bunnies, Easter Eggs, flowers, gifts and cards that have become part of popular culture. It is an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a Christian

would fall off. The most interesting part of the three hours was the sudden interruption of the proceedings by car horns blaring outside. Knowing looks passed around the church as it was recognised that the Marseille football team must have won and the car drivers were heading for the church Notre Dame de La Garde – Our lady who guards the harbour, to say thank you for the victory.

On our final night we were having supper with the English teacher with whom I was staying. The lady in the previous story was also invited and was the first to arrive. She spoke no English so I was left whilst our host got supper ready to converse with this senior and very religious teacher as best as I could. This was not helped by the fact that I had asked a question at a formal lunch earlier in the week that had nearly triggered a diplomatic incident. I always have been capable of putting my Yorkshire foot in it big time. Having said that we had been on a trip to Aix en Provence for the day with the children Madame asked me what I had thought of the fountains. What fountains I asked? Any of you who have been to Aix will know that fountains are on every street corner, in the middle of roundabouts and squares, I'm not sure how, but I had missed every one. Her next question was had we been to the museum? No I replied the girls had been shopping. This was clearly the wrong thing to say and I only partly managed to rescue the situation by saying that they had practised their French buying presents to take home.

This visit really opened my eyes to the joy of exploring another culture and I jumped at the opportunity to join three further trips.

Ruth Atkinson

FROM THE EDITORS

We continue to welcome contributions from readers of ideas, articles, photographs etc for inclusion in this monthly publication. Thank you to all those who share with the St Mary's community in this way and to those who support the magazine through the distribution process.

Contributions may be given to any member of the magazine committee, e-mailed to stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk, left in the in-tray at the back of church or passed direct to one of the editors by prior arrangement or contact by telephone as shown on page 2.

CHILDREN'S PAGES

WHAT IS EASTER?

Easter is the time for holidays, festivals and a time for giving chocolate Easter eggs. But Easter means much more...

Easter is the oldest and the most important Christian Festival, the celebration of the death coming to life again of Jesus Christ. For Christians, the dawn of the Easter Sunday with its message of new life is the high point of the Christian year.

Of all the symbols associated with Easter, the egg—the symbol of new life—is the most identifiable. Eggs have been used to represent rebirth and new life for hundreds of years with many customs dating back to pagan traditions. In the past, eggs were forbidden food during lent so Easter Sunday became the traditional time to start using them again. This led to many people giving eggs, usually decorated, to their friends or servants.



Celebrating Easter: Resurrection Eggs



Many of you have seen the plastic “Resurrection Eggs” that are used to tell the story of the Christian Easter celebration. Did you know that these can easily, and frugally, be made at home?

First, purchase 12 plastic Easter eggs, the kind that you can open and fill. I recommend the size that can fit in a Styrofoam or cardboard egg carton. You can reuse one that you bring home eggs in from the grocery. This makes for easy storage so that you can use these many times without losing any of the bits and pieces.

If possible, try and have each of the 12 eggs a different colour. This makes it easier as well. If having 12 different colours isn't an option, use a permanent marker to write the number 1 through 12 on each egg and then put them in the egg carton.

Into each egg place the item and scripture reference written on a small piece of paper.

To order your own eggs, just go to www.amazon.co.uk and have fun decorating...

Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene (John 19. 15-17)

Here is part of the story of Easter, taken from John 19.15-17 of the Good News Bible. Fill in the missing words in the wordsearch below

“Woman, why are you _____?”
Jesus asked her. “Who is it that you are _____ for?”

She thought he was the _____ so she said to him, “If you took him away, sir, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.”
Jesus said to her, “_____!”

She turned towards him and said in _____, “Rabboni!” (This means “_____”.)

“Do not hold on to me,” Jesus told her, “because I have not yet gone back up to the _____. But go to my brothers and tell them that I am _____ to him who is my Father and their Father, my God and their _____.”



Here is a beautifully decorated Easter Egg. Why don't you add colour to it and perhaps display somewhere in your house in Easter? And why not make up your own design on the blank egg below...

