

St Mary's Parish Magazine



March - April 2025

50p

Notes from the Editor

Lent is an important part of the Christian calendar as it is a time when Christians can prepare for the celebrations of Easter by reflecting on their behaviour over the last year and finding ways to live a life based on the teaching of Jesus. People do this in different ways: some people fast, eat frugally, give up treats, or give to charity.

During Lent, many people also set aside time to study the Bible and meet with other Christians to reflect on Jesus's life and prepare for the events of Holy Week and Easter.

At St Mary's we are starting to develop the actions needed to support our Vision 2030, beginning with a renewed Stewardship Campaign – keep an eye out for more information on this in the coming weeks.

Vision 2030

Rooted in faith, reaching out in love. We seek to build a resilient, Christ-centred, and outward-looking St Mary's Minster for future generations.

Tony King - Editor

Contents

3 Reflections on Lent

What the Lent season means to Christians

4 Saint Mark the Evangelist

Gospel writer whose feast day we celebrate on April 25th

6 African Sisters of Mary (CMM)

A report from Andrew de Smet of a recent visit with Dirk Juttner

9 The Flowers That Bloom

Fancy volunteering for the Flower Team?

11 Lady Day

We celebrate the Annunciation on March 25th

12 Never A Crossword

Our regular brain teaser with mainly religious themes

13 Thought For Food

A delicious and easy winter main course

14 Pancakes

A timely story

15 And Finally

Crossword answers and other important things



REFLECTIONS ON LENT

Preparation for Easter: Lent holds immense significance in Christianity as it serves as a period of preparation for the celebration of Easter, the most important event in the Christian calendar. Just as Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness preparing for his ministry, Christians use the 40 days of Lent to prepare their hearts and minds for the joyous celebration of Christ's resurrection.

Reflection and Repentance: Lent provides a dedicated time for believers to engage in self-reflection and repentance. It is a season for introspection, acknowledging one's shortcomings, and seeking forgiveness for sins. Through prayer, fasting, and acts of self-denial, Christians use this time to turn away from worldly distractions and focus on their relationship with God.

Spiritual Discipline: The observance of Lent emphasizes spiritual discipline and self-control. By voluntarily giving up certain luxuries or habits, such as fasting from food or abstaining from certain activities, Christians aim to cultivate a deeper sense of discipline and reliance on God. This intentional self-denial is a way of drawing closer to God and identifying with the sacrifices made by Jesus.

Renewal and Growth: Lent is a season of spiritual renewal and growth. It offers an opportunity for believers to recommit themselves to their faith and deepen their spiritual practices. Through prayer, meditation, and acts of charity, Christians seek to grow in their relationship with God and their love for others.

Commemoration of Jesus' Sacrifice: The Lenten journey culminates in Holy Week, during which Christians commemorate the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. By walking through the final days of Jesus' earthly life, believers gain a deeper appreciation for the magnitude of Jesus' sacrifice and the incredible gift of redemption that comes through his resurrection.

In summary, the significance of Lent in Christianity is multifaceted, encompassing themes of preparation, reflection, discipline, renewal, and commemoration. It is a sacred season that invites believers to journey alongside Jesus, embracing the spiritual disciplines that lead to a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and a more profound experience of the Easter celebration.

Karen Herndon

MARK THE EVANGELIST



Much of what we know about St. Mark, the author of the Second Gospel, comes largely from the New Testament and early Christian traditions. Mark the Evangelist is believed to be the 'John Mark' referred to in the Acts of the Apostles, the history of the early Church found in the Canon of the New Testament.

He was the son of Mary of Jerusalem (Acts 12:12) whose home became a meeting place for the apostles. He is also the cousin of St. Barnabas (Colossians 4:10), a Levite and a Cypriot.

Mark joined St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey to Antioch in 44 A.D. When the group reached Cyprus, Christian tradition holds that Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem, possibly because he was missing his home (Acts 13:13). This incident may have caused Paul to question whether Mark could be a reliable missionary. This created a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas and led Paul to refuse Mark's accompaniment on their second journey to the churches of Cilicia and the rest of Asia Minor.

However, it can be assumed the troubles between Paul and Mark did not last long, because when Paul was first imprisoned, Mark, who was at the time in Rome with plans of visiting Asia Minor, visited him as one of his trusted companions (Col 4:10).

Mark's hopes to visit Asia Minor were most likely carried out, because during Paul's second captivity and just before his martyrdom, Paul wrote to Timothy at Ephesus advising him to "take Mark and bring him with you [to Rome], for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (2 Timothy 4:11). If Mark returned to Rome at this time, he was probably there when Paul was martyred.

According to Christian tradition, Mark also held a close relationship with St. Peter, who referred to Mark as 'his son' in his letter addressed to a number of churches in Asia Minor (1 Peter 5:13). Clement of Alexandria,

Irenaeus and Papias all indicate that Mark was an interpreter for Peter.

Although Papias states Mark had not personally heard the Lord speak firsthand and, like Luke, Mark was not one of the twelve apostles, some believe Mark was likely speaking of himself when he wrote the description of Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane. "Now a young man followed him wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body. They seized him, but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked" (Mark 14:51-52).

St. Mark lived for years in Alexandria, where he died as a martyr while being dragged through the streets.

Mark's Gospel was probably written between 60 and 70 A.D., and was based upon the teachings of St. Peter. It is believed Mark provided both Luke and Matthew with basic sources for their Gospels.

He was probably the first bishop of Alexandria, Egypt and the founder of the Church of Alexandria, although he is not mentioned in connection to the city by either Clement of Alexandria nor by Origen.

In 828, relics of St. Mark were stolen from Alexandria and taken to Venice, Italy. There they are enshrined in a beautiful cathedral dedicated to the saint.

St. Mark's symbol is a winged lion. This is believed to be derived from his description of St. John the Baptist, as "a voice of one crying out in the desert" (Mark 1:3). The wings come from Ezekiel's vision of four winged creatures as the evangelists.

He is often depicted as writing or holding his Gospel. He is sometimes shown as a bishop on a throne or as a man helping Venetian sailors.

St. Mark is the patron saint of Venice. His feast day is celebrated on April 25th.

Until recent years many village nonconformist chapels were heated by a large coke stove situated in the middle of the room. One shrewd chapel steward, during the singing of the hymn before the sermon, used to put a whistling kettle on the stove ready to serve tea and coffee after the service. One week the visiting preacher commented afterwards that that was a sure way of timing the sermon. 'Ah, yes, sir' replied the steward, 'but with some of the preachers us gets 'ere, I only half fills the kettle'.

AFRICAN SISTERS OF ST. MARY (CMM) SUPPORT GROUP

Supporting the Ministry of the CMM Sisters with the disadvantaged in
Tanzania and Zambia

This year Dirk took me with him to Tanzania, I had been once before for two weeks in 2009, this time being newly retired I was able to accompany him for the whole month he was there. After some problems at Heathrow Airport we got to Dar es Salaam and stayed initially with the Benedictines at Kurasini in Dar es Salaam. Tragically three of the brothers died a few months ago in a car crash.

We then flew to Mtwara on the South East coast, where we were met by Bishop James Almasi, Bishop of Masasi. After a pause at the Anglican Church and small convent there, we travelled in the Bishop's car to Masasi where the Sisters have a very active convent at Malisita literally "six miles out" it is in the countryside just off one of the main roads into Masasi. Mtr. Angelina the new Mother of the community is now based at Masasi. Sr Sapelo from Zambia joined us. She speaks good English which was very helpful as many Tanzanian Sisters have very little English as Swahili is the national language.



Staying at most of the convents has some similarities to staying on farms, as unlike most European convents the Sisters have to earn or grow enough to live on mainly through agriculture, like 50% of the population in Tanzania. So there are crops, tilled by hand – no tractors, many fruit trees and plants. Papaya and water melon were in season while we were there and Mangos almost ripe. There are also lots of chickens, a few ducks, cows and goats and also pigs which sell well. There is also a fish pond a project which aimed to earn some money through the sale of fish, but has met with some hitches. The Sisters also keep bees. With rains now more erratic than in the past due to climate change, wells and water collection are vital and the CMM Support Group has provided valuable support in this area. At Malisita the Sisters run a hostel for girls attending secondary school, so they are safe and looked after. They also run a nursery and pre-school which they are hoping to expand to a primary school.

We were made very welcome at each. Finance is always a problem whether to start new projects and when harvests are poor due to drought or storms simply finding money simply to buy food.

We also visited the Cathedral and Diocesan offices, World Vision in association with the Diocese run a project providing wells for rural communities. On the Sunday the Bishop invited me to preach at Masasi Cathedral, with him translating into Swahili. We then went to a confirmation in one of the villages where 69 candidates were confirmed, it is encouraging to see growing lively churches with many young people.

The Sisters at both Masasi and at Sayuni did not have a chaplain so I ended up celebrating their daily Eucharist for them, 6.30am and in a mixture of English and Swahili, and I don't speak Swahili! Dirk has Tanzanian Eucharist booklets with both English and Swahili in them so I learned how to pronounce the Swahili words, the Sisters obtained permission from the bishops and I was supervised by a Cathedral priest on the first occasion. I think my pronunciation gradually improved as I went on. Sr Sophia at Sayuni gave me some extra instruction. The Sunday Anglican Eucharists in southern Tanzania have traditional Anglo-Catholic ritual with some traditional UK hymn tunes but with African beats sometimes drums or these days sometimes a drum machine and some African songs and tunes and sometimes dancing; so both reverent and lively.



From Masasi we travelled to Newala for a few days. Sisters Deborah, Erica and Paulina hosted us. Sr Erica was producing communion wafers on a machine imported from Germany. Sr Deborah is a nurse. The convent is near the Cathedral. We were joined by Beatrice Reusser who was visiting projects supported by the Old Catholics in Switzerland, Germany and Holland.

We visited a well run pre-School (ages 5 to 6) and junior school (ages 7 to 12 or 13). The older children ran a formal debate in English. The school is in the top three in Tanzania.



On St Luke's Day we set off for Sayuni

which is 30km from the upland town of Njombe. There were 5 of us in a 7 seater people carrier, plus luggage, plus a rather amazing picnic, plus large sacks of watermelons, papaya and flour, and some rather discouraging scraping noises emanating from somewhere in the people carrier. As usual there was a mix of good tarmac roads, roads with pot holes and dirt roads, 15 hours later we arrived in Sayuni. I was feeling my age by then! On the way some amazing scenery, monkeys and giant grasshoppers with coloured wings and a dramatic orange moon rise. Sadly after dropping us off the vehicle broke down on the way back. Njombe and Sayuni are high up so we left behind the 30 plus degree temperatures, for cool misty mornings. In Njombe we visited the site where a new secondary school is being built. And saw the creche and junior school the Sisters run which is doing well. In Sayuni the Sisters have the Medical Centre and employ a clinical officer, Sr Sophia is training in pharmacy and Sr Hongera runs the laboratory. Their now elderly microscope has broken. Common diseases include, urinary tract infections, peptic ulcers, pneumonia, chest infections, intestinal worms, dental conditions, gut infections, anaemia, skin infections, and sexually transmitted diseases. Frequently underlying and exacerbating these are malaria and AIDS. An AIDS clinic is run at the Centre. The Centre has capacity for greater use. The Diocese has built an orphanage nearby, it is a wonderful building which needs some finishing before it can open. The Bishop is looking to the Sisters to run it. One day we went to a remote village called Kidegembye taking with us 7 small pigs in the back of the 1990s pickup truck we travelled in. The pigs kept escaping from the bags they were restrained in, so we stopped several times while the Sisters re-bagged them! At the pre-school we visited Dirk and I were the first white men ("Mzungos" – foreigners) they had seen and the children were quite alarmed by us, but soon got over it.

The Sisters are having a junior school built there. There is a constant need for new schools as educational standards improve and Tanzania's population continues to expand, from 10 million in the 1960s to nearly 60 million now. More than a million of these are refugees from conflicts in neighbouring countries. Our trip ended with a journey back to Dar es Salaam. In Dar es Salaam we visited Sr Martha and Sisters in Dar and Action Medeor the German charity who The Sisters are having a junior school built there. There is a constant need for new schools as educational standards improve and Tanzania's population continues to expand, from 10 million in the 1960s to nearly 60 million now. More than a million of these are refu-

gees from conflicts in neighbouring countries. Our trip ended with a journey back to Dar es Salaam. In Dar es Salaam we visited Sr Martha and Sisters in Dar and Action Medeor the German charity who supply medicines to the Sisters. Dirk arranged for a new microscope for Sayuni.



I found my visit to Tanzania and the

Sisters fascinating and inspiring and I am very grateful to Dirk for taking me. It was great to meet the Sisters in the houses we visited and to see the various projects they are



engaged in. It was also a joy to be able to share in their rhythm of worship, although I have to confess rather nerve wracking trying to pronounce the Swahili correctly when I celebrated the Eucharist! All the way through we were made very welcome and we were given some rousing welcomes and send offs – singing and dancing! The Sisters clearly have great affection for Dirk. The moneys sent by the African Sisters of St Mary (CMM) Support Group have been put to good use.

Andrew De Smet November 2024

THE FLOWERS THAT BLOOM

Have you noticed how many flower displays there are in St Mary's, or wondered how and when they got there? You have probably spotted the large arrangement by the lectern, and maybe noticed that it changes every fortnight. There is also a small display in the Dean's Chapel. These beautiful displays are the result of the hard work of a dedicated team of people, led by Brenda Watts. Each large pedestal display, from its creation to the end of the fortnight, is the responsibility

of one person. This involves buying the flowers from local shops, cutting the greenery, transporting it all to church and creating the arrangement, and takes between three and four hours. All this is usually done on a Thursday or Friday so that the church looks at its best for the weekend. The arranger then visits daily for watering for the first four days and half-weekly thereafter.

On a smaller scale, the Dean's Chapel display is the responsibility of one team member for one month at a time. Simpler and less demanding to create, it is usually replaced once during the month and watered twice a week. Clearly the flowers are appreciated - the team members receive many positive comments whilst they are working in church, and a quick glance at the visitors' book reflects this.



The current team numbers six but there is always room for additional enthusiastic volunteers. No experience is necessary, and help and guidance is always available.

Ordinarily, the flowers are paid for by the flower fund. If a wedding couple wishes to choose specific flowers then they pay for them. If you would like to remember a loved one or to mark a celebration please consider sponsoring a pedestal.

For more information or to volunteer please contact Brenda Watts via the Parish Office.

Here are some of the displays from Christmas 2024.



LADY DAY

In the Western liturgical year, Lady Day is the common name in some English-speaking and Scandinavian countries of the Feast of the Annunciation, celebrated on 25 March to commemorate the annunciation of the archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would bear Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

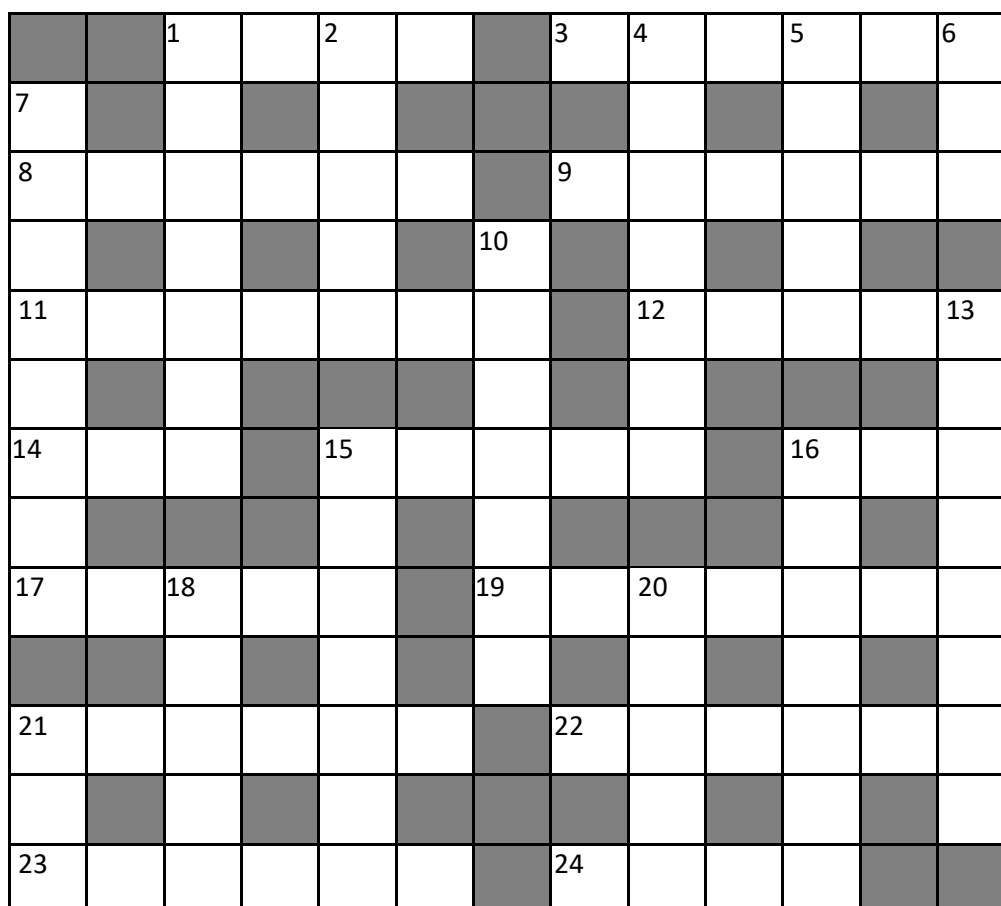
The commemorated event is known in the 1549 prayer book of Edward VI and the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* as "The Annunciation of the (Blessed) Virgin Mary" but more accurately (as in the modern Calendar of the Church of England) termed "The Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary". It is the first of the four traditional English quarter days.

It is celebrated on 25 March each year. In the Catholic Church's Latin liturgical rites, when 25 March falls during Holy Week or Easter week, it is transferred forward to the first suitable day during Eastertide.

The Feast of the Annunciation is observed almost universally throughout Christianity, especially within Orthodoxy, Anglicanism, Catholicism, and Lutheranism. It is a major Marian feast, classified as a solemnity in the Catholic Church, a Festival in the Lutheran Churches, and a Principal Feast in the Anglican Communion. In Orthodox Christianity, because it announces the incarnation of Christ, it is counted as one of the 8 great feasts of the Lord, and not among the four great Marian feasts, although some prominent aspects of its liturgical observance are Marian. Two examples in liturgical Christianity of the importance attached to the Annunciation are the Angelus prayer and, especially in Roman Catholicism, the event's position as the first Joyful Mystery of the Dominican Rosary.

As a year-end and quarter-day that conveniently did not fall within or between the seasons for ploughing and harvesting, Lady Day was a traditional day on which year-long contracts between landowners and tenant farmers would begin and end in England and nearby lands (although there were regional variations). Farmers' time of "entry" into new farms and onto new fields was often this day. As a result, farming families who were changing farms would travel from the old farm to the new one on Lady Day.

NEVER A CROSSWORD!



ACROSS

1. Found on Glastonbury Tor, no more. (4)
3. Good men suffer stains. (6)
8. Cardinal's headgear worn back to front causes animosity! (6)
9. St George's victim could be nothing grand. (6)
11. Unwrap present to find Eve's nemesis. (7)
12. The opening part of that chapter. (5)
14. Lad found floating, we hear! (3)
15. South African spirit from old Salisbury. (5)
16. How to go the Roman way! (3)
17. Praise section of the next Olympic Games. (5)
19. Ate rats - turned into a goddess! (7)
21. Bury cardinals and where to. (6)
22. Biblical character in denial. (6)
23. Member of sect found in German city by cardinal. (6)
24. It's our burden. (4)

DOWN

1. Soldier truly confused by form of worship. (7)
2. See four about a riddle. (5)
4. Sailor and artist get pork for a patriarch. (7)
5. Templar who lost his head after dark? (5)
6. Break the law, returning in unison. (3)
7. Charles blue about his clerical vestment. (8)
10. Ten are left confused for ever. (7)
13. Ah! Evenly spread it's out of this world! (8)
15. Scotsman by himself is a wise man. (7)
16. Olive oil cardinal gets for innocents. (7)
18. Bird we got for a companion of Paul. (5)
20. Anti? Right about what a coach does. (5)
21. Last night's First Lady. (3)

THOUGHT FOR FOOD

One pan chicken and asparagus bake

Ingredients:

- 2 8-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 12 ounces baby new potatoes, halved lengthwise
- 8 ounces carrots, diagonally sliced into 1-inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped shallot
- 1 tablespoon whole-grain Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- Lemon wedges



Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place chicken on a clean work surface and cover with plastic wrap. Using a meat mallet, pound the chicken pieces to an even 1/2-inch thickness. Arrange chicken on one half of a large rimmed baking sheet. Arrange potatoes and carrots in a single layer on the other half of the pan. Drizzle the chicken and vegetables with 1 tablespoon oil; sprinkle with 1 teaspoon coriander, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Bake for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, whisk lemon juice, shallot, mustard, honey and the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, 1 teaspoon coriander, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a small bowl. Remove the pan from the oven; switch the oven to broil. Stir the potato-carrot mixture; arrange asparagus in the centre of the pan. Spoon the lemon juice-shallot mixture evenly over the chicken and vegetables. Broil until the chicken and vegetables are lightly browned, asparagus is tender-crisp and a thermometer inserted in the thickest portion of the chicken registers 165°F, about 10 minutes.

Remove from oven; sprinkle evenly with parsley and dill. Serve with lemon wedges.

PANCAKES

Six-year-old Dan decided one Saturday morning to make pancakes for his parents. He found a big bowl and spoon, pulled a chair to the counter, opened the cupboard and pulled out the heavy flour canister, spilling it on the floor.

He scooped some of the flour into the bowl with his hands, mixed in most of a cup of milk and added some sugar, leaving a floury trail on the floor which by now had a few tracks left by his kitten.

Dan was covered with flour and getting frustrated. He wanted this to be something very good for Mum and Dad, but it was getting very bad.

He didn't know what to do next, whether to put it all into the oven or on the stove, and he didn't know how the stove worked! Suddenly, he saw his kitten licking from the bowl of mix and reached to push her away, knocking the egg carton to the floor. Frantically, he tried to clean up this monumental mess but slipped on the eggs, getting his pyjamas white and sticky.

Just then he saw Dad standing at the door. Big crocodile tears welled up in Dan's eyes. All he'd wanted to do was something good, but he'd made a terrible mess. He was sure a scolding was coming, maybe even a spanking. But his father just watched him.

Then, walking through the mess, he picked up his crying son, hugged him and loved him, getting his own pyjamas white and sticky in the process.

That's how God deals with us. We try to do something good in life, but it turns into a mess. Our marriage gets all sticky, we insult a friend, we can't stand our job, or our health goes sour.

Sometimes, we just stand there in tears because we can't think of anything else to do. That's when God picks us up and loves us and forgives us, even though some of our mess gets all over Him.

But just because we might mess up, we can't stop trying for God or for others. Sooner or later, we'll get it right, and then they'll be glad we tried.

LUNCHTIME RECITALS AT ST MARY'S

Fridays 1:15 – 2:00pm

7 th March	Young Musicians from Warwick School
21 st March	Castalia – Clive Latchford
4 th April	Harry Sullivan -organ (St Mary's, Warwick)

Admission free – retiring collection

AND FINALLY

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS 1 Last 3 Saints 8 Hatred 9 Dragon 11 Serpent 12 Hatch 14 Boy
15 Sarum 16 Via 17 Extol 19 Astarte 21 Entomb 22 Daniel 23 Essene 24 Onus

DOWN 1 Liturgy 2 Sieve 4 Abraham 5 Night 6 Sin 7 Chasuble 10 Eternal
13 Heavenly 15 Solomon 16 Virgins 18 Titus 20 Train 21 Eve

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 st 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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