

NEWSLETTER



This newsletter contains details of our overseas links and social justice projects, news about our Passion Play, Holy Week & Easter and the Mothers' Union, plus the usual Vicar's letter, Fr Gregory's article, daily intentions for prayer and more.

Highlights of April

Sunday 8th April

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

After the 10.30am High Mass. *A chance to elect Churchwardens, review the past year and look ahead to 2018-19.*

Monday 9th April (*transferred from 25th March*)

Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Low Mass 12.30pm, High Mass 7pm *followed by refreshments.*

Tuesday 10th April

Forum Lunch *for dementia sufferers and their carers*

11.30am-3pm. *Cooks & helpers wanted (training given). See Bob DeWolf for information.*

Wednesday 11th April

Monthly Healing Mass

10am *preceded by prayers for the sick at 9.45am in the Lady Chapel. All welcome to this meditative service where personal prayer & anointing with oil are offered at Mass.*

Wednesday 11th-Wednesday 18th April

Holy Land Pilgrimage. *We will pray for you at the holy sites. Pray for us too!*

Monday 23rd April

Feast of S. George, martyr & patron of England

12.30pm Low Mass, 7pm Sung Mass *followed by refreshments*

Wednesday 25th April

Feast of S. Mark, evangelist

7pm Pontifical High Mass with Baptism & Confirmation. *We welcome David, Bishop of Huntingdon, to Confirm six of our congregation. Don't miss this!*

From the Vicar

Easter Wednesday 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Alleluia! Christ is risen!

There's so much happening at the moment that this letter has less of a flow to it and is more of a series of bulletins on aspects of our life together – so please forgive the lack of prose style or rhetorical flourish in these next paragraphs!

First, I thank all those involved in our preparations for Easter. Cleaners, flower arrangers, servers, choir members and all those who volunteered and all those who took part in our liturgies – all of you were wonderful and contributed to a very good keeping of Holy Week. As ever, we had a number of visitors (I don't know where they go for the other 51 weeks of the year!) and our numbers were again up, especially for Good Friday and Easter Day. More important than numbers is that we offer true worship to God and were deepened in faith and trust ourselves. I pray this happened. My especial thanks to the Archdeacon of Cambridge for his sermons, not least for his agreeing to preach all the way through from Palm Sunday to Easter Day.

Secondly, I hope you like the newly-restored Lady Chapel. There is still a small amount of finishing off to do but it is to all intents and purposes complete. I am thrilled with the result and I trust you will be too. This leads us into a renewed period of work on the interior of the church. We have restored and secured the exterior in recent years and are now turning our attention to things such as the walls, sound system, floor, cushions and kneelers. The new Stations of the Cross will be installed before Lent 2019 and then we will need to repaint the whole church internally. We have agreed to replace the dilapidated sound system and this will happen within the next twelve months and the PCC recently voted to purchase long cushions for the pews in church to make our presence in them a less penitential experience. We will also replace the kneelers in due course. The loveliness of the Lady Chapel floor shows up the horridness of the main church floor and so that is something we

shall have to look into and I am well aware that the lighting of the choir and sanctuary leaves something to be desired in terms of both tone and subtlety. I will talk about all these things at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting after High Mass on Sunday 8th (the day this newsletter comes out).

It was the Archdeacon who observed to me that catholic and liberal Anglican churches spend spare money on their building while evangelical parishes spend spare money on youth work. I am conscious therefore that amid all this good and improving expenditure on Little S. Mary's building we should not lose focus on the people inside it, members of the true Temple not made with human hands. I hope our new PCC will spend some time with me later this year thinking and praying about where we go and what we do in the future and how we turn the pleasing number of people who come to church into those who are actively involved and committed to it.

This leads me to my final point which is to thank Patricia Davies who retires this year as one of our Churchwardens. Tricia has been a wonderful Warden, full of support, enthusiasm and hard work and I will miss her a huge amount, as I know will Janet Nevitt, our other Warden. My thanks too to her husband Richard and daughter Lizzie who have also shouldered the burden of Tricia's absence from home and presence in church! Happily, it is not as if they are leaving, and we shall still enjoy Tricia's work and wisdom, not least in the life of the parish choir.

Early on Wednesday morning (11th April) 21 of us head off from Luton Airport for a week's pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It will be good to be doing this in the immediate aftermath of Easter, both to consolidate the spiritual experiences of Holy Week and also to prevent us from turning our minds immediately back to the practicalities of parish life. It will be a busy week but one that all will remember and hopefully inspire us all in our faith. We'll be praying for all at LSM too!

With excitement at our journey and the assurance of prayer, I am,
yours in the risen Lord,
Fr Robert.

Explaining the Eucharist

Fr Gregory writes:

In this series of articles I want to talk about the Holy Mass, explaining what we do and why. I hope these short writings will help each of us to participate at the Holy Mysteries, the Eucharist, more fruitfully.

Preparation and awaiting are two very human reactions when it comes to important things. They express both the importance of the upcoming event and our joy over it. So it is only natural that when it comes to the Holy Mass, the most important and most real encounter with Jesus Christ we can have this side of heaven, we must first consider the act of preparation.

Obviously, our first and most important preparation is being as holy and pure as it is possible for mortals to be to receive Jesus worthily in the Blessed Sacrament. So, as the Book of Common Prayer teaches, if our conscience is troubled by sin, first we must go to Confession, seeking absolution from our sins.

Remote and immediate preparation

Our remote preparation for the Eucharist begins at home and continues on our way to church. It is a venerable Christian tradition, even rooted in Judaism, that, unless prevented by reasons linked to our health, we abstain from food and drink (except for water and medicine) for an hour before the Holy Mass. S. Augustine of Hippo in the 4th century writes about it as an already consolidated practice.

In the Old Testament, fasting prepared individuals to receive the action of God and to be placed in His presence. Just think about Moses (Ex 34.28) or Elijah (I Kings 19.8). S. John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord with fasting and penance. In the early Church, fasting was considered an act of prayer and was connected with the Liturgy (in Acts 13.2-3 for example). Also, because our soul and body are so intimately connected, this corporal work can enhance the spiritual disposition we need to receive Christ in the Blessed Sacrament: fasting creates a physical hunger and thirst reminding us of the spiritual hunger and thirst we ought to have for the Lord (Matthew 5.6).

Our “corporal preparation” must be accompanied by a spiritual one. On our way to church, we should try to fix our thoughts on Him whom we are going

to meet and receive (not so easy when we have children too!) It is the same Lord, the living God Himself who said to Moses: “Come not nigh hither, put off the shoes from thy feet; for the place, whereon thou standest, is holy ground.” (Ex 3.5); in whose presence Isaiah exclaimed: “Woe is me, because I have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of hosts.” (Is 6.5); and S. Peter trembled with holy fear: “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” (Lk 5.8); or in front of whose throne the whole heavenly court prostrates in worship (Rev. 5.8). But He is also the Lord who calls sinners, is meek and humble of heart, and “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant” (Phil 2.7) so we do not need to be afraid of Him.

These thoughts and biblical images can help us to realize that it is Jesus Christ, it is God Himself we are about to meet. His majesty and glory are hidden, expressed only by the beauty of Liturgy. However, His love and mercy are manifest all the more in the wonderful Sacrament of the Eucharist. Feelings of holy fear and joy, hope and love should fill us by the time we enter the church.

The Priest's preparation

While it is not my intention to write in detail about the Priest's preparation, two elements of it might be helpful for us too: the use of liturgical vestments and Psalm 43.

Psalm 43 - Let's start with the Psalm. Psalm 43 is mentioned by 6th-century documents as prayer connected to the celebration of the Eucharist. According to the tradition, it was written by King David when he had to flee from his enemies and was wandering in his hiding place. His heart was longing for the Holy City, Jerusalem. David asks God to “send out [His] light and ... truth” so that he may be brought back by them to God's “holy hill and... dwelling.” - to that dwelling where David in his youth had found so much joy in God, “even in the God of joy and gladness.” All he desires is that he may “go unto the altar of God” again. But he does not despair; on the contrary, he “puts his trust” in God's faithfulness and acclaims with certainty: “I will yet give Him thanks; upon the harp will I give thanks unto my God.”

This Psalm expresses the sentiment which animates the priest: he is powerfully attracted to the altar. How many times are we oppressed by our own enemies: the evil, temptations, sickness, tragedies, loneliness, violence, injustice and others. This Psalm summarises the feelings every Christian should have when we approach God's altar: though we are weak, God is our strength, in Him we trust, to Him we cry out with confidence and certainty only faith can give. He is our hope and our desire, our joy and fortress. It is a commendable practice to

recite this Psalm privately before the Mass, as part of our preparation, along with the Collect for Purity.

Vestments – sometimes even fervent Christians tend to consider vestments as mere exteriority, something not essential or something even superfluous to the Liturgy. But this is far from the truth. In the Old Testament, it was God's command that the Jewish priests wore a distinctive garb when they ministered, first in the Tent of the Covenant and later in the Temple. The sacred had to be separated from the secular, from the everyday (this is one of the reasons we use a more archaic, solemn language in the Liturgy). The Bible tells us that the Old Testament priests and Levites were vested in violet, purple and scarlet fine linen, and decorated with gold and precious stones. This expressed the dignity of their priestly office, independent of the merits of the person, but more importantly it ensured that the best and most precious they produced, was put aside to the service of God. This "giving the best to God" was also observed in the early Church. While the garments worn at the Eucharist were not dissimilar in form to everyday clothing, they were distinguished in richness and beauty of decorations.

However, a second, theological and spiritual reason led the Church to the use of liturgical vestments. This reason is clear from the first vestment the priest puts on: the **amice**. The amice is a piece of fine linen in the form of an oblong. The priest places it for a moment on his head, and then allows it to rest upon his shoulders. The prayer accompanying prayer compares it to "the helmet of salvation" (Ephes 6.17) but it is also a reference to the linen cloth that the soldiers put over Our Lord's head; when thus blindfolded He was mockingly asked who struck Him (Mt 26.68). It was a Roman custom to put a white cloth over the head of those condemned to death. Thus from the very moment the Priest starts to vest, he is reminded of what the Mass is: the memorial of Christ's Passion, the re-presentation of the Sacrifice of the Cross. As Prayer C in Common Worship says: Jesus made on the Cross "a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death and sacrifice." This perpetual memory is the Eucharist, the Holy Mass.

When the Priest puts on the amice, the Church instructs him to "disappear," so to say. It is not the person of the Priest that counts any more, but Christ. With John the Baptist must the priest repeat: "He must increase: but I must decrease." (John 3.30)

Every other vestment serves the same goal: to separate the sacred from the profane, to raise the splendour of the Liturgy, to hide the person(ality) of the Priest, to highlight the dignity of Christ's priesthood, to recall us to His Passion, Death and Resurrection:

The long, white **alb** (worn in ancient times by all who enjoyed any dignity, reminder of the garment with which Herod clothed Our Lord, also the garment of the redeemed following the Lamb);

the **girdle** (reminder of the cord that bound Our Lord to the pillar when He was being scourged, also symbol of modesty and hard work in God's service (I Peter 1,13-15);

the **stole** (historically part of the dress of the upper classes, and because worn over the shoulders, it reminds us of the Cross, just as the yoke of Christ that the Priest wears is a heavy burden, but one which Christ nevertheless makes sweet and light);

and finally the **chasuble** (historically an immense cloak that completely covered the body; reminder of the purple cloak worn by Our Lord when He stood before Pilate, and symbol of Christ's redeeming grace and love, "covering" the whole person). The chasuble is also representative of the charity required for the priest. This is why it is supposed to be worn over the stole. Wearing a stole over the chasuble would symbolise authority over charity rather than what the Church asks for, which is charity over authority.

Fr Gregory's article continues next month...



Calendar and Intentions

for

April 2018

*The list of Thanksgivings and Intercessions offers a focus
for our daily prayer, both at the Offices and Mass,
and in our personal times of prayer.*

*The Vicar would be glad of suggestions or
additions to the list of daily intentions.*

Calendar for April

SUN 1st **EASTER DAY**
Mon 2nd **in Easter Week**
Tue 3rd **in Easter Week**
Wed 4th **in Easter Week**
Thu 5th **in Easter Week**
Fri 6th **in Easter Week**
Sat 7th **in Easter Week**

SUN 8th **SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER**
Mon 9th **THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD**
Tue 10th William Law, priest
Wed 11th *George Augustus Selwyn, bishop & missionary*
Thu 12th
Fri 13th
Sat 14th

SUN 15th **THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**
Mon 16th
Tue 17th of Requiem
Wed 18th
Thu 19th S. Alphege, bishop & martyr
Fri 20th
Sat 21st S. Anselm, bishop & doctor

SUN 22nd **FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**
Mon 23rd **S. George, martyr, patron of England**
Tue 24th *S. Mellitus, bishop*
Wed 25th **S. Mark, Evangelist**
Thu 26th
Fri 27th
Sat 28th *Peter Chanel, missionary & martyr*

SUN 29th **FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**
Mon 30th

Daily Intentions and *Anniversaries of death for April*

Our Parish & People	<i>Arthur Murrell, Michael Farmer</i>	1 st
The gift of joy		2 nd
The gift of peace		3 rd
The gift of patience	<i>Ruth Daniel, Owen Balls</i>	4 th
The gift of kindness		5 th
The gift of self-control	<i>David Hand, bp.</i>	6 th
The gift of faithfulness	<i>Elsie Duncan Jones</i>	7 th

Our Parish & People		8 th
All mothers		9 th
The LSM Pilgrimage to the Holy Land	<i>Eva Camps</i>	10 th
The sick	<i>Mary Linsey</i>	11 th
Refugees		12 th
Openness to God's call in our lives		13 th
Increase in prayer	<i>Patricia Morris</i>	14 th

Our Parish & People		15 th
The homeless of Cambridge	<i>Sidney Cade, pr.</i>	16 th
The Faithful Departed	<i>Iris Bushell, Mary Rayner</i>	17 th
Thanksgiving for creation	<i>Lucy Barlow-Poole, Edna Shipp</i>	18 th
The Diocese of Winchester		19 th
Emergency services	<i>Philip Pare, pr., Trevor Huddleston, bp., Lydia Siddall</i>	20 th
Archbishop of Canterbury	<i>Angela Waddington, Elizabeth Bagley</i>	21 st

Our Parish & People		22 nd
Our Queen & country	<i>Michael Ramsey, bp., Charles Roper</i>	23 rd
Returning students	<i>Ruth Mott, Scilla Hall</i>	24 th
Thanksgiving for the Gospels		25 th
The Mothers' Union		26 th
The terminally ill	<i>Patrick Morris</i>	27 th
The Church in Australia	<i>Richard Love</i>	28 th

Our Parish & People		29 th
Those with a particular ministry to the young	<i>Frederick Thorling</i>	30 th

Saint George

23rd April

O God of hosts, who didst so kindle the flame of love in the heart of thy servant George that he bore witness to the risen Lord by his life and by his death: grant us the same faith and power of love that we, who rejoice in his triumphs, may come to share with him the fullness of the resurrection; through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.



S. George was probably a soldier living in Palestine at the beginning of the fourth century. He was martyred at Lydda in about the year 304, the beginning of the Diocletian persecution, and became known throughout the East as ‘The Great Martyr’. There were churches in England dedicated to S. George before the Norman conquest.

The story of his slaying the dragon is probably due to his being mistaken in iconography for S. Michael, himself usually depicted wearing armour, slaying Satan depicted as a serpent; or it may again be a mistaken identity representing Perseus’ slaying of the sea monster, a myth also associated with the area of Lydda.

S. George replaced S. Edward the Confessor as Patron Saint of England following the Crusades, when returning soldiers brought back with them a renewed cult of S. George. Edward III made S. George patron of the Order of the Garter, which seems finally to have confirmed his position.

In an era when the flag of S. George is claimed by racists and others holding views incompatible with the Christian faith, it is important to reclaim S. George as the patron of all people in England and, given the fact that he was from the middle East, he makes a fine patron for the diverse people who make up the English nation today.

Stamps

A huge THANK YOU to all who have kindly contributed stamps in support of the Helen Keller School for visually impaired children, east Jerusalem. This has been another excellent year: 14,000 used stamps were donated by members of the congregation, by family, friends and colleagues, bringing our total to 66,000 stamps since the collection began 8 years ago. All contributions of UK and overseas stamps, however small, are welcome; but we would particularly like to thank Mrs Anne Jordan for the gift of a box of stamps collected by the late Brian Jordan in the course of his music book business; and Richard Klimek for many items from his personal stamp collection.

On 14th February we received an update from Embrace the Middle East describing how Helen Keller School children had worked with their accounts teacher to set up a bazaar, and in the process, to develop the skills of an entrepreneur: “They were encouraged to create projects and advertise them, as well as to manage their market stalls and learn skills like stock management. The local community and the parents of the students were invited to take part in the bazaar, and the event was seen as a resounding success. Thanks to your donations, last year the Stamp Fellowship raised £6,895.48 for the Helen Keller School. Thank you again for donating your stamps to us and enabling the Helen Keller School to continue its vital work.”



We hope that the LSM Holy Land pilgrimage will further inspire you to keep the contributions coming!

Julia Norman and Bill de Quick

Cambridge Churches Homeless Project: Report

The CCHP is a local scheme to reduce rough sleeping in Cambridge during the winter months by offering accommodation in church buildings, and which aims to build pastoral relationships with those in our care leading hopefully to longer-term housing and help with our guests' other needs. At the time of writing we have offered shelter to 43 people this winter, of whom 15 so far have been helped into a variety of accommodation.

2017-18 has been the Project's fifth winter of operation and has been a time of growth, greater organisation and deepening understanding of the issues facing rough sleepers in the city. During the summer of 2017 we became a registered charity, with a board of six Trustees: it has been very good to see continued at this level the strong ecumenical emphasis which CCHP has had since its beginning, with each Trustee coming from a very different church tradition. This group, with some additional members, also currently forms the "core team" who run the project from night to night and meet fortnightly after work on Tuesdays throughout the year. The rota of "host churches" has expanded this year to include St John's Hills Road and Wesley Methodist Church (staffed by a team of volunteers from Trumpington Church): vital help which has enabled LSM to stage a Passion Play and the Project to run for the first time through Holy Week until Easter Monday. The nights are still very cold so this is something for which to be thankful!

Recruitment and training of new volunteers ran as in previous years during November, with LSM hosting much of the training: this season we have grown from c.300 to c.400 volunteers from almost every church in Cambridge, several colleges, and local business groups. Volunteers offer either evenings or "overnights", as many or as few as they are able: each night is also supported by a "team leader" from among the volunteers. There is a strong ethos of mutual support and good communication: all team leaders attend focused training every autumn and all receive the reports from each night of the project. We are very grateful to Franco Basso from our own congregation and Julia Smith from Trumpington for sharing this responsibility at LSM. On an operational level the Project has been much blessed this year by the appointment of Jemma Strachan as a part-time paid "co-ordinator": not only does she manage the "guest list" with grace and compassion, we have never been short of sleeping bags since!

LSM hosted on Tuesday nights in December and January this year, with a holiday on 26th December which fell under the Christmas period hosted by our friends at Our Lady and the English Martyrs. As in previous years our volunteers were a mix of our own congregation and help from elsewhere: this year the Mothers' Union stepped forward to wash our sheets and pillowcases which with 15-17 guests a week is a substantial task! It was especially good to enjoy Fr Gregory's cooking on one of the evenings, and throughout the two months to see how much our guests appreciated staying at LSM with the peaceful atmosphere and warmth of hospitality we were able to offer. A number returned in March to see our Passion Play which was something of a

testament to what this place has meant to them. Our guests were once again a mix of British nationals and those from overseas: Polish, Lithuanian and Romanian have been this year's languages and we are always keen to hear from volunteers who are able to help with conversation and interpretation. This year has seen a number of serious health concerns among our guests: we can be confident that two guests would not be alive today had they spent the winter on the streets. Inevitably these worries put an additional strain on our volunteers, and the "core team" sought to help by clear notes in the nightly files so that team leaders would have the information they needed.

This year has also seen the strengthening of our links with the City Council's Street Outreach Team and other workers, with Heather Yeadon on secondment to us to work with guests on follow-on accommodation. As last year, the CCHP will rent a shared house from April for six months to give likely candidates among our guests a chance at holding down work and accommodation and move towards supporting themselves. The 2017-18 season however has also reinforced what we already knew: not only is housing next to impossible for some of our guests owing to addiction, mental health, or no access to the housing benefit which makes possible a first step into the hostel system; but equally, a lack of housing is for some of our guests only one among several more difficult needs. It is always a shock to realise that one is being presented with a letter by a (British) guest because he cannot read it himself: when that letter contains a list of the written application or training needed for housing or a job, the problems in the way of getting off the streets are only more visible. Many of our guests are victims of trauma or child abuse and have no opportunity for counselling or psychotherapy which might help their sense of self and worth: others are caught in cycles of guilt and addiction which are driven by much more even than the continuous stress of being without a home. Then there is still the problem that Cambridge has many more rough sleepers than hostel spaces (or spaces at the CCHP): and, significantly, a number are choosing not to use even the emergency "cold weather" beds offered by the City Council at Jimmy's on the worst winter nights. These are all problems which are facing our brothers and sisters in Cambridge today, and the CCHP is grateful for the support of this church in our work.