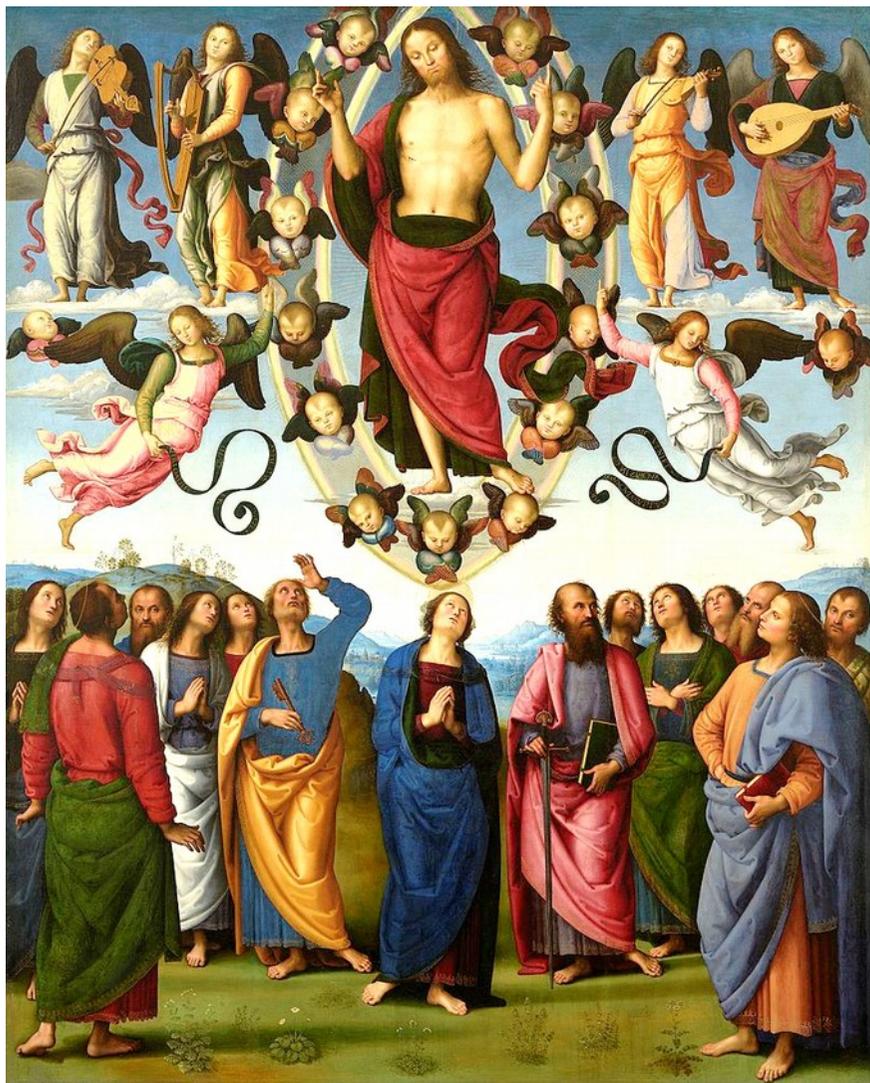


NEWSLETTER



This newsletter contains details of the upcoming events of the month, including the Forum Lunch, the PCC, Bible Study and the May Devotion, and of course the usual Vicar's letter, daily intentions for prayer and more.

Highlights of May

Monday 1st May

Feast of SS Philip & James, apostles

Low Mass 12.30pm, Sung Mass 7pm.

Tuesday 9th May

Monthly Forum Lunch

12noon lunch for sufferers from dementia and their carers.

See Tim Wheatley for more information.

Parochial Church Council

Low Mass with intention for the new PCC 7pm; PCC Meeting 7.30pm.

Wednesday 10th May

Monthly Healing Mass

10am Eucharist with laying-on of hands and anointing

Thursday 25th May

Ascension Day

Low Mass 7.45am; Mothers' Union Prayers in the Lady Chapel 10.30am

Coffee in the Parish Centre 11am

Pontifical High Mass, Baptism & Confirmation 7pm.

We welcome David, Bishop of Huntingdon, to Baptize, Confirm and receive into the Church members of our parish and other parishes within the Deanery.

Saturday 27th May

Bible Study

4.30pm *looking at the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to S. John*

Tuesday 30th May

May Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary

7pm Vespers, sermon, procession & Benediction

Preacher: The Very Rev'd Frances Ward, Dean of St Edmundsbury.

Wednesday 31st May

Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Low Mass 10am, Sung Mass 7pm.

From the Vicar

Saturday 29th April 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

There's an old joke against Roman Catholic clergy that has a priest beginning his Easter sermon by saying 'This Sunday being Easter Day puts us in mind of Our Lady' and then preaching one of his standard Marian sermons oblivious to the occasion! I won't deny that there have been times when I've bent a biblical text to fit a sermon I'd already written or wanted to preach, and I suspect the primary subject of Easter Day ought to be the death and resurrection of Jesus; nonetheless there is certainly something about the Easter *season* that ought to put us in mind of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

For a start, it is only natural to rejoice with a mother when she has good news of her child, and the resurrection of a dead child could hardly be better news. It's why we sing the *Regina Caeli* at morning, noon and evening through this season. The resurrection also vindicates Mary's obedience to God and, as is always the case with Our Lady, what it does for her it does for us too: Easter is the vindication of our following and trust in the Lord. Mary's joy is ours. More generally, the month of May is always in Eastertide (regardless of how early or late Easter is) and since the 18th century this month has been especially associated with the Blessed Virgin. Why? Some people have pointed to the fact that, in classical western culture (both Greek and Roman), May was recognized as the season of the beginning of new life. In the Greek world, May was dedicated to the goddess Artemis and associated with fecundity. Roman culture linked the month of May to Flora, the goddess of bloom and blossoms – this led to the custom of Ludi Florales (floral games) which took place at the very end of April as a preparation for entering into the month of May.

It seems that this ancient tradition of connecting May with new life and fecundity led to a realization that May is very much the month of motherhood – this may be the reason why Mother's Day is celebrated during May so many countries (although not ours). In the month of May, the winter comes to an end and the spring season begins (this was the official beginning of spring in Roman culture). This new beginning and new birth is a testimony to the motherhood of Mother Earth. The connection between motherhood and May, therefore, led Christians eventually to adopt May as Mary's Month.

On 30th May, therefore, the Eve of the Visitation of Our Lady to Elizabeth, we have our annual May Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. We give thanks to God for her example, the unique gift she was given of being Mother of God, and for her prayers for her fellow-Christians here on earth. More generally, it is a celebration of the Incarnation, of Easter and new life and ends with prayer before Our Lord and receiving His sacramental blessing in Benediction. It is a lovely evening (7pm – c.8.30pm) and I'm especially delighted that the Dean of St Edmundsbury, the Very Rev'd Frances Ward, has agreed to preach. She is a fine preacher and we look forward to welcoming her to LSM. I'm grateful to Fr Stephen Anderson for inviting her on behalf of our parish and the Society of Mary.

May, month of the Resurrection and month of Our Lady, is (I hope) a time of joy and thanksgiving for us and our church. While we sadly say goodbye to Fr Max at this time, we look forward to joining him at his installation in June and we give thanks for his ministry among us over the past three and a half years – the harvest of which will long continue. We also look forward to the work starting on the Lady Chapel. Further, we begin our annual Christian Giving Renewal where we pray about how we respond financially and practically to God's generosity to us. He gives us so much – how do we respond? What part of what He has given us do we give back to His church? I thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration of this.

All these appeals for generosity only make sense once we have understood and experienced the generosity of God to each of us. We love because He first loved us, as Saint John writes. Easter and May culminate with the Feast of Pentecost on the first Sunday of June, when the ascended Lord pours Himself out on us as the Holy Spirit. Amid the busy tasks of the Easter Term I hope we can find time to be open to the Holy Spirit and discover the love and generosity at the heart of all things – in our creation, preservation and the blessings of this life and in the nourishment of word and sacrament that our Mother the Church provides.

With my prayers for an experience of that generosity this Easter, I am,
yours ever in the Lord,

Fr Robert.

May Magnificat

by Gerard Manley Hopkins

May is Mary's month, and I
Muse at that and wonder why:
Her feasts follow reason,
Dated due to season—

Candlemas, Lady Day
But the Lady Month, May,
Why fasten that upon her,
With a feasting in her honour?

Is it only its being brighter
Than the most are must delight her?
Is it opportunist
And flowers finds soonest?

Ask of her, the mighty mother:
Her reply puts this other
Question: What is Spring? –
Growth in every thing –

Flesh and fleece, fur and feather,
Grass and greenworld all together;
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throstle above her nested

Cluster of bugle-blue eggs thin
Forms and warms the life within;
And bird and blossom swell
In sod or sheath or shell.

All things rising, all things sizing
Mary sees, sympathising
With that world of good,
Nature's motherhood.

Their magnifying of each its kind
With delight calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify the Lord.

Well but there was more than this:
Spring's universal bliss
Much, had much to say
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-dapple
Bloom lights the orchard-apple
And thicket and thorp are merry
With silver-surfèd cherry

And azuring-over greybell makes
Wood banks and brakes
wash wet like lakes
And magic cuckoo-call
Caps, clears, and clinches all –

This ecstasy all through mothering earth
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth
To remember and exultation
In God who was her salvation.

- **The May Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is at 7pm on Tuesday 30th May and is followed by refreshments!**

Calendar for May

Mon 1st **SS Philip & James, Apostles**
Tue 2nd S. Athanasius, Bishop & Doctor
Wed 3rd
Thu 4th English Saints & Martyrs of the Reformation
Fri 5th of the Sacred Heart
Sat 6th

SUN 7th FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Mon 8th Julian of Norwich, spiritual writer
Tue 9th
Wed 10th
Thu 11th
Fri 12th
Sat 13th of the Blessed Virgin Mary

SUN 14th FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Mon 15th **S. Matthias, Apostle**
Tue 16th
Wed 17th of Requiem
Thu 18th
Fri 19th S. Dunstan, Bishop
Sat 20th Blessed Alcuin of York, Deacon & Abbot

SUN 21st SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Rogation Sunday)

Mon 22nd Rogation Day
Tue 23rd Rogation Day
Wed 24th John & Charles Wesley, Priests (Rogation Day)
THU 25th ASCENSION DAY
Fri 26th S. Augustine of Canterbury, Archbishop
Sat 27th

SUN 28th SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Mon 29th
Tue 30th Josephine Butler, social reformer
Wed 31st The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Daily Intentions and *Anniversaries of death for May*

Increase in our discipleship	<i>Cicely Gibson</i> 1 st
Greater study of the Church Fathers	<i>Richard Mashedor, pr.</i> 2 nd
All those discerning vocation	3 rd
Modern day martyrs	4 th
Increase in devotion to the Blessed Virgin	<i>Barbara Chamier</i> 5 th
The homeless of Cambridge	6 th

Our Parish & People	7 th
Spiritual Writers	8 th
<i>Those suffering with dementia and their carers</i>	<i>Lois Rayner, deaconess</i> 9 th
Increase in prayer	10 th
Increase in thanksgiving for the gift of creation	<i>Arthur Mickle</i> 11 th
Wise and compassionate political leaders	<i>Jeremy Bunting, pr.</i> 12 th
The Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham	<i>Charles Perrin</i> 13 th

Our Parish & People	14 th
That we may hear God's call more keenly	15 th
Refugees	<i>Sarah White</i> 16 th
The faithful departed <i>Constance Rosedale, Gwendolen Plumley, Catherine Beesley</i>	17 th
The terminally ill	<i>Arthur Cuff, Laila Antoun</i> 18 th
The religious life in England	<i>Helen Paton</i> 19 th
The Diocese of York	20 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Ethel Gibbons</i> 21 st
The gift of fasting	<i>Herbert Burrell, pr.</i> 22 nd
Farmers	23 rd
Collaboration between Anglicans and Methodists	24 th
Thanksgiving for the promise of eternal life	<i>Francis Maycock, pr.</i> 25 th
Archbishop of Canterbury	<i>Margaret Verney</i> 26 th
Greater love for one's neighbour	27 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Eileen Cope, Frank Hollick, John Bagley, pr.</i> 28 th
Christianity in Asia	<i>William Dempsey, Roy Abraham</i> 29 th
Those who fight for reform and justice	30 th
Expectant mothers and their joy	<i>Liz Fretten</i> 31 st

The Ascension of Our Lord

*Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God,
that like as we do believe Thy only-begotten Son
our Lord Jesus Christ
to have ascended into the heavens;
so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend
and with Him continually dwell,
who liveth and reigneth with Thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

The Ascension of Jesus is the departure of Christ from Earth into the presence of God. The well-known narrative in Acts 1 takes place 40 days after the Resurrection: Jesus, in the company of the disciples, is taken up in their sight after warning them to remain in Jerusalem until the coming of the Holy Spirit; as He ascends a cloud hides Him from their view, and two men in white appear to tell them that He will return "in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Luke-Acts, a single work from the same anonymous author, provides the only detailed account of the Ascension. Luke 24 tells how Jesus leads the eleven disciples to Bethany, a village on the Mount of Olives not far from Jerusalem, where He instructs them to remain in Jerusalem until the coming of the Holy Spirit and blesses them. "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."

Acts 1 describes a meal on the Mount of Olives, where Jesus commands the disciples to await the coming of the Holy Spirit, a cloud takes Him upward from sight, and two men in white appear to tell them (the disciples) that He will return "in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven." Luke and Acts appear to describe the same event, but present quite different chronologies, Luke placing it on the same day as the Resurrection and Acts forty days afterwards; various proposals have been put forward to resolve the contradiction, but the question remains open.

The Gospel of John has three references to ascension in Jesus' own words: "No one has ascended into heaven but He who descended from heaven, the son of man" (John 3:13); "What if you (the disciples) were to see the son of man ascending where He was before?" (John 6:62); and to Mary Magdalene after his Resurrection, "Do not hold Me, for I not yet ascended to My Father..." (John20:17). In the first and second Jesus is claiming to be the apocalyptic "one like a son of man" of Daniel 7; the last has mystified commentators – why should Mary be prohibited from touching the risen but not yet ascended Christ, while Thomas is later invited to do so?

Various epistles (Romans 8:34, Ephesians 1:19-20, Colossians 3:1, Philippians 2:9-11, 1 Timothy 3:16, and 1 Peter 3:21-22) also refer to an Ascension, seeming, like Luke-Acts and John, to equate it with the post-resurrection "exaltation" of Jesus to the right hand of God.

The common thread linking all the New Testament Ascension references, reflected in the major Christian creeds and confessional statements, is the exaltation of Jesus, meaning that through His ascension Jesus took His seat at the right hand of God in Heaven: "He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty." It is interpreted more broadly as the culmination of the Mystery of the Incarnation, marking the completion of Jesus' physical presence among His apostles and consummating the union of God and man, as expressed in the Second Helvetic Confession:

Christ Is Truly Ascended Into Heaven. We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, in His same flesh, ascended above all visible heavens into the highest heaven, that is, the dwelling-place of God and the blessed ones, at the right hand of God the Father. Although it signifies an equal participation in glory and majesty, it is also taken to be a certain place about which the Lord, speaking in the Gospel, says: 'I go to prepare a place for you' (John 14:2). The apostle Peter also says: 'Heaven must receive Christ until the time of restoring all things' (Acts 3:21).

People for our prayers

Fr Robert writes:

In the last month we have lost two people very dear to the life of Little Saint Mary's:

Mary Rayner worshipped at LSM for decades and was a wonderful, supportive presence and friend to many. Together with her husband Maurice (Churchwarden, Treasurer and server) and two sons, Mary was at the heart of the parish's life. Mary and Maurice retired to Norwich a few years ago and Maurice died early on in my time as Vicar. Mary had been in a nursing home for the last two years. She died early on Easter Monday, 17th April. Her funeral is on Monday 8th May at S. John's Church, Timberhill, Norwich. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Scilla Hall's cheery face can be found on choir and parish photographs over many decades! She worshipped at LSM together with her husband Philip for a very long time and nursed Philip in his final illness. She retired from the choir a couple of years ago but continued to support its work and to worship faithfully Sunday by Sunday. Sadly her son Andrew predeceased her, dying last year, but she leaves her daughter Anastasia and grandchildren. Scilla was in church on Sunday 23rd and died peacefully in her sleep only a day later. Her funeral is on Wednesday 17th May at 2.30pm here at Little S. Mary's. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Franco Basso, Rosanna Price and Fiona Howe are the joyful focus of our prayers as they prepare for Ascension Day this year. Franco is being received into the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church, Rosanna is being Baptized and Confirmed and Fiona is being Confirmed. We're delighted to welcome to LSM members of the congregation of **S. James, Wulfstan Way**, to be Baptized and Confirmed too. The Right Rev'd Dr David Thompson, Bishop of Huntingdon, will be with us at 7pm on Thursday 25th May to celebrate Mass, preach, Baptize and Confirm. Do make every effort to be present, not only to support our candidates but to welcome Bishop David and, of course, to celebrate the Ascension of our Lord!

The Great Get Together – Saturday 17th June

Brendan Cox and the Jo Cox Foundation are asking people to get together on this weekend in June to strengthen the ties that bind us, as a tribute to the life and legacy of Jo Cox MP, who was tragically murdered last June.

She lived her life sharing her belief that we have more in common than divides us; her life as a public servant was dedicated to standing up for vulnerable people.

Encouraged by Archbishop Justin we at LSM would like to host a tea party in the churchyard inviting all around us to come. So please note the day and come to help us celebrate Jo's life.

Camtrust Tuesday Pop-Up Sales at Histon Methodist Church

Camtrust, one of the local organisations supported by the Social Responsibility Group, offers supportive vocational training and work experience programmes to adults with learning and physical disabilities. Camtrust has had to expand its fundraising greatly in the last few years, as it is no longer primarily funded and staffed by the regional colleges. In this, Camtrust has been very imaginative, and through these efforts has built strong relationships with business and organisations both locally in Histon and Impington, and in Cambridge.

One of Camtrust's initiatives, and now a regular occurrence in Histon, is its Pop-up sales which are held regularly at the local Methodist church. An extremely wide range of items can be found and it is well worth a visit. The next pop-up sales are on **Tuesdays 16 May and 13 June**.

Another way to contribute would be to donate items for the sale. Camtrust accepts donations of a very wide range of items, but children's books, DVDs, jewellery and old curiosities are particularly welcome. For more information contact info@camtrust.co.uk

Bob DeWolf

Hassocks and Kneelers

It has been suggested that Little St Mary's church could be further enhanced if the hassocks and altar rail kneelers were replaced. They could be specially designed

and worked on canvas, which would include Liturgical and Marian symbols, by members of the congregation.

As this will be a big undertaking the project will start by making hand-sown altar rail kneelers. If anyone is interested in any of this work please would they contact a churchwarden?

Christine Tipple

The happy birds *Te Deum* sing,
'Tis Mary's month of May;
Her smile turns winter into spring,
And darkness into day;
And there's a fragrance in the air,
The bells their music make,
And O the world is bright and fair,
And all for Mary's sake.

Where'er we seek the holy Child,
At every sacred spot,
We meet the Mother undefiled;
Who shun her seek Him not:
At cloistered Nazareth we see,
At haunted Bethlehem,
The throne of Jesus, Mary's knee,
Her smile, His diadem.

The Daughter, Mother, Spouse of God,
None silence her appeal
Who long to tread where Jesus trod,
What Jesus felt to feel.
O Virgin-born, from Thee we learn
To love Thy Mother dear;
Her teach us duly to discern,
And rightly to revere.

To love the Mother, people say,
Is to defraud the Son;
For them, alas, there dawns no May,
Until their hearts are won:
Then, when their hearts begin to burn,
Ah, then, to Jesus true,
And loving whom He loves, they learn
To love Saint Mary too.

How many are the thoughts that throng
On faithful souls today!
All year we sing our Lady's song,
'Tis still the song of May:
Magnificat! O may we feel

That rapture more and more;
And chiefly, Lord, what time we kneel
Thine altar-throne before.

'Tis then, when at Thy feet we pray,
We share our Lady's mirth;
Her joy we know who hail today
Thy Eucharistic birth;
That trembling joy to Mary sent,
Ah, Christians know it well,
With whom in His dear sacrament
Their Saviour deigns to dwell.

Yes, Mary's month has come again,
The merry month of May;
And sufferers forget their pain,
And sorrows flee away,
And joys return, the hearts whose moan
Was desolate erewhile
Are blithe and gay, once more they own
The charm of Mary's smile.

Thy Son our Brother is, and we,
Whatever may betide,
A Mother, Mary, have in thee,
A guardian and a guide;
Thy smiles a tale of gladness tell
No words can ever say;
If but, like thee, we love Him well,
The year will all be May.

All hail! An angel spake the words
We lovingly repeat;
The song-notes of the singing birds
They are not half so sweet:
This is a music that endures,
It cannot pass away,
For Mary's children it ensures
A never-ending May