

Around the Spire

Saint James'



&

Saint Mary Magdalene
Quedgeley & Kingsway



February 2021

Issue No. 66

Your Editor Fr. Hugh



NOT ALL DOOM AND GLOOM!

YES – of course there is plenty of doom around! As I write this Editorial in mid-January it does seem that the horrifying cases of those testing are positive, and a number of these go on to be seriously ill.

The pressures that all this puts on the noble, sacrificial members of the N.H.S. deserve all our admiration and support.

The number of deaths is also not only a great tragedy, but again puts enormous pressure on the caring professions, and of course the pain of bereavement.

So the current lockdown is such that all of us need to adhere to in every department of our lives. Sadly there are so many who have a feeling that – this will never affect us! - nothing could be further from the truth!

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN ALL THIS;

You may well ask!

Where is God in all this?

Of course there is no easy answer. Part of me wants to rail against a God whose creation can wreak such havoc and cause such misery. But I also believe in the vulnerable, powerless, and, suffering God who we look to at such times and it is in the Church through its prayer and teaching looks at the sincere, caring and loving service at such times as this pandemic has wrought upon us. It is to this God who at this time of year we see as the Child in the manger, that moves us to light candles in church before the statue of the Blessed Virgin.

It is also to this God seen in the services of the Church, and specially in the Eucharist, the act of worship the Lord has given to us as we receive Holy Communion.

This is why those who are in charge of this parish in the vacancy have voted to maintain our Sunday morning worship as long as we are able. At this act of worship we do all we can to ensure that the important guidelines which are so important at the time of an epidemic are followed. Of course we do know that there are many who feel uneasy at this time to come to an act of worship., and accept this.

Having said all this, it is so important that if we are Christians we are always able to PRAY- AT HOME, OR TAKING EXERCISE, OR AT WORK – God is always with us when we turn to him.

In my long career as a Priest in the Church I have often been asked to pray with people in all kind of circumstances and often by people who never come to Church.

I am well aware of course that this includes many readers of this magazine.

So to all our readers whether regular churchgoers or not I do commend this prayer:

**Risen Lord, when so many of our
fellow citizens succumb to illness
at the same time, there you are
standing in the midst.**



**We easily panic or else unreasonably
feel it will never happen to us.**

**Be the rock in our turbulence, the calm in our storm,
and strengthen those who give their skill and care
to return us to health and well-being.**

Through him who is always the resurrection and the life.

Jesus Christ our Lord

AMEN.

Saints of the Month—February

By Revd. Fr. Ian Robb



1st: Brigid, Abbess of Kildare Brigid (or Bridget, also known as Bride) was born in the latter part of the 5th century, just five miles from Kildare. She joined the convent there and later became its Abbess. It is said that she was baptised by St Patrick and is portayed as a woman of great compassion. By her prayers and miracles, she is reputed to have had a strong influence on the formation of the Church throughout Ireland, where she is regarded, along with Patrick, as a Patron Saint. She died in the year 525.



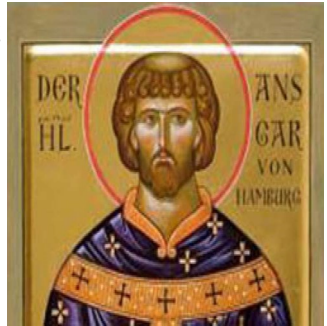
2nd: The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

This marks forty days since the birth of the child Jesus, when Mary and Joseph took him, their first-born, to the temple to perform the rites of purification and presentation as laid down in Leviticus. The prophets Simeon and Anna proclaimed the child as the “light to enlighten the nations” and the Redeemer of Israel. The image of Christ the Light has led to the celebration of light countering darkness, and this feast becoming widely-known as “Candlemas” with the blessing and distribution of candles to light the reading of the gospel during the Eucharist.



3rd: Anskar, Apostle to Scandinavia

A native of Picardy, Anskar was a monk of Corbie near Amiens, and after receiving the news that the Danish king had become a convert, he went to Schleswig to attempt to start a Christian school there. The locals rejected him, so he travelled on to Sweden where he is reputed to have built the first Christian church. In 832 he was consecrated



Bishop of Hamburg, and later Archbishop of Bremen. He returned to Denmark and this time was more successful! He converted the King of Jutland and went on to teach widely throughout Scandinavia, being noted for his work in mitigating the slave trade. He died in 865.

6th: The Martyrs of Japan

: Francis Xavier was the first Christian Apostle to Japan, arriving in 1528. Some fifty years later, the presence of several thousand baptised Christians in the land became a subject of suspicion to the ruler Hideyoshi, who soon began a period of persecution. Twenty-six men and women, Religious and lay, were first mutilated and then crucified near Nagasaki. After their martyrdom, their bloodied clothes were kept in reverence by their fellow Christians. The period of persecution continued for another thirty-five years and many new witness-martyrs were added to their number.

14th: Valentine, Martyr at Rome, 269AD

: Valentine was a priest (he may also have become bishop of Terni) who was martyred at Rome under the Emperor Claudius. The connection of this celebration with lovers seems to be either as the traditional day in mediaeval belief when birds mated, or more likely as being linked with the pagan Lupercalia festival in Rome, which occurred on the Ides (13th) of February. For Christians, the day marks an acknowledgement of an all-loving God who blesses those who love one another, as Jesus implored his own disciples so to do.

17th: Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda

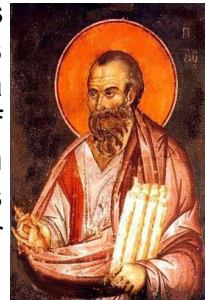
Janani was born in 1922 at Acholi in Uganda. He spent his childhood and youth as a goatherd but he quickly displayed a talent for learning and absorbing knowledge when given the chance. He became a teacher; he converted to Christianity and was eventually ordained in 1956. He was made Bishop of Northern Uganda in 1969 and Archbishop of Uganda in 1974. Idi Amin had come to power in 1971 as the result of a military coup and his harsh, undemocratic rule was much criticised by the Church and others. After Amin had received a letter from the bishops protesting at



the virtual institution of state murder, Janani and two of Amin's own government officials were stated as having been found dead following a car accident. It soon emerged that they had in fact died on the implicit instructions of the President. Janani's enthusiasm for the good news of Jesus, combined with his willingness to sacrifice even his own life for what he believed in, led him to his martyrdom on this day in 1977.

23rd: Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna

Polycarp is one of the first Christian martyrs. He was Bishop of Smyrna on the Adriatic coast of Asia Minor for over 40 years when the persecution of Christians began. He was arrested and given the option to renounce his faith and live; his response was: "I have been Christ's servant for 86 years and he has done me no harm. Can I now blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" He was immediately taken outside the city and burnt at the stake. The local Christian community vowed never to forget him, and annually on the anniversary of his death celebrated the Eucharist on the site of his execution. Polycarp died in 155.



The Faith We Sing
By *Revd. Canon Michael*
Garland



The season of Lent begins on February 17th. It is a season which we should welcome as a time of reflection on our faith journey and our potential for growth and renewal as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Hymns for the season of Lent are often thought to be rather dreary and dull, with music in the minor key, but on closer inspection they can be inspiring and comforting. Take, for example, this little hymn, whose history goes back sixteen hundred years:

*Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin;
from earthborn passions set me free,
and make me pure within.*

*Lord Jesus, think on me
with many a care opprest:
let me thy loving servant be,
and taste thy promised rest*

*Lord Jesus, think on me,
nor let me go astray;
through darkness and perplexity.
point thou the heavenly way.*

*Lord Jesus, think on me,
that when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see,
and share thy joy at last.*

I always find it a moving experience to voice this deeply personal hymn, as it prayerfully acknowledges our human frailty and our need of forgiveness. Notice how, in each verse, the opening line is the same, 'Lord Jesus, think on me' (or 'remember me'). We might recall the words of the penitent thief to Jesus, recorded in Luke's gospel, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom', a text coupled to a Taizé chant, often used in worship today. The hymn is particularly suitable for the season of Lent. The time of testing in the desert place which Jesus faced is well mirrored in these verses. For all of us, caught up in a pandemic, the pleas for healing and guidance are full of meaning.

The first lockdown came when we were halfway through Lent last year, and still for many people in these challenging times, security and spiritual comfort is found by returning to scripture, or tuning in to streamed services, or perhaps, by reading and praying through well-known hymns. We might well say that we have been oppressed with cares and woes, facing a battle against an invisible enemy, and seeking the assurance of the heavenly way through darkness and perplexity.

The story behind this hymn is an interesting one and takes us back in time to the beginning of the fifth century. Its author was Synesius of Cyrene, a contemporary of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. Synesius was a man of many parts: soldier, athlete, statesman, poet, and philosopher. He eventually became Bishop of Ptolemais, an ancient city of Libya. The hymn that we sing today is a translation by an Anglican priest and scholar, Allen Ewan Chatfield (1808-1896). Chatfield was Vicar of Much Marcle in Herefordshire for very nearly fifty years. Whilst he was Vicar, he published *Songs and Hymns of Earliest Greek Christian Poets* (1876) in which 'Lord Jesus, think on me' appears.

The hymn is usually sung to a simple tune called 'Southwell' and was written in the 16th century by William Daman, organist of The Chapel Royal under Queen Elizabeth. You can hear it sung [here](#), by the choir of St Mary's, Warwick.



God of our life,
there are days when the burdens we carry
chafe our shoulders and weigh us down;
when the road seems dreary and endless,
the skies grey and threatening;
when our lives have no music in them
and our hearts are lonely,
and our souls have lost their courage.
Flood our path with your light,
turn our eyes to where skies are full of promise;
tune our hearts to brave music;
give us the sense of comradeship
with heroes and saints of every age;
and so quicken our spirits
that we may be able to encourage
the souls of all who journey with us
on the road of life to your honour and glory.

From Mary Ellis

FROM THE REGISTERS - DECEMBER

Funerals and Cremations

10th PHILIP MOUNTFORD

21st JOHN CLARK

30th ALLAN LANDER

"Rest eternal Lord"





Quedgeley Town Council

The New Year will see meetings starting again to ensure the smooth running of the Pilot Memorial Day on Saturday 24th April.

Headed up by Quedgeley Town Council the day will remember Flight Lieutenant Robert Coventry, the Pilot of a Blenheim Bomber that suffered total engine failure and was on a crash course for Quedgeley School (now the site of Quedgeley Community Centre in School Lane) which at 2.30pm on that September day in 1940 was full of pupils, staff and others.

Flight Lieutenant Coventry (grandson of the then Earl of Coventry) managed to fight his controls and move away from the school before crashing on the then Field Court Farm killing himself and his crew were badly injured.

So a big event is planned with Services at the crash site and at the Quedgeley Town Council Memorial Garden where a Stone will be unveiled to the memory of this brave and heroic man

There are a number of dignitaries coming along and the RAF are hoping to arrange a flyover so until this is confirmed, timing is sketchy, however all is proceeding well and the Charities Help if we Can and Quedgeley Community Trust have sponsored the day along with Quedgeley Town Council.

We hope you will be able to support the day and the parade along School Lane. An Air Vice Marshall along with Canon Hugh Broad and the Catholic Priest for the area will be at the Services.

Did you go that school? We have found 2 that did and they are coming along on 24th April. Let me know.

Steve Smith - Chairman of Quedgeley Town Council

To make you smile ...



SERIOUS LOCK DOWN ADVICE..I think!

Everyone PLEASE be careful because people are going crazy from being locked down at home!

I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my tea, and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention any of this to the washing machine, because she puts a different spin on EVERYTHING!! Certainly couldn't share with the fridge, cause he's been acting cold and distant!

In the end, the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out!

The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic...told me to just suck it up! But the fan was VERY optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon!

The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything when I asked its opinion, but the front door said goodbye 2020. I was becoming unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip!! You can just about guess what the curtains told me: they told me to "pull myself together!"

We will survive!!

Pass it on - gotta keep the humour! 😂😄😅



Like



Comment

The way we were - 2020 (Jan & Feb)



Saint James' Chit -Chat

Relax and meet new friends!

Many of you have contacted us to say how much you're missing your Thursday Chit Chat sessions. Unfortunately, we won't be opening until we can ensure a safe environment for everyone. We know you loved to sample the yummy cakes! Here's one of Tricia's recipes for an Apple Cake. Try it at home and enjoy!



INGREDIENTS

9oz S R Flour

6oz baking margarine

4oz caster sugar

12oz cored and skin on apples, chopped, small to medium dice.

4oz sultanas(soak them in hot water for about 10 minutes)

2 eggs

a pinch of salt

METHOD

Preheat oven to gas3 or 170c

Grease an 8" cake tin & line the base with greaseproof paper.

Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl.

Rub in the margarine.

Stir in the sugar, sultanas and chopped apples.

Stir in eggs (Do not beat).

Put mx in tin

Bake for 50 minutes, until a skewer comes out clean.

Cool in tin for 10 minutes before turning out onto a cooling rack

WHAT IS A PRAYER CELL?

You may have noticed in recent months, reference to this. I was first involved in this when I was Rector of Matson. It was something which the previous priest had set up.

THIS IS HOW IT WORKS!

A small group of parishioners (maximum of six) form what is called a cell.

They agree to pray for each other on a regular basis; share ideas of ways in which their life of prayer can be strengthened.

This works really well with the Cell at St. James where so much has to be done without meeting together physically.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

Do let me know and I will help to get a second cell up and running.

Father Hugh

Your Lock down photos



The church office is now closed until Saturday 10th April

(Covid 19 permitting)

If you would like to arrange a baptism or wedding please contact a member from the team of clergy. Contact details are on the back page of this magazine.

The Church is open every day for private prayer from 9.30am – 4pm to light a candle or to place requests for prayers on the prayer board



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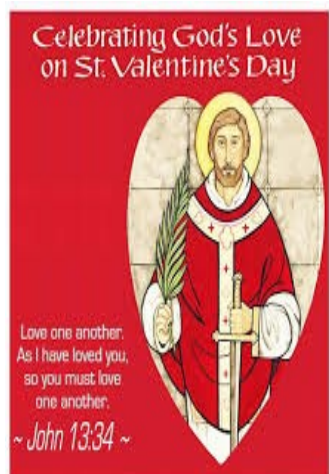
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**Articles /photos for the March
edition of 'Around the Spire'
should be with the Editor Hugh
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hugh.broad@yahoo.co.uk by
Sunday 14th February (at
latest)**



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Printed by: Alpha Colour printers Ltd., GL2 2AA 01452 887000