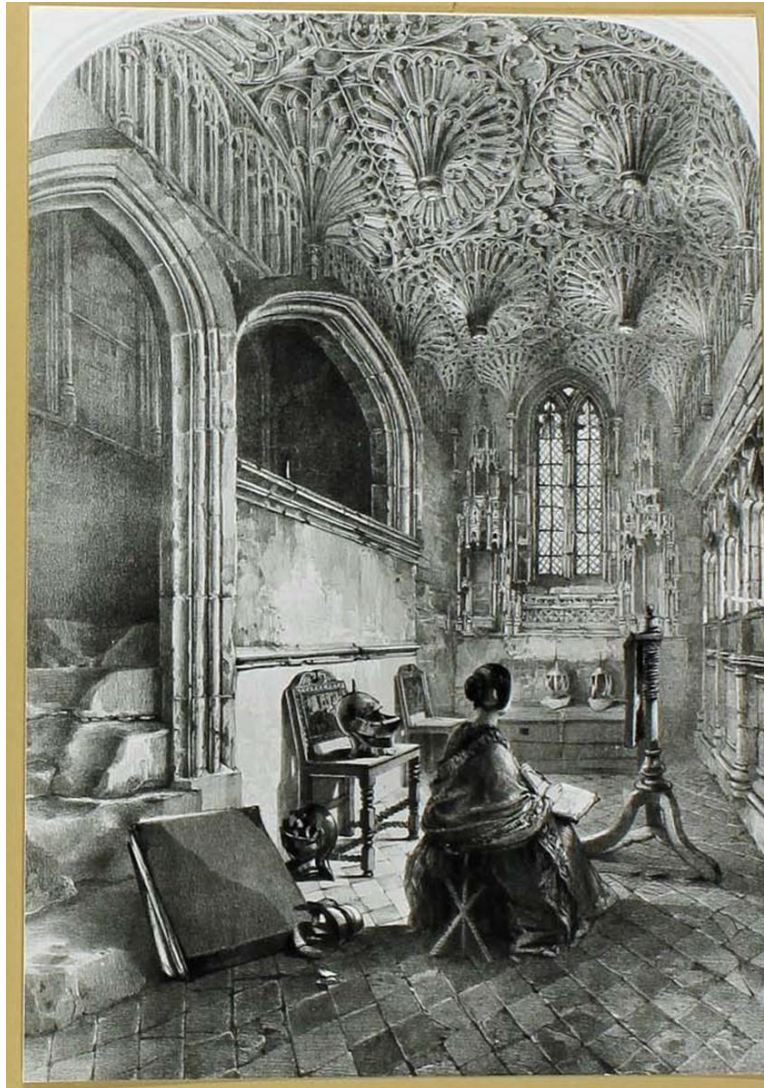


# St Mary's Parish Magazine



**January - February 2025**

**50p**

## ***Notes from the Editor***

**Hope and renewal** are cornerstones in Christian teachings, essential themes as we step into the New Year. In our faith, we see each new year not just as a change in the calendar but as an opportunity for a fresh start, a time to renew our commitment to God and to grow in our spiritual walk.

As you reflect, acknowledge the growth you've experienced and the challenges you've overcome. Now, with a heart full of anticipation, look toward the horizon of the upcoming year. Allow your faith to be the foundation of a hopeful outlook, understanding that through God's guidance, each day presents a chance to live out His will and purpose for your life.

There's something incredibly powerful about starting afresh with the knowledge that our God is a God of new beginnings and second chances.

Take these thoughts on board as we start to work on Vision 2030.

***Tony King - Editor***

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# REFLECTIONS FROM THE RECTORY

Be Happy!

How many times have you said 'Happy Christmas' over the season and now 'Happy New Year'? We want people to be happy, we want to share happiness!

The word 'happy' in modern usage can sometimes lack the depth of meaning it originally had; it can be a word used to describe how we feel at surface level; it can be a bit frothy lacking substance or stability.

In the Bible it has a far deeper meaning. In it there is no difference between 'blessing' it and 'happiness', especially in the Gospel. The people who are said to be 'happy' are also said to be 'blessed,' a blessed person is a happy person.

'Makarios' was a common Greek word appearing 50 times in the New Testament and can be translated as happy/blessed. Just look at the beatitudes: 'blessed are the peacemakers', 'blessed' are the poor in spirit', 'blessed are the meek'. Further on in the Bible we are told - 'blessed is the one who believes in God, blessed is the one who remains faithful, blessed is the one who serves others'.

We are called to be blessed and to share God's blessing. It is a deep, active, inviting, lovely and demanding word requiring much of us . God, is described, in 1Timothy, as the Makarios God.

To be God's Makarios people we need to take hold of God's ever present blessing to us to help shape and direct our lives in this new year. Without that blessing we will struggle to find God's happiness; it's a blessing that invites us to be forward-looking ,active and hopeful, it demands of us service and commitment.

As we move into this year and begin to deliver our vision for Saint Mary's, let us bless each other ,hold ourselves before God for his blessing and be his happy people, his blessed people, his Makarios people.

Happy New Year!

*Father Angus*

# ST MARY'S VISION 2030



## **Our Vision**

*What we seek our church to look like in 5+ years*

Rooted in faith, reaching out in love

## **Our Mission**

*What are we to do as a church*

Worship God

Encourage discipleship growth

Transform communities

## **Our Mission Action Plan**

*How we will achieve our vision*

Pray for clarity and faithfulness

Share our vision with the local community

Contribute our God-given skills, talents and financial support

# LIVING LIFE GOD'S WAY

Recently, as I walked along the streets of Seattle, I became intrigued with the golden inserts in the sidewalks. As I stopped at one intersection, one in particular caught my attention. It said:

*"I always knew that someday I would travel this road but yesterday I did not know it would be today."*

It reminded me of how casually I live my life, not considering that tomorrow could be totally different from anything I could have ever expected or for that matter, for me, tomorrow might not even exist. St James tells us that your life is like a puff of smoke that appears for a short time and then vanishes. John Wesley said that life is like an arrow shot from a bow and passing swiftly over the sea of time. Life is short and fragile and every day is a gift. No one has ever got out of this world alive. We indeed all know that someday we will travel that road, but as the plaque in the sidewalk inferred, we know not when.

As an attorney, I have written hundreds of wills for clients and their focus is usually on what will happen with their estate when they die. I remind them that estate planning does focus on death, but it also ought to focus on life planning as well, what you will do and how you will use your resources for your remaining days, however many that may be.

So, it is a reminder to live our lives more focused on the limitation of time we have on earth and how we can best use it for good and for God. Here are some thoughts and suggestions:

- *Live each day as if it were going to be your last. Never go to bed without resolving internal turmoil of external relationships that need to be resolved with others.*
- *Be prepared to meet God face to face at any time by making sure you have made the right decisions about your relationship with Jesus and your salvation is secure. After all, the next life will be a lot longer and more important than this one.*
- *Make sure that each day you live and love life the way God would want you to.*
- *Live, laugh and experience each day to the fullest, so that when you die, you will have no regrets, no reservations and that you will be prepared to receive the greatest revelation of your life.*

*John Grant*



# EPIPHANY

Epiphany comes from the Greek *epiphaneia* meaning manifestation. This Christian festival commemorates the first manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, and the manifestation of his divinity, as it occurred at his baptism in the Jordan River and at his first miracle, at Cana in Galilee. Epiphany is one of the three principal and oldest festival days of the Christian church (the other two are Easter and Christmas). Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and other Western churches observe the feast on January 6, while some Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate Epiphany on January 19, since their Christmas Eve falls on January 6. The festival originated in the Eastern church, where it at first included a commemoration of Christ's birth. In Rome, by 354 Christ's birth was being celebrated on December 25 (Christmas), and later in the 4<sup>th</sup> century the church in Rome began celebrating Epiphany on January 6. In the Western church the festival primarily commemorates the visit by the Magi to the infant Jesus, which is seen as evidence that Christ, the Jewish Messiah, came also for the salvation of Gentiles. In the East it primarily commemorates the baptism of Jesus and celebrates the revelation that the incarnate Christ was both fully God and fully man.

In the West the evening preceding Epiphany is called Twelfth Night. The time between December 25 and January 6 is known as the Twelve Days of Christmas. Epiphany is celebrated with special pastries in many countries, and children often receive small gifts in their shoes in honour of the Magi's gifts to the infant Jesus. The holiday also has a number of traditions involving water as a reflection of Jesus' baptism, including the blessing of houses with holy water.

Ethiopian Orthodox Christians celebrate Epiphany, or *Timket*, with a major festival that begins the night before, on *Ketera* (January 18). In honour of Christ's baptism, celebrants escort a replica of the Ark of the Covenant, a *tabot*, to a local body of water with great ceremony. The night is spent in prayer and hymn services. The following morning the congregation is blessed with holy water, and the *tabot* is brought back to its church in a colourful procession.

## THE CHILL OF WINTER

Every year we witness the rhythm of nature, bringing forth the different seasons and all the changes and challenges that go with them. For many folk the onset of the chillier temperatures of Autumn and Winter are met with dread and for some, simply endured. Others, like me, delight in the crisp, cold days of Winter with mounds of snow, crockpot dinners, crackling fires and long stretches when I am content to stay at home and not venture out, embracing the motto, “All I need is tea, warm socks and a good book.”

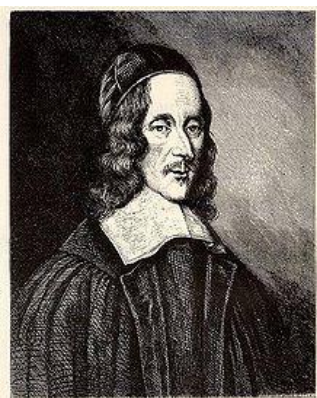
During the chill of Winter, our bodies do have a natural need for more food, sleep, warmth and, like bears, we tend to hibernate and rest. It’s a period of dormancy, a time to “chill.” After all, our poor bodies may be begging for a break after coming through Christmas, the most hectic season of the year. It’s a good time for a reset, to change our compulsion from “doing” to just “being”—being in His presence, hearing His voice. We are reminded once again of what Psalm 46:10 says, “Rest! Be still and know I am God. I rule the nations and I rule the earth.” He has given us permission to cease from striving— and perhaps even serving—for a time, to clear our minds, renew our strength and enthusiasm, draw us closer to Him, and to reflect on His calling upon our lives. For some of us that is hard, especially when we begin to feel sluggish or unproductive. We may think that we are letting others down or even ourselves as we see all the goals and resolutions we set in January fly out the window in February, taken away by Winter’s winds!

As we enjoy the quiet weeks of this winter season, remember that Spring will not be far behind. Though the ground looks quiet and serene we can learn a lot from and be inspired by what is going on outside, underneath the snow. “Don’t think the garden loses its ecstasy in Winter; it may be quiet but the roots are down there being riotous! May we be still, seek Him more deeply and know that our God is making “riotous” the roots of faith that have been firmly planted in our hearts, ready to spring forth into a new season.

Father in Heaven, how we thank You for the seasons and the benefits you bring with them, even the cold winds, the snow, and ice. All have their purpose for which we are grateful. Be with us today as we embrace this season as you accomplish what You please in it, in us, and for Your glory. In Your name we pray. Amen.

*Marsha Richards*

## GEORGE HERBERT – PRIEST AND POET



George Herbert (3 April 1593 – 1 March 1633) was an English poet, orator, and priest of the Church of England. His poetry is associated with the writings of the metaphysical poets, and he is recognised as "one of the foremost British devotional lyricists." He was born in Wales into an artistic and wealthy family and largely raised in England. He received a good education that led to his admission to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1609. He went there with the intention of becoming a priest, but he became the University's Public Orator and attracted the attention of King James I. He sat in the Parliament of England in 1624 and briefly in 1625.

After the death of King James, Herbert renewed his interest in ordination. He gave up his secular ambitions in his mid-thirties and took holy orders in the Church of England, spending the rest of his life as the rector of the rural parish of Fugglestone St Peter, just outside Salisbury. He was noted for unfailing care for his parishioners, bringing the sacraments to them when they were ill and providing food and clothing for those in need.

In 1629, Herbert had decided to enter the priesthood and the next year was appointed rector of the rural parish of Fugglestone St Peter with Bemerton, near Salisbury. He was responsible for two small churches: the 13th-century parish church of St Peter at Fugglestone, near Wilton, and the 14th-century chapel of St Andrew at Bemerton, closer to Salisbury at the other end of the parish. Here he lived, preached and wrote poetry; he also helped to rebuild the Bemerton church and adjacent rectory out of his own funds.

While at Bemerton, Herbert revised and added to his collection of poems entitled *The Temple*. He also wrote a guide to rural ministry, entitled *A Priest to the Temple or, The County Parson His Character and Rule of Holy Life*, which he himself described as "a Mark to aim at", and which has remained influential to the present day. Having married shortly before taking up his post, he and his wife gave a home to three orphaned nieces. Together with their servants, they crossed the lane for services in the small St Andrew's church twice every day. Twice a week



Herbert made the short journey into Salisbury to attend services at the cathedral, and afterwards would make music with the cathedral musicians.

Herbert's time at Bemerton was short. Having suffered for most of his life from poor health, in 1633 he died of consumption, only three years after taking holy orders. His wife Jane died in 1661.

Herbert came from a musical family. His mother Magdalen was a friend of the composers William Byrd and John Bull, and encouraged her children's musical education; his brother Edward was a skilled lutenist and composer. George Herbert played the lute and viol, and "sett his own lyrics or sacred poems". Musical pursuits interested him all through his life and his biographer, Izaak Walton, records that he rose to play the lute during his final illness. Walton also gave it as his opinion that he composed "such hymns and anthems as he and the angels now sing in heaven", while Walton's friend Charles Cotton described him as a "soul composed of harmonies".

More than ninety of Herbert's poems have been set for singing over the centuries, some of them multiple times. In his own century, there were settings of "*Longing*" by Henry Purcell and "*And art thou grieved*" by John Blow. Some forty were adapted for the Methodist hymnal by the Wesley brothers, among them "*Teach me my God and King*", which found its place in one version or another in 223 hymnals. Another poem, "*Let all the world in every corner sing*", was published in 103 hymnals, of which one is a French version.

In the 20th century, "*Vertue*" alone achieved ten settings, one of them in French. Among leading modern composers who set his work were Edmund Rubbra, who set "*Easter*" as the first of his *Two songs for voice and string trio* (op. 2, 1921); Ralph Vaughan Williams, who used four by Herbert in *Five Mystical Songs*, of which "*Easter*" was the first and "*Antiphon II*" the last; Robin Milford, who used the original Fitzwilliam manuscript's setting of the second part of "*Easter*" for his cantata *Easter Morning* (1932), set in two parts for soprano soloist and choir of children's or women's voices; Benjamin Britten and William Walton, both of whom set "*Antiphon*" too; Ned Rorem who included one in his "*10 poems for voice, oboe and strings*" (1982); and Judith Weir, whose 2005 choral work *Vertue* includes three poems by Herbert.

## JANUARY/FEBRUARY IN WARWICKSHIRE

On Candlemas Day (2 February), the feast of the purification of the Virgin Mary, an important occasion before the Reformation, Coventry guilds such as that of the cappers paid for singers, and as late as 1628 for 'musitions'. According to country lore, this was, all being well, the last day of winter:

*If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,  
Winer will have another flight;  
If Candlemas Day be wind and rain,  
Winter is gone and won't come again.*

On Orange Day (5 February) at Kineton, oranges were sold cheaply in the market square until 1940. St Valentine's Day (14 February) is still commemorated by the sending and receiving of Valentines. These can be signed or anonymous, and profess either love or dislike. At Tysoe, some children used to have the day off school, and at Armscote boys went round singing for apples, to be fried in fritters. Their little chant was:



*Morrow, morrow, Valentine,  
I'll be yours if you'll be mine,  
Please to give us a Valentine.*

The apples were saved to be chopped up and added to the pancake batter on Shrove Tuesday. 'Much noise and merriment accompanied the making when the large pan of fat stood on the open fire' wrote one observer, 'and skilful tossers would take a pancake on a big ladle "an' pitch un 'alf up the chimbley, an' it 'ould come down on t'other side, *smack!* in the pan, an' the fat 'ould fly!'"

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare refers to the old belief that birds begin to mate on Valentine's Day. He was well aware of calendar customs. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, he uses the expression, 'fit ... as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday'. At Alcester a ladies' pancake race has been held every year since 1968 on Shrove Tuesday. The prize, usually a stainless steel frying pan, is presented by the Lord of the Manor, the Marquis of Hertford. Much rougher sports used to be played on this day,

and Joseph Hill of Stratford mentions ‘throwing at tethered cocks’. ‘Very sharp frost,’ he noted on 5 February 1799; ‘snow was so deep on the ground that the boys could not find no other place to throw at cocks but on the ice on the river.’ William Odell of Coventry, who died in 1884, could ‘just remember the throwing at cocks on Shrove Tuesday in the Windmill Fields and at Spon Wake’. The practice ended in Warwick sixty years earlier after an appeal to townsfolk by the Mayor. Shrove Tuesday street football is still very much alive at Atherstone.

Mothering Sunday, the fourth in Lent, normally falls in March. It was the custom in Warwickshire, until late in the nineteenth century, for grown-up children, both married and single, to visit their mothers:

*The lad and lass on Mothering Day  
Hie home to their mother so dear;  
‘Tis a kiss for she and a kiss for they,  
A chine of pork and a sprig of bay.  
A song and dance – but never a tear.*



While mother prepared the traditional meal of pork, the children took her little delicacies, like frumenty. Many shops stocked specially prepared wheat for the occasion. Frumenty (called ‘furmatty’ at Shipston) was made by putting wheat in a bag on the floor and beating it to separate the husk from the

grain. The prepared wheat meant that this process could be omitted, for it was already de-husked. The grain was boiled with plums to make a pudding. By the early twentieth century the custom was in marked decline, though apprentices and girls in service made a point of getting home to see their parents and eating pork and frumenty. Today, cards – sometimes made and coloured at school – are sent to mothers, or flowers given.

*Roy Palmer*

.....  
*When the vicar had been in his new parish twelve months, a parishioner asked him what he thought had been his main contribution to the life of the church. He replied “People here didn’t know what sin was till I came”.*

# 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					

## ACROSS

1. A rum sort of ghost? (6)
5. Warden made a saint. (6)
8. Slang cardinal uses for messengers. (6)
9. Religious person, a bit of a wobbler? (6)
10. Cross held by Rita upside down. (3)
11. Priest's house for a bloke and two cardinals? (5)
13. Today in quiet song. (8)
15. Warmth brought to chickens by non-believers. (8)
16. Bet the organ is sharp! (5)
19. Tip back down the hole. (3)
21. Confused? Almost realise it's a country. (6)
22. The mount of Popeye's girl. (6)
23. Sunglasses she's wearing today. (6)
24. Barest possible chest. (6)

## DOWN

2. Clean pins dropped on top of tower. (9)
3. Grasses in the organ loft? (5)
4. Exam taken by private student. (4)
5. Gets a group of singers, say, to point. (8)
6. Second note about clergymen. (7)
7. Child in care found in hospital. (4)
12. A stolder performance by infidels. (9)
13. Pete's upset by the French spires. (8)
14. Custodian found in Dewar Street? (7)
17. Quiet journey? It's a sin! (5)
18. This girl's not a hit! (4)
20. Cat caught with an insect, we hear, in the vault. (4)

# THOUGHT FOR FOOD

## Chicken stroganoff

### *Ingredients*

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 400g/14oz chestnut mushrooms, halved
- 2 red onions, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 3 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 300ml/10fl oz chicken stock
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
- 1 tbsp sweet smoked paprika
- 250ml/9fl oz soured cream (use reduced fat soured cream if preferred)
- small handful chopped tarragon or parsley
- salt and freshly ground black pepper



Preparation time: 30 minutes  
Cooking time: 10 to 30 minutes

Serves: 4

Heat the oil and butter in a wide, non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Add the mushrooms, red onions and garlic and stir-fry for 3–4 minutes, or until lightly golden-brown. Transfer to a bowl or plate (with all the pan juices) and set aside.

Return the pan to the heat and stir-fry the chicken for 6–7 minutes, or until lightly browned. Pour in the stock, tomato purée, mustard and smoked paprika, and season well with salt and pepper.

Return the mushroom mixture to the pan, bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low. Add the soured cream and chopped tarragon or parsley and cook for 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until the sauce has thickened.

Check the seasoning and add salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Serve in warmed bowls with rice, pasta or mashed potato.

# THE CRACKED POT

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole that he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house.

Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers on your side of the path but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path. Every day while we walk back, you've watered them. For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

\*\*\*\*\*

*The daughter of a minister asked her mother: 'Why does Daddy pray to God before he preaches?'*

*Her mother replied: 'He asks God to help him.'*

*A cloud came over the little girl's face and she said: 'Why doesn't he then?'*



## LUNCHTIME RECITALS AT ST MARY'S

**Fridays 1:15 – 2:00pm**

10<sup>th</sup> January      Katherine Cooper *mezzo soprano*  
24<sup>th</sup> January      Alexander Wilson *organ* (St Cyprian's, Clarence Gate)  
14<sup>th</sup> February      Polly Rumble *trumpet*

*Admission free – retiring collection*

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## AND FINALLY .....

### CROSSWORD SOLUTION

**ACROSS** 1 Spirit 5 Andrew 8 Angels 9 Quaker 10 Tau 11 Manse 13 Serenade  
15 Heathens 16 Spear 19 Pit 21 Israel 22 Olives 23 Shades 24 Breast

**DOWN** 2 Pinnacles 3 Reeds 4 Test 5 Acquires 6 Deacons 7 Ward 12 Idolaters  
13 Steeples 14 Steward 17 Pride 18 Miss 20 Tomb

### Who's Where in The Warwick Team

Contacts in our partner churches in the Warwick Team include:

**All Saints**

Revd Diane Thompson (Team Vicar)

492073

**St Nicholas**

Revd Linda Duckers (Team Vicar)

496209

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Bell Ringers	492783
1 <sup>st</sup> Warwick St Mary's Rainbows/Brownies/Guides	403185
Choir	403940
Friends of St Mary's Choir	07549 534339
Collegium	498851
St Mary's Scholars	403940
St Mary's Study Group	07799 682872
Flowers	857351
Church Guides	403940
Gift Shop	403940
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Helen Dodsworth	
Clare Gould (Operations Manager)	403940
Oliver Hancock	403940
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Gill James (Synod member)	
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