

# **St Mary's Parish Magazine**



**May - June 2021  
50p**

## ***Editor's notes***

So another major festival in the church's year has been affected by the Corona virus – the run up to Easter and beyond. However there is every indication that things will start to return to some form of normality with congregations returning to Sunday worship and choirs gearing up to be present once again. We are all acutely aware of how much the musical life of St Mary's has suffered with its knock-on effect on the quality of worship. However, around the country choirs **are** returning and soon we hope to see familiar faces and sounds in our own church.

Our cover photo for this edition of the Parish Magazine showcases one of the most recognisable features of St Mary's which is the subject of a recently launched appeal for funds to support essential repair work. Coincident with this appeal is the launch of the Order of St Mary, which it is hoped will ensure the long-term existence of this wonderful building, its ministry, music and fabric. Please see our website for further information.

***Tony King***

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### Footnote:

Copies of the magazine can be posted to your home or friends and relations. Subscription rates are £6.50 for a year (6 editions), including postage. Please contact the Parish Office.

# THE RECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

## CHALLENGING

The past twelve months will live on as a critical year in local, national and global history as the time during which the COVID 19 pandemic has wrought illness, bereavement and social upheaval on a scale rarely witnessed in our society. As well as the widespread personal, economic and social challenges our church has been under enormous pressure too. We have had to learn to be the worshipping and praying community of St Mary's in an entirely new way. In last year's annual report we celebrated the live broadcast of our Easter Day service on the BBC, little knowing that live streaming from our church would become a regular part of worship in 2020 and into 2021. To take just one example, it was poignant and sad to have to say goodbye to our curate Alycia Timmis along with Mark and Miles with only five other people in St Mary's. Nevertheless, our prayers and best wishes go with them as Alycia takes up her new role as incumbent of the Northleach Benefice.

## CHANGING

For much of the past year the physical building of St Mary's has oscillated between being open and closed. Even when open, the restrictions imposed by the pandemic have severely curtailed what we could do. Having said that, we have continued to meet in-person and online for worship, whilst our musicians and choirs have provided wonderful music for both locations; we have continued to repair and restore our magnificent building and one of the by-products of our new chairs has been furniture that is far easier to keep COVID compliant; we have continued to keep other important elements of our ministry going and we have been planning our Campaign 2023.

## CONTINUING

Once again I would like to express my appreciation to all who have worked so hard on our behalf in such difficult circumstances. I am enormously grateful for all that people have done in the past 12 months. Thanks are due to those in our Parish Office (Mary and Glynis); our Churchwardens (John and Gail), Deputy Churchwardens (David, and Godfrey), our church treasurer(s) John and Mary; Alan who has been co-ordinating our YouTube channel and comms strategy; all the PCC, our vergers team (Mark, Francis, John H, Phil, John A, Richard and Ian); Oliver, Mark, Lucy and Paddy with all who work on the musical side of our life; Vicky, Grahame and all our servers; Catherine and those running the Sunday School; Jayne and our safeguarding committee; our readers and intercessors; our Family Service leaders; Gill and Carol and all our sidespeople; Alycia, Doreen and all assisting clergy, Kirsteen for our prayer diary and Tony our magazine editor; Mandy, Dave and everyone who has helped with online streaming of services; our bell ringers; Brenda and all our flower team. CRUCIAL In addition, I also recognize the continued support of the Friends of St Mary's, the Friends of the Choir, the Guild of Ex-Choristers, the King Henry VIII Trust, the St Mary's Hall Trust, Clare Sawdon and Gifted Philanthropy.

*The Revd Dr Vaughan Roberts*

# CORPUS CHRISTI

Corpus Christi, which falls on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, is one of several major festivals which were extremely important public events in their day, but are now virtually forgotten. Corpus Christi (meaning 'Body of Christ') was a relative latecomer to the festival calendar, being introduced by Pope Urban IV in 1264 and relaunched by Pope John XXII in 1317. It was created to honour the body of Christ, and to commemorate the central mystery of the Eucharist, in which Christ is believed to be truly present in the wine and bread of the Mass.

The new feast was enthusiastically adopted by some English churches almost immediately, and in a very short time specialist guilds were being formed. By the middle of the fifteenth century, Corpus Christi guilds were so common as to be the third most popular subjects for such groups



(after the Virgin and the Trinity), and their primary task was to organize processions of the host through the streets. These processions involved not only the Corpus Christi guild members but also the local clergy, officials of the town, and members of trade guilds, and by Tudor times the processions had grown into huge affairs, particularly in urban areas such as York, Shrewsbury, Durham, Coventry, and Lichfield, which could support lavish productions. Houses and churches were decorated, streets were strewn with rushes and flowers, and the members of the procession carried torches, banners,

crosses, garlands, pictures of saints, and even models of beasts. In pride of place at the front of the procession, the host, enshrined in a pyx of crystal, silver, or even gold, was carried on the shoulders of the clergy. Onlookers were required to kneel, bareheaded, as the procession passed.

As they developed in size and complexity, the processions began to include tableaux and pageants, which eventually turned into plays on biblical themes, enacted on carts both moving and stationary. It is generally agreed that these Corpus Christi plays performed an important role in the development of drama in Britain. An extract from a nineteenth-

century description of proceedings in York, as presented by folklorists A R Wright and T E Lones, gives a flavour of the day:

*On the day before and the morning of the day itself, thousands of spectators streamed into the city. On Corpus Christi morn, artisans and tradesmen rose early, spending an hour or two completing the arrangements of their large stages. At 9 a.m. the procession started, beginning to play first at the gates of the priory of the Holy Trinity; then it proceeded so every street had a pageant, 'all at one time playing together'. Scaffolds and stages were erected in the streets, in those places where they determined to play their pageants .... Their Mystery Plays bearing titles such as, for example, 'Cain and Abel', 'Slaughter of the Innocents' and 'Deliverance of Souls from Hell'. In the year 1415, fifty-four distinct dramas were represented on fifty-four stages .... The Corpus Christi plays were kept up till 1584 at York.*

It is no surprise that the ceremonial carrying of the host through the streets was abolished at the Reformation. In many places the processions also lapsed, but in others they simply took on a new secular role, and were transformed into trade guild affairs or town pageants, such as the Shrewsbury Show, which survived until the 1860s.

*Steve Roud*

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## **POET'S CORNER**

The warmth of the sun's embrace,  
the gentle breeze swept in by incoming tide,  
the rhythm of seasons,  
of new birth,  
death and recreation.  
All these speak so clearly of Your love,  
Your power  
and Your beauty.  
All are expressions of Your creativity,  
and more importantly of Yourself.  
As an artist might share his personality  
within each brushstroke,  
so within the myriad colours of a butterfly's wing  
You share the exuberance of Your love.

*John Birch*

# 10 GUIDELINES

From: God

To: All His Children

Effective Immediately:

Please be aware that there are changes you need to make in your life. These changes need to be completed in order that I may fulfil my promises to you to grant you peace, joy and happiness in this life. I apologize for any inconvenience, but after all that I am doing, this seems very little to ask of you. I know, I already gave you 10 Commandments. Keep them, but follow these guidelines as well.

## 1. STOP WORRYING

Life has dealt you a blow and all you do is sit and worry. Have you forgotten that I am here to take all your burdens and carry them for you? Or do you just enjoy fretting over every little thing that comes your way?

## 2. PUT IT ON THE LIST

Something needs done or taken care of. Put it on the list. No, not YOUR list. Put it on MY to-do-list. Let ME be the one to take care of the problem. I can't help you until you turn it over to me. And, although my to-do-list is long, I am, after all, God. I can take care of anything you put into my hands. In fact, if the truth were ever really known, I take care of a lot of things for you that you never even realize.

## 3. TRUST ME

Once you've given your burdens to me, stop trying to take them back. Trust in me. Have the faith that I will take care of all your needs, your problems and your trials. Problems with the kids? Put them on my list. Problem with finances? Put it on my list. Problems with your emotional roller coaster? For my sake, put it on my list. I want to help you. All you have to do is ask.

## 4. LEAVE IT ALONE

Don't wake up one morning and say, "Well, I'm feeling much stronger now, I think I can handle it from here." Why do you think you are feeling

stronger now? It's simple. You gave me your burdens, and I'm taking care of them. I also renew your strength and cover you in my peace. Don't you know that if I give you these problems back, you will be right back where you started? Leave them with me and forget about them. Just let me do my job.

## 5. TALK TO ME

I want you to forget a lot of things. Forget what was making you crazy. Forget the worry and the fretting because you know I'm in control. But there's one thing I want you to never forget. Please don't forget to talk to me - OFTEN! I love you. I want to hear your voice. I want you to include me in the things going on in your life. I want to hear you talk about your friends and family. Prayer is simply you having a conversation with me. I want to be your dearest friend.

## 6. HAVE FAITH

I see a lot of things from up here that you can't see from where you are. Have faith in me that I know what I'm doing. Trust me, you wouldn't want the view from my eyes. I will continue to care for you, watch over you, and meet your needs. You only have to trust me. Although I have a much bigger task than you, it seems as if you have so much trouble just doing your simple part. How hard can trust be?

## 7. SHARE

You were taught to share when you were only two years old. When did you forget? That rule still applies. Share with those who are less fortunate than you. Share your joy with those who need encouragement. Share your laughter with those who haven't heard any in such a long time. Share your tears with those who are mourning. Share your faith with those who have none.

## 8. BE PATIENT

I managed to fix it so in just one lifetime you could have so many diverse experiences. You grow from a child to an adult, have children, change jobs many times, learn many trades, travel to so many places, meet thousands of people, and experience so much. How can you be so impatient then when it takes me a little longer than you expect to handle something on my to-do-list? Trust in my timing, for my timing is perfect. Just because I created the entire universe in only six days, everyone thinks I should always rush, rush, rush.

## 9. BE KIND

Be kind to others, for I love them just as much as I love you. They may not dress like you, or talk like you, or live the same way you do, but I still love you all. Please try to get along, for my sake. I created each of you different in some way. It would be too boring if you were all identical. Please know I love each of your differences.

## 10. LOVE YOURSELF

As much as I love you, how can you not love yourself? You were created by me to be loved, and to love in return. I am a God of Love. Love me. Love your neighbours. But also love yourself. It makes my heart ache when I see you so angry with yourself when things go wrong. You are very precious to me. Don't ever forget that!

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## **WHERE'S THE PICCOLO?**

At certain times in life we may feel insignificant and useless. Surrounded by people with greater talent than ours, we are tempted in our weak moments just to settle back and let somebody else do the work. We reason that what we have to offer won't make much difference anyway. We forget the truth suggested by our Lord's use of five loaves and two small fish to feed a multitude (John 6:1-14).

Each of us has something important to offer in His service.

Sir Michael Costa was conducting a rehearsal in which the orchestra was joined by a great chorus. About halfway through the session, with trumpets blaring, drums rolling, and violins singing their rich melody, the piccolo player muttered to himself, "What good am I doing? I might just as well not be playing. Nobody can hear me anyway." So he kept the instrument to his mouth, but he made no sound. Within moments, the conductor cried, "Stop! Stop! Where's the piccolo?" It was missed by the ear of the most important person of all.

It's much the same way with the use of our abilities for the Lord. Whether our talent is great or small, the performance isn't complete until we do our best with what we have.

*Richard De Haan*



# HOUSE HUNTING

With a view to buying a pleasant country cottage, a young married couple went to see the vicar of a small rural parish in Somerset, and asked him if such a cottage was available in the area. The vicar showed them round one, and asked them if they would let him know their decision. Later, however, they remembered that they had now noticed a W.C. in the cottage, so the young man wrote to the vicar and enquired where this might be. The vicar, however, was not familiar with the term W.C. and wrote them the following letter, taking it that they were meaning Wesleyan Chapel.

*Dear Sir,*

*I was very pleased to receive your letter, but regret to inform you that the nearest W.C. in the area is 50 miles away, which is unfortunate if you are in the habit of going regularly.*

*This one is a lovely little place, situated in a beautiful valley amongst pine trees, and it may interest you to know that many people make a day of it, setting off early in the morning and taking meals with them. Some travel by car or bus, others walk and arrive just in time. A bell rings 25 minutes before the W.C. opens and there is plenty of standing room for those who arrive late.*

*Inside, everything is most appropriate with 80 plush seats and beautiful carvings on the walls. The children sit and sing during the procedure. Hymn sheets are found hanging behind the door, and there is an organ accompaniment.*

*I hope this information has been useful to you and that you will make it your business to attend often. I myself have not been for five months and you can imagine this pains me very much.*

*Yours faithfully*

*The Vicar*

## SAINT ATHANASIUS

Athanasius was born at Alexandria around 295 AD. His name is from the Greek and means 'immortal'. 'Black Dwarf' was the tag his enemies gave him, and the short, dark-skinned Egyptian bishop had plenty of enemies. He was exiled five times by four Roman emperors, spending 17 of the 45 years he served as bishop of Alexandria in exile. Yet in the end, his theological enemies were "exiled" from the church's teaching, and it is Athanasius's writings that shaped the future of the church. Most often the problem was his stubborn insistence that Arianism, the reigning "orthodoxy" of the day, was in fact a heresy.

The dispute began when Athanasius was the chief deacon assistant to Bishop Alexander of Alexandria. While Alexander preached 'with perhaps too philosophical minuteness' on the Trinity, Arius, a presbyter from Libya announced, "If the Father begat the Son, then he who was begotten had a beginning in existence, and from this it follows there was a time when the Son was not." The argument caught on, but Alexander and Athanasius fought against Arius, arguing that it denied the Trinity. Christ is not of a like substance to God, they argued, but the same substance. To Athanasius this was no splitting of theological hairs. Salvation was at issue: only one who was fully human could atone for human sin; only one who was fully divine could have the power to save us. To Athanasius, the logic of New Testament doctrine of salvation assumed the dual nature of Christ. "Those who maintain 'There was a time when the Son was not' rob God of his Word, like plunderers."

Alexander's encyclical letter, signed by Athanasius (and possibly written by him), attacked the consequences of the Arians' heresy: "The Son [then,] is a creature and a work; neither is he like in essence to the Father; neither is he the true and natural Word of the Father; neither is he his true wisdom; but he is one of the things made and created and is called the Word and Wisdom by an abuse of terms... Wherefore he is by nature subject to change and variation, as are all rational creatures."

Word of the dispute which spread all over the empire made it to the newly converted Emperor Constantine the Great, who was more concerned with seeing church unity than theological truth. "Division in the church," he told the bishops, "is worse than war." To settle the matter, he called a council of bishops.

Of the 1,800 bishops invited to Nicea, about 300 came—and argued, fought, and eventually fleshed out an early version of the Nicene Creed. The council, led by Alexander, condemned Arius as a heretic, exiled him,

and made it a capital offence to possess his writings. Constantine was pleased that peace had been restored to the church. Athanasius, whose treatise *On the Incarnation* laid the foundation for the orthodox party at Nicea, was hailed as "the noble champion of Christ." The diminutive bishop was simply pleased that Arianism had been defeated.

However, within a few months, supporters of Arius talked Constantine into ending Arius's exile. With a few private additions, Arius even signed the Nicene Creed, and the emperor ordered Athanasius, who had recently succeeded Alexander as bishop, to restore the heretic to fellowship. When Athanasius refused, his enemies spread false charges against him. He was accused of murder, illegal taxation, sorcery, and treason—the last of which led Constantine to exile him to Trier, now a German city near Luxembourg.

Constantine died two years later, and Athanasius returned to Alexandria. But in his absence, Arianism had gained the upper hand. Now church leaders were against him, and they banished him again. Athanasius fled to Pope Julius I in Rome. He returned in 346, but in the mercurial politics of the day, was banished three more times before he came home to stay in 366. By then he was about 70 years old. While in exile, Athanasius spent most of his time writing, mostly to defend orthodoxy, but he took on pagan and Jewish opposition as well. One of his most lasting contributions is his *Life of St. Antony*, which helped to shape the Christian ideal of monasticism. The book is filled with fantastic tales of Antony's encounters with the devil, yet Athanasius wrote, "Do not be incredulous about what you hear of him... Consider, rather that from them only a few of his feats have been learned." In fact, the bishop knew the monk personally, and this saint's biography is one of the most historically reliable. It became an early 'best-seller' and made a deep impression on many people, even helping lead pagans to conversion: Augustine is the most famous example.

During Athanasius's first year permanently back in Alexandria, he sent his annual letter to the churches in his diocese, called a festal letter. Such letters were used to fix the dates of festivals such as Lent and Easter, and to discuss matters of general interest. In this letter, Athanasius listed what he believed were the books that should constitute the New Testament. "In these [27 writings] alone the teaching of godliness is proclaimed," he wrote. "No one may add to them, and nothing may be taken away from them." Though other such lists had been and would still be proposed, it is Athanasius's list that the church eventually adopted, and it is the one we use to this day.

# NEVER A CROSSWORD!

	1		2		3		4		5		6	
7							8					
					9							
10									11			
				12		13		14				
15								16				17
				18								
19	20							21			22	
				23	24		25					
26			27						28			
					29							
30							31					

## ACROSS

7. Priest found in correct order. (6)
8. Richard initially moans about a letter from Paul. (6)
9. You'll find a welcome in the tavern. (3)
10. Boris turns to a city for illumination. (4)
11. Wise men seen in my imagination. (4)
12. Cat, say, gets queen to become a saint. (5)
15. Pouring oil onto cardinals makes them beastly! (5)
16. Hittite soldier, upper class and hair-raising. (5)
18. Spiritual investor? (5)
19. Instrument left behind in the country. (5)
21. A more senior churchman? (5)
23. Was this prophet a bit of a basket case? (5)
26. Nothing east of this river. (4)
28. Like a relative? (4)
29. Doctrine of Rita Ora? (3)
30. Jack has hopes about a dreamer. (6)
31. Emperor – the result of a scare. (6)

## DOWN

1. Possibly Dean in charge of his side? (6)
2. What the organist pulls out to come to a halt? (4)
3. Old king getting 9 when found in the churchyard. (5)
4. A long note authorised by the Pope. (5)
5. Holy leader: 'I'm getting a degree.' (4)
6. Mystery developed in game. (6)
12. Song for a cardinal in a tree? (5)
13. Old clothes to initially get a smile. (5)
14. 50 sure about the laws. (5)
15. Was his wife a bit salty? (3)
17. Midianite king from a hot city. (3)
20. All together now! (6)
22. Priest gets a pint, we hear, for a prophet. (6)
24. Promises made to a hot cardinal! (5)
25. Patriarch? One comes back with benzene. (5)
27. A prime minister's garden? (4)
28. A capable character, say. (4)

# THOUGHT FOR FOOD

## Pork with pears

A simple yet stunning recipe that combines well known flavours to create an exquisite dish

### Ingredients

- tbsp sunflower oil
- 2 red onions , roots trimmed and cut into eighths
- 2 large pears , quartered and cored (leave the skin on)
- few sprigs rosemary , leaves roughly chopped
- 4 pork steaks, about 175g/6oz each, trimmed of excess fat
- 50g blue cheese, cubed



Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

Heat the oil in a roasting tin on the hob (use 2 rings), then add the onions, pears, most of the rosemary and seasoning. Fry for 5 mins or until just starting to caramelize.

Heat grill to high. Season the pork, then arrange among the veg and fry for 5 mins, turning halfway until golden and cooked through. Scatter with the remaining rosemary and the cheese, grill until the cheese starts to melt, then serve.

Goes well with crushed new potatoes, asparagus and, of course, a glass or two of a nice dry white wine or even something pink!

# WHITSUN TRADITIONS

Pentecost is also known as Whitsunday and is a major festival in the Christian Church. It is celebrated on the Sunday which falls on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the Easter festival. The name *Pentecost* comes from a Greek word which means 'fiftieth'.

Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of flames to the followers of Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament. Jesus has told them to wait until the Spirit came to them. Ten days after Ascension, fifty days after the resurrection, the Spirit came.

Pentecost is recognised as the birth of the Church. The Apostle Peter preached a sermon which resulted in 3,000 people becoming believers. Whit Sunday is a favourite day for baptism. It is thought that because people are often baptised dressed in white, Whit Sunday was probably originally known as 'White Sunday'. Whitsuntide is the week following Whitsunday, which is always the seventh Sunday after Easter Sunday.

Christians in some towns and cities have traditionally taken part in Whit Walks. Whitsun was the time for walks and processions. The traditional 'Procession of Witness' has long been celebrated throughout the North West.

In Gloucestershire, Whit Sunday is called 'Bread and Cheese Day' because of a very strange custom. In St Braivels, following Evensong on Whit Monday, basketfuls of bread and cheese are thrown from a wall near the old castle, to be scrambled for in the lane below. The locals have been hurling bread and cheese since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the custom began probably as a payment for the villagers' right to cut timber from a nearby wood.

The first Sunday or Monday in May is a unique opportunity to witness the ancient custom of cheese rolling. In Randwick, Gloucestershire, after rolling three double Gloucester cheese around the church, one is cut up and shared amongst bystanders and the other two are rolled down a steep hill. At nearby Coopers Hill, an annual cheese rolling takes place on the last Monday of May which attracts worldwide interest. Men and women hurtle 200 yards down a near vertical slope in pursuit of a seven pound Double Gloucester cheese.

In Stilton, Cambridgeshire, teams of four in bizarre costumes, roll stilton cheese along a 50 yard course. They are not allowed to kick or throw the cheeses. The prize is a whole Stilton cheese, which weighs about 16 pounds, and bottles of port – the traditional accompaniment.

In Ide Hill, Kent, women chase a thrown Edam cheese down the sloping village green during the annual Whit Monday Fair.



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## AND FINALLY .....

### CROSSWORD SOLUTION

**ACROSS** 7 Rector 8 Romans 9 Ave 10 Lamp 11 Magi 12 Peter  
15 Lions 16 Uriah 18 Angel 19 Tubal 21 Moses 26 Nile 28 Akin  
29 Tao 30 Joseph 31 Caesar

**DOWN** 1 Decani 2 Stop 3 Grave 4 Breve 5 Imam 6 Enigma  
12 Psalm 13 Togas 14 Rules 15 Lot 17 Hur 20 Unison 22 Elijah  
24 Oaths 25 Enoch 27 Eden 28 Abel

### Who's Where in The Warwick Team

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