NEW LEAVES February 2014

Firstly, may I say a Happy New Year to each and every one of you. I hope you all had a fun filled Christmas that contained lots of friends, family and festive food. This will be the first magazine that will be printed after what I hope will have been a most joyous and happy Christmas, heralding the start of 2014. Over this Christmas it has been both a joy and a privilege to host many Christmas events, from Christingle to Carol services. It has been wonderful to see the church full with so many children. The children were also kind enough to bring with them the unsung heroes of Christianity...their parents and carers. Having a small child myself I know and understand the immense effort that is required to get little ones to services, let alone keep them entertained when the curate starts to waffle!

So in honour of all those who bring little ones to church I would like to copy a post from a blog which was kindly sent to me back in May 2013 by '*that* mom', written on her blog, http://www.iamtotallythatmom. blogspot.co.uk/2013/05/dear-parents-with-young-children-in.html

"You are doing something really, really important. I know it's not easy. I see you with your arms overflowing, and I know you came to church already tired. Parenting is tiring. Really tiring.

I watch you bounce and sway trying to keep the baby quiet, juggling the infant car seat and the diaper bag as you find a seat. I see you wince as your child cries. I see you anxiously pull things out of your bag of tricks to try to quiet them.

And I see you with your toddler and your pre-schooler. I watch you

cringe when your little girl asks an innocent question in a voice that might not be an inside voice let alone a church whisper. I hear the exasperation in your voice as you beg your child to just sit, to be quiet as you feel everyone's eyes on you. Not everyone is looking, but I know it feels that way.

I know you're wondering is this worth it? Why do I bother? I know you often leave church more exhausted than fulfilled. But what you are doing is so important.

When you are here, the church is filled with a joyful noise. When you are here, the Body of Christ is more fully present. When you are here, we are reminded that this worship thing we do isn't about Bible Study or personal, quiet contemplation but coming together to worship as a community where all are welcome, where we share in the Word and Sacrament together. When you are here, I have hope that these pews won't be empty in ten years when your kids are old enough to

sit quietly and behave in worship. I know that they are learning how and why we worship now, before it's too late. They are learning that worship is important.

I see them learning. In the midst of the cries, whines, and giggles, in the midst of the crinkling of pretzel bags and the growing pile of crumbs I see a little girl who insists on going two pews up to share peace with someone she's never met. I hear a little boy slurping



(quite loudly) every last drop of his communion wine out of the cup determined not to miss a drop of Jesus. I watch a child excitedly colour a cross and point to the one in the front of the sanctuary. I hear the echoes of Amen's just a few seconds after the rest of the community says it together. I watch a boy just learning to read try to sound out the words in the worship book or count his way to Hymn 672. Even on weeks when I can't see my own children learning because, well, it's one of those mornings; I can see your children learning.

I know how hard it is to do what you're doing, but I want you to know, it matters. It matters to me. It matters to my children to not be alone in the pew. It matters to the congregation to know that families care about faith, to see young people... and even on those weeks when you can't see the little moments, it matters to your children.

It matters that they learn that worship is what we do as a community of faith, that everyone is welcome, that their worship matters. When we teach children that their worship matters, we teach them that they are enough right here and right now as members of the church community. They don't need to wait until they can believe, pray or worship a certain way to be welcome here, and I know adults who are still looking to be shown that. It matters that children learn that they are an integral part of this church, that their prayers, their songs, and even their badly (or perfectly timed depending on who you ask) cries and whines are a joyful noise because it means they are present.

I know it's hard, but thank you for what you do when you bring your children to church. Please know that your family - with all of its noise, struggle, commotion, and joy – are not simply tolerated, you are a vital part of the community gathered in worship."

I shall continue to pray that both of our churches will be places of

warmth and understanding, where parents and carers will feel nurtured, encouraged and most of all welcome. The children of today will be our congregations of tomorrow and as a wise man said to me as I wrote this letter "for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven"

God Bless you and yours.

Andy x



From the vicar

WARM & PEN

An update on St David's Church Building

Recently we had to close the West End of the church again, because our architect saw that the arch above the font needed more support. At the end of last year, the scaffolding was reinforced and a platform was added to provide protection from any masonry that might fall. Then a framework was constructed inside the arch to hold the stones in place. Now the work has been completed and we have been able to open the West door again. We are still not able to use the font because we cannot raise the lid. Our insurance requires that the pulley and chain should be regularly tested. This is a costly procedure and we don't want to have it done while the whole area is potentially unstable. We are considering the long term possibility that the lid will be fixed in an elevated position.

At our Vision Day on November 3rd I was glad to hear that the congregation are determined to try and repair the building. A large majority of those present wanted to explore possible internal changes to make St David's a more flexible space, which might be used during the week by a variety of groups and organisations. To that end we are hoping to put in a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant towards the necessary remedial work and development of the building. If possible we would like to meet the May 2014 deadline for bids to HLF.

Over the last month we have been gathering information from the

parish and from the local community. This process has been in three parts. Volunteers from the church distributed Christmas cards, giving details of Christmas services. Thank you everyone who delivered cards. More volunteers are conducting an online search of data relating to our parish eg from the recent census. We are now planning to survey the numbers of passers by in the area of the church, at various times during the week, and to question them about their awareness of St David's and how they would like to see the building used.

When we have this information we will use it to help us think about how the church should look in the future. Lots of ideas emerged from our Vision Day and they will also go into the mix, as we consider what we need to do.

May I offer my vision for the future. It is not specific, but I find it inspiring. I want St David's to be OPEN and WARM. Good words with a physical and a spiritual/emotional meaning.

The doors of the church should be OPEN, the building should be accessible and clearly welcoming, so that passers-by and visitors wish to explore further. The church community should be OPEN to people of all traditions, lifestyle and backgrounds, OPEN to those who believe in different ways and those who almost believe or struggle with belief. We should be OPEN to God - a place where prayer and contemplation are a natural part of each day. We wish to be OPEN to a variety of people, who wish to use our space. We wish to provide an OPEN and uncluttered space where a variety of worship and other activities can happen. Ideally this would mean removing the pews.

And we want the church to be WARM, so that people feel comfortable and able to stay, with a new heating system that is as sustainable and effective as possible. At the moment St David's is often too cold for comfort. We want to greet visitors with a WARM acceptance, not smothering, but genuinely caring and welcoming. A church with a smile on its face, and a place for everyone.

With the WARM and OPEN vision, anything is possible.

Tom



February from St Michael's



There would have been, some time ago, those of a superstitious frame of mind who regarded our lightning strike in January as prophetic or punishing. Fortunately we have moved on from those days...

We are travelling towards the lighter time of the year; Christmas Eve Mass brought us many visitors; other services were also well-attended; we have celebrated the visit of the Magi, who followed the light of the star to the Christ Child. (We were amused by a cartoon in which the Wise Men set themselves up for a 'selfie' in the stable in Bethlehem.) Now we look forward to Candlemas, the presentation of the Light of World in the Temple in Jerusalem. Having Protestant and Puritanical intervention in our ecclesiastical history, many of the Catholic festivals were suppressed. These still are noted in European countries which did not have the 'privilege' of Cromwellian purging; some of the celebrations are still holidays -holy days, even- with the cessation of work and attendance at Mass.

I have watched with interest a television programme presented by Prof. Jim Al-Khalili, explaining that the further we look out in space, the further we look back in time; ultimately, astronomers will discover the first presence of light, because the universe is awash with light from the very beginning of the universe itself. Our sunlight, for example, is eight minutes old. The ancient myth of Creation in Genesis still has the power to present this notion poetically: 'God said "let there be light, and there was light". It is taken further in the Prologue to the Gospel

of John, where the light shines in the darkness and is never conquered by it. I love the translation in the Authorised Version, which claims that the light is not 'comprehended' by the darkness; I have a vision of dark hands trying to capture and enclose the light which can never be trapped, always slipping through gaps between fingers, never quite being truly contained. Nor is it ever fully understood, though 'comprehend' only came to that meaning later. At present, I am looking at the NRSV version which tells me that the darkness 'did not overcome' the light. To my mind, this translation loses a bit of the depth, a bit of the need to unmesh the poetic English. It is what happens when ancient and solemn liturgies and prayers are converted to the vernacular. Do we not have time to dwell with our beautiful language, such as that used by Cranmer in the Prayer Book for instance? Could spending time unravelling vocabulary and context not be a part of worship? I realise that language develops; reflecting those changes is important, but if we ditch words and contexts as soon as they become 'difficult' or 'old-fashioned', we deny the ability of the human intellect to frame meaning and understanding in challenging worlds. I have started reading a biography of George Herbert (1593-1633), the priest/poet who gave such beauty in words, expressing deep spiritual longing and delight. The poems are not immediately easy to understand, and often require reading aloud for the sense to be clear. Some were set for the University Entrance exams that I took long ago; I was lucky that my English teacher did not dismiss them as 'too difficult' or 'too old-fashioned' for a sixteen-year-old to fathom. The measure of the language and the concepts still delight me, giving an almost Wordsworthian flash of recollection of the initial joy I had in discovering Herbert's work. What a terrible loss it would be, should the Thought Police decide to discard such language, especially as language

needs to be worked at for it to be almost comprehended, for like the light in St John's Gospel, it is that which contains and expresses truth, communicating lucidity, but always has more to give, so that we have to aim to understand, not to be satisfied with the easiest or simplest explanations, knowing that there is always more than meets the eye. (See Herbert's poem The Pulley.)

And if that editing could happen to language, what would happen to our music? What would we be left with? Architecture, too, could be ravaged in the pursuit of the modern. All those old-fashioned churches could be bulldozed and we could have, instead, towers of contemplation, without religious symbolism, such as those desired by the philosopher Alain de Boton, with just a gold line towards the top to represent the development of human-kind, with easy-peasy 'rules' for living, devised by Richard Dawkins displayed inside, requiring us to be nice to all and re-cycle our rubbish. None of that old Ten Commandments stuff or Sermon on the Mount! All that 'thou shalt not' - and who wants a sermon in these days of tweets and twitter! Let's get on with living for the moment and never mind what went before (which is actually what has contributed to the present). The classical paintings and sculptures inspired by Scripture would be destroyed in favour of the modern. Iconoclasm lives again!

We still use the respectful personal pronouns at St Michael's; we are not averse to Prayer Book language in the Propers or on other occasions; our choir still sings Latin chants and anthems and some of our music is pretty ancient, too. We use these as exercises in contemplation and paths to worship.

We survive, despite lightning strikes.

Stephanie Aplin

ANNUAL REVISION OF THE PARISH ELECTORAL ROLL

Revision of the parish electoral roll will begin on Sunday 16th February and end on Sunday 9th March 2014..

In order to be entitled to attend the annual parochial church meeting on Wednesday 2nd April 2014, and to take part in its proceedings, your name must be on the electoral roll. Similarly if you wish to stand for any office (other than Churchwarden) your name must be on the Roll.

If you would like to have your name entered on the Roll, please contact Jeremy Lawford at St David's, or Penny McDonald at St Michael's, who will be happy to give you an application form and/or more details.

AS THIS IS A REVISION ANYONE WHOSE NAME IS ON THE CURRENT ELECTORAL ROLL NEED NOT APPLY - BUT PLEASE INFORM PENNY OR JEREMY OF ANY CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Jeremy Lawford

Electoral Roll Officer

Parish of St David with St Michael and All Angels

jeremy@jlawford.co.uk

Henley Half in memory of Richard Orme

On the 8th September, I took part in the Challenge Henley Half Iron distance triathlon in memory of my dad, Richard Orme, and to raise money for Hospiscare. The event got off to a rather cold and misty start, getting into the Thames just after dawn - it was actually warmer in the water than outside!

The mist had cleared by the time I and the other 650 half ironman competitors got out onto our road bikes and it was almost warm in places as we cycled up and down the Chilterns. The bike route was a loop, so we got to mix with the 350 full ironman athletes again as we went along.

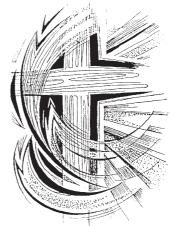
It rained a little at the end of the cycle - fortunately mostly while I was in a marquee changing from my bike kit into running kit - but the final half marathon up and down the Thames footpath was in a pleasantly cool and sunny afternoon. I have to admit I walked a little bit towards the end, but finally crossed the line after 6 hours 51 minutes and 22 seconds.

In total, I raised £4585 (not even including Gift Aid!) and many of you

contributed to helping me reach this fantastic total. Hospiscare is a superb organisation, but they couldn't continue to provide the support they do without the help you've provided. So, Happy New Year to all, and many, many thanks.



David Orme



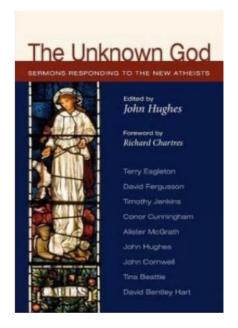
St Da	vid's Eucharist	December
Sunday 2nd I	February: Candlemas	
Reading 1	Malachi 3: 1-5	Hilary Frances
Reading 2	Hebrews 2: 14-end	Jeanie Honey
Gospel	Luke 2: 22-40	
Time of prayer		Nigel Walsh
Junior Church:	Susan Mitchell	
C 1 041- E	alamana 44h Sanadara Lafana I and	
·	ebruary: 4th Sunday before Lent Isaiah 58: 1-9a	Alan Baker
Reading 1		
Reading 2	1 Corinthians 2: 1-12	Karen Facey
Gospel	Matthew 5: 13-20	
Time of prayer		Avril Pattinson
Junior Church	: Helen Sail	
C 1 164h	Falanciana 2nd Sanadara Lafana I and	
·	February: 3rd Sunday before Lent	D 1 I C 1
Reading 1	Ecclesiasticus 15: 15-end	Paula Lawford
Reading 2	1 Corinthians 3: 1-9	Jeremy Lawford
Gospel	Matthew 5: 21-37	
Time of prayer		Bill Pattinson
Junior Church:	Sarah Harrison	
Sunday 23rd	February: Family Service - Somethin	g different
Reading 1	~	<u>g</u>
Reading 2	~	
Gospel	~	
Time of prayer		
No Junior Church		
Sunday 2nd I	March: Sunday before Lent	
Reading 1	Exodus 24: 12-end	Emma White
Reading 2	2 Peter 1: 16-end	Gabrielle Kirby
Gospel	Matthew 17: 1-9	<u> </u>
Time of prayer		Helen Drever
	Susan Mitchell	1
<i>J</i>		

Former Curate John Hughes writes:

Dear friends at St David's and St Michael's,

Please forgive the shameless plug, but I thought that some of you might be interested in reading a new book I've edited, which seeks to respond to the challenges of the New Atheists. My hope is that it might be of use to ordinary Christians in the pew. I've donated a copy to the parish library, or you can buy your own online or from all good bookshops. I hope you enjoy it!

With fond memories and my prayers for you all,



John Hughes

The first decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed a cluster of authors who have attained public notoriety through their mockery of religion and their popularizing of atheism. How should Christians and other believers understand and respond to this aggressive attack on their faith?

In this collection of public addresses, leading academic theologians and philosophers who have written about the New Atheists seek to sum up their thinking and help us make sense of this contemporary phenomenon-and offer a richer and more sophisticated account of what belief in God is really about.

Praise for The Unknown God

"In this absorbing and measured collection some leading contemporary Christian voices take the New Atheist challenge as a stimulus to the renewal of theology and the church"

Samuel Wells, King's College, London.

"These nine intellectually dazzling sermons speak clearly and charitably to all those who say in their heart 'God does not exist.' A stellar collection!"

C. C. Pecknold, The Catholic University of America

The Unknown God is published by SCM Press ISBN: 978 0334 04982 1

£,12.99



Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme at St David's Church

What it's about.

This scheme allows us to claim top up payments on individual donations of loose cash (notes and coins only) made on the plate at services. If you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration then please do not put loose cash on the plate, use one of the white envelopes.

The benefit.

The scheme will allow us to claim top up payments on up to a maximum of £5,000 of un-Gift Aided cash donations. That is potentially an extra £1,250.

The small print.

GASDS does not replace the Gift Aid scheme. The scheme is in addition to Gift Aid

It provides for top-up payments to charities on small cash donations (up to £20) where it is difficult to obtain a Gift Aid declaration, such as at religious services. The payments are not a tax relief and there is no audit trail back to the original donor's tax record.

In order to be eligible to claim GASDS payments we need to continue to make regular Gift Aid claims. We currently claim Gift Aid on some £50,000 of donations annually.

You can still use the white Gift Aid envelopes in the pews. (If you use an envelope please make sure you complete it fully.)



Gift Aided Planned Giving

If you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration and give through the Planned Giving Scheme you should continue to donate using Standing Orders and/or your numbered Gift Aid Envelopes.

In fact if you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration then you should NOT put loose cash on the plate because of the perceived danger of "double counting". (Any donation treated as GASDS **must not** be Gift Aided.) There is no reason why a spouse or partner cannot put their own money on the plate if they have not signed a Gift Aid Declaration.

If you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration and want to give an extra donation then use the white envelopes in the pews and sign and date it or use the wall boxes as we will not claim top up payments under GASDS on the contents of these.

When?

We plan to claim payments under the GASDS on donations collected on the plate as from the beginning of October.

If you have any queries please contact me via:

stewardship@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk

Geoff Crockett Stewardship Officer



St. Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham Parish of St. David Exeter ST. MICHAEL'S LECTURES 2014



Wednesday 12th February 7:30pm Telling Stories about Intersex and Christianity

Doctor Susannah Cornwall

Followed by discussion and light refreshments

Susannah Cornwall is Advanced Research Fellow in Theology and Religion at the University of Exeter. Until August 2013 she was Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Lincoln Theological Institute, University of Manchester. She is the author of Sex and Uncertainty in the Body of Christ: Intersex Conditions and Christian Theology; Controversies in Queer Theology; Theology and Sexuality; and is the editor of Intersex, Theology and the Bible: Troubling Bodies in Church, Text and Society.

Intersex conditions, where an individual's body cannot be classified as male or female, have received little attention in theological or church circles. However, intersex Christians' stories are of relevance to broader theological discourse about sex, gender and sexuality, as well as deserving attention in their own right. In this lecture, Susannah Cornwall draws on interviews with ten intersex Christians, and suggests that recognizing them as full members of the Church community means giving space for their differing experiences of identity and embodiment, to change the stories about bodies and humanness which the Church tells. Christian communities which invest only male or female bodies with legitimacy and significance risk marginalizing and devaluing other types of body-story, with detrimental consequences for theology and pastoral care.

The lectures are open to all and admission is FREE (there is a voluntary retiring collection). St. Michael's Church is the church with the tall spire by the Iron Bridge on North St./St. David's Hill.

For further information contact David Beadle at dnb201@ex.ac.uk or www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk



St. Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham Parish of St. David Exeter ST. MICHAEL'S LECTURES 2014



Wednesday 12th March 7:30pm Evolution, Suffering and the Creative Love of God

Bethany Sollereder

Followed by discussion and light refreshments

Bethany Sollereder was born in Edmonton, Canada. She earned a BA in Intercultural Studies there, then went on to a master's degree in Theology at Regent College, Vancouver. Now she is pursuing a PhD at the University of Exeter in Science and Theology, in the Department of Theology and Religion.

In 1859 Charles Darwin uncovered in The Origin of Species a world that evolves on the basis of natural selection. It is competitive, violent, and careless of the amount of suffering it produces. Yet, Christian theologians identify God as the creator of the evolutionary process. This raises serious theological questions including 'Why would a good God ordain a process that necessarily involves pain, suffering, and death for so many creatures?' In this talk, Bethany Sollereder will explore the theological and pastoral implications of evolution, and ground a theology of evolutionary creation in the love of God.

The lectures are open to all and admission is FREE (there is a voluntary retiring collection). St. Michael's Church is the church with the tall spire by the Iron Bridge on North St./St. David's Hill.

For further information contact David Beadle at dnb201@ex.ac.uk or www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk

Exeter Central Library

Exeter Central Library run several groups on a variety of topics.

Please use this link for more information

www.devon.gov.uk/index/cultureheritage/libraries/yourlocal-library/exeter_libraries/exeter_central_library/events_at_exeter_central.htm

Here are a few examples of what's on offer.

Woolly Wonders Knitting Group

Date: Every month - Tuesdays

Time: 14.00 - 15.30

Description: Knitting is being touted as "The new Yoga". It can help to relieve stress and take your mind off your aches and pains, as well as keeping your mind active and reducing the risk of memory loss. All this and the added bonus of enjoying the company of other knitters.

Audience: Everyone welcome

Cost: Free

Bookings: Drop in - no need to book

Exeter Audio Book Group

Date: Once a month meeting

Time: 10:00 - 11:30

Description: A new reading group for blind and visually impaired people being launched at Exeter Central Library, The Hoskins Room Castle Street. This is a chance to get together and discuss and recommend books in large print or audio format.

Audience: Blind and Visually Impaired people with or without helpers including guide dogs.

Cost: Free

Bookings: Just turn up

Organiser: Ask for Liz Cordin 01392 384 209

••••••

IT Drop -in Sessions

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: 10:00 - 12:00

Description: We can help you with: how to set up an email account and how to open and send attachments. How to use a scanner. How to upload photos to your computer. How to find what you want on the web. How to use social housing sites. How to use Ebay. How to book things online. How to use ereaders and ebooks.

Audience: Anyone who would like help sorting out their basic computer needs.

Cost: Free

Bookings: Just drop in

Organiser: Mike Mills & James Knight 01392 384 209

Music at St Michael's February 2014

As someone said to Erika after the final service of 2013, "In the words of ABBA – Thank you for the Music". Thanks to all our talented Music Team for 2013 which ended with a very busy December, including the BBC Radio Devon Carol Service recorded in the Cathedral and our own 9 Lessons & Carols.

Thanks also to Matthew Wright for the Wednesday Recital Series he has started at St Michael's to complement the Lecture Series run by David Beadle and helpers; these are bringing new people to our Church mid-week and, although entrance is free, retiring donations seem to be covering the costs. This month our own choir is in Concert on the 19th.

Music dates and details at St Michael's for the next month or so:-

Sunday 2nd February – Candlemas – The Presentation of Christ in the Temple. 10.45am. Mass.

Setting: Charles Wood's lovely Mass in F, with its foretaste of John Rutter in the Sanctus. Motet: Lux aurumque, Eric Whitacre.

Lux, calida gravisque pura velut aurum et canunt angeli molliter modo natum. Light, warm and heavy as pure gold and angels sing softly to the newborn babe.



Also **First Sunday Evensong and Benediction at 6pm.** Office Hymn 54, Psalm 132, Reading Responses, Palestrina double choir Magnificat, Wood 6-part Nunc Dimittis, O Salutaris by Elgar, Tantum Ergo by Fauré and the Candlemas Anthem.

"When to the Temple Mary went" by Johannes Eccard (1533–1611), is one of a host of motets by foreign composers which were supplied with translations or new words in the nineteenth century. Here the text was translated from German and given a second verse by the Reverend J Troutbeck (1833-99) who is best remembered for his lasting translations of Bach's Passions and Christmas Oratorio.

Born in Thuringia, Eccard was a chorister in the Kapelle of the Weimar court from 1567 until it was disbanded in 1571. He then went to Munich to sing in the Bavarian Hofkapelle, where he also studied with Lassus. In 1579 he returned north to the Hofkappelle of the Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach, eventually becoming Kapellmeister in 1604. Eccard's music is frequently scored for more than four voices; this setting is in six parts. His music is thus rich and sonorous, the inner parts having their own melodic and rhythmic interest. This piece is known as a 'chorale-motet' and is characteristic of late 16th and 17th century Protestant composers.

Singers who like a good Choral Evensong are welcome to join us on the 1st Sunday of the month to rehearse the music beforehand at 4:45 pm; regular choir practice is Tuesdays 7:00-8:30pm.

Sunday 9th February, 4 before Lent, 10.45am. Mass.

Setting: Mass in E, Darke. Motet: Our conversation is in heaven, by Exeter born Walter Bond Gilbert (1829-1910).

Wednesday 12th February, 7.30pm. St Michael's Lecture.

Telling stories about Intersex and Christianity. Dr Susannah Cornwall (Dept of Theology and Religion, Univ of Exeter).

Sunday 16th February, Septuagesima, 3 before Lent, 10.45am. Mass.

Missa "O Quam Gloriosum" by Victoria was sung at short notice at Epiphany, so we may use Stanford in C&F today. Motet: Ubi Caritas, Duruflé.

Wednesday 19th February, 7.30pm. St Michael's Recital.

Our own Church Choir in a Concert of "Light" music taken from the recent liturgical seasons.

Saturday 22nd February, 5.30pm in Tyntesfield Chapel.

St Michael's Choir has also been invited to sing a concert at this National Trust property at Wraxall, near Bristol, BS48 1NX. The spectacular Victorian Gothic Revival House and Chapel were created by William Gibbs (1790-1875) who funded the building of both our own glorious church and the chapel of Keble College, Oxford.

Sunday 23rd February, Sexagesima, 2 before Lent, 10.45am. Mass.

Setting: Missa "Lauda Sion", Palestrina. Motet: Ave verum corpus, Byrd.

Sunday 2nd March, Quinquagesima, Next before Lent, 10.45am. Mass.

Setting: Missa Brevis "Laetatus Sum", Nigel Browne. Motet: O Lord Thou art my God, by Exeter composer Kellow John Pye (1812-1901).

Sunday 2nd March, 6pm. Evensong and Benediction.

Responses: Smith, Psalm: 84, Office Hymn: 241, Canticles: Walmisley in D minor, Anthem: Verleih uns Frieden, Mendelssohn. O salutaris, Liszt. Tantum Ergo, Liszt.

Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich, Herr Gott, zu unsern Zeiten. Es ist doch ja kein andrer nicht, der für uns könnte streiten, denn du, unser Gott, alleine. (Martin Luther)

Give peace in our time, O Lord. Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.

(Thomas Cranmer)

Wednesday 5th March, Ash Wednesday, 7.30pm. Mass with Imposition of Ashes.

Setting: Mass in A minor, Casciolini. Motet: Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts, Purcell.

"St Eward's Hip"

Unfortunately, St Eward's Hip is not a miraculous relic that will solve all our church's financial problems. Stewardship is the commitment of time, talents and money to our church, so that it can do its work of worship, service and witness.

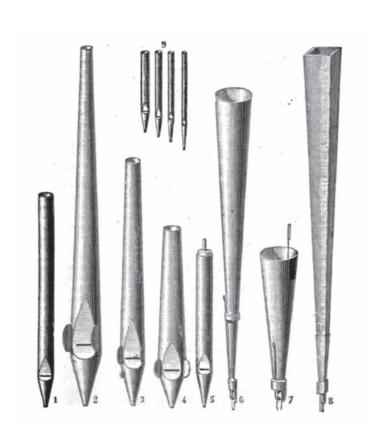
As well as having to pay for the running costs of our church, the Diocese "taxes" us at St Michael's. For 2014 this will be the sum of £18992; that's "on average" £9 per week for each of our 40-odd regular worshippers. To be fair, the church receives this back in the salaries and pensions of our clergy.

Each of us is unique and St Michael's has possibly the most "unaverage" congregation and choir in Devon, but some sort of regular giving, with GiftAid if possible, is still the best way to help the Treasurer budget the utilities and maintenance bills of this little household of faith.

HLF Project

Thanks to all who've helped with the Organ, Peregrine and Heritage Project over the past year. Our half-way reports to the Heritage Lottery Fund were accepted and I'm pleased to be able to say that the next tranche of grant money has been received. So work can continue, with many activities planned for June 2014.

Richard Barnes





FROM WILDERNESS TO MOUNTAIN TOP

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Five Mondays in Lent from March 10th - April 7th 2014 7 - 8 p.m. St David's Church, Exeter. All are welcome.

Read any good books lately?

We would like to introduce a review section to our magazine and invite all you readers, film goers, music fans to write a short recommendation of something that you have seen or heard recently and really enjoyed.

It can be on any subject, not necessarily religious although we would especially welcome those.

It's just a way of sharing and enjoying things together and fostering our feelings of community.

Go on -be brave! All you need to do is to include the author, composer or performer and a short piece about it and why you enjoyed it. Books, CDs DVDs Films.



Religion, Spirituality & ...? 3 evening talks in Feb 2014

Religion, Spirituality & Evolution A Sense of Transcendence

How evolutionary psychology can enhance our understanding of spirituality

> Richard Skinner Thursday 13th Feb

Religion, Spirituality & Art Meaning-Making through Art

Meaning-Making through Art

The context and reception of Bobbie Cox's "Pieces of Light" tapestry
in St Stephen's
Alison Goodlad
Thursday 20th Feb

Religion, Spirituality & Music
The Dancing Night of the Soul
How music as diverse as plainsong and punk
can help us pray
Andrew Godsall
Thursday 27th Feb

7.30pm
St Stephen's Church
Exeter

<u>Devon Home Library Service</u> – bringing books and more to people in their homes

The Devon Home Library Service works in partnership with the WRVS (Women's Royal Voluntary Service). It aims to provide library books, (including audio books on CD, and large print books) to those people in the community who through ill health or disability can no longer visit the library.

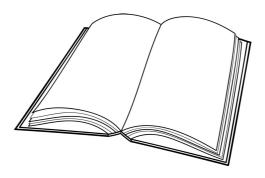
After discussing with the clients the sort of books they like, (eg romantic fiction, travel books, particular authors), WRVS volunteers choose books for their clients which they deliver to them from once a fortnight to once every six weeks, depending on the needs of the client, at a mutually convenient time. There is no charge for the service and there are no fines on books!! Clients may keep the books for as long as needed and may order books they particularly want to read.

Large print books, cassette tapes and audio CDs as well as ordinary print books are available. Some clients prefer non fiction such as biography and travel books, other prefer romantic novels or murder mysteries!

For those people who love reading or just browsing through books, but are confined to their home, this service offers a chance to have access to the library as well as a visit from a friendly face on a regular basis. Often clients and volunteers make lasting friends so there is satisfaction on both sides.

We really want to promote and extend the service to reach as many people as possible!

If you would like to use the service, or know of someone who would, please contact Julia on 01392 757725 or email crichton-smith9@hotmail.co.uk



PARISH RETREAT Looking Back

Last November a small group of parishioners made their way one weekend to Abbey House Glastonbury for the first ever Parish Retreat.

Two of the Retreatants have written their reflections on the weekend which hopefully give a flavour of the time spent away.

First from GEOFFREY DAVIES who writes.....

It is fairly obvious that we live in a hectic world with many distractions, particularly in the pre-Christmas period. More difficult to accept is the amount of noise generated by ourselves. As a self-confessed talker, it was quite a challenge to attend a silent retreat. Also, I was, like many others, a retreat novice.

As small group led by Frs. David Hastings and Andy Atkins gathered at Abbey House, Glastonbury at the end of November 2013. The location of a retreat is of great importance. The ancient Christian heritage of Glastonbury was a first rate backdrop for our weekend. The imposing, recently improved Abbey House provided warm, comfortable surroundings. There were chapels, lounges, spacious bedrooms and attentive staff served delicious wholesome meals. Peace and space were key to our experience.

The word "Retreat" conjured up vague ideas of meditation and heightened spirituality. It soon became obvious that all this was founded on the structure and careful preparation by the Leaders. The theme was "Here is the Little Door", preparing us for the coming of Christmas after the days of Advent. There was prayer and worship but also time for

reading and reflection. Time for set aside for leisure and relaxation.

Regular services were conducted consisting of prayer, praise and scripture readings in Chapel. Mass was celebrated on Saturday and Sunday. A rhythm was established to which I became quickly attuned. Short addresses, supported by music and visual aids developed the theme of "Here is the Little Door" culminating in a consideration of Holman Hunt's iconic picture "The Light of the World."

There was time set aside for reading and relaxation. For myself I took a book on the Rosary - "Ten for Sorrow, ten for Joy" by J. Neville Ward - and a John Mortimer novel. Periods of extended reading can be difficult in a busy world and it was wonderful to have time set aside for this during the weekend. The Library in the House provided a range of works and it was tempting to browse, select and return at leisure.

On Saturday I enjoyed visiting the Abbey grounds, a first for me. The extent of the monastic settlement was incredible and the ruins themselves led to deep reflection. We had our free access to the Abbey, a definite bonus. Another bonus was a walk up the Tor in sparkling autumn weather. Such breath taking views and an energetic walk were part of the retreat experience.

All of this was enjoyed in silence, the absence of unnecessary chatter and forced conversation and the "Greater Silence" extended from Friday evening until Sunday lunch time. At meal times music was played, the Vaughan Williams much favoured by myself. Yes, there were words in services, addresses and reflections, in themselves a sort of internal conversation.

Looking back on the weekend and speaking to other participants, it would appear that many benefits became apparent after the journey

home. No blinding revelations came at least to myself. Rather there was opportunity to take stock and reflect upon what Christian witness might mean, and on a more trivial note, a little rest and relaxation in the pre-Christmas period can be more precious than jewels.

Secondly from JUDITH STURMAN who writes......

Last November I made my first foray into the world of religious retreats joining that arranged by Father David Hastings at the Retreat House in Glastonbury.

The old house was warm and welcoming and Fr. David and Fr. Andy had clearly spent much of the day preparing the our arrival in the late afternoon.

After Evening Prayer, supper and the first address we went into silence which lasted until Sunday lunch time. The silence presented an opportunity for introspection, meditation and contemplation, not to mention sleep!!

Fr. Hastings had clearly taken great care with his preparations for the weekend and this was particularly apparent in the six addresses given under the heading "Here is a Little Door", the title taken from a poem by Frances Chesterton and set to music by Herbert Howells, allowing such aspects such as "Waiting at the Door", "The Door of Hospitality, "The Door of Heaven" and "Knocking at the Door" to be explored.

Fr. Hastings brought in aspects of his wide ranging knowledge of literature from Kenneth Graham, Sydney Carter, George Herbert, Shakespeare to A.A. Milne. He also chose interesting pieces of music to accompany our meals.

Morning and Evening Prayer and Holy Communion offered the opportunity to get away from the busyness and responsibilities of daily life. My head lit the pillow of the first night and I awoke ten hours later. At every break in the schedule I took the opportunity to rest in my room although the Bible and other volumes which I took along remained unopened for the entire weekend!

No review of the weekend would be complete without mention of the delicious meals, charming staff and opportunity to meet the friendly members of the St. Michael's congregation, my fellow 'retreaters'. Hopefully next September's Retreat will be equally rewarding with more opportunity to enjoy the lovely retreat grounds.

Thanks to Fr. Hastings and Fr. Atkins for a very satisfying weekend.

::::::

Another Retreat weekend has been booked at Abbey House from 5th. until 7th. September and booking forms will be available soon. Why not come and join us? Hopefully the accounts of the 2013 experience from Geoffrey and Judith might whet your appetite! If you want to know more talk to those who attended or else contact me.

Fr. David Hastings



The Soup Kitchen at St. David's

As many of you will know, Thursday evening is the time we receive a number of homeless folk at St. David's and provide soup and refreshments to sustain them through the cold nights.

They need warm clothing and shoes, so if you have fleeces, sweaters, coats, jeans, or trousers you would like to pass on, they will be gratefully received.

We also like to have paperbacks they can take to read, so if you are parting with books please think of leaving them with us.

Thank you.

Contact Mary on:- 07872626168 if you need to leave donated goods





every Wednesday Exeter Community Centre 17 St Davids Hill Exeter

Affordable Community Acupuncture £15 - £30 per treatment session pay what you feel you can afford

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"An outstanding feature of the school is the care, guidance and support it gives pupils."
"The personal development of pupils is also outstanding."

"Spiritual development is excellent." "Behaviour is exemplary."

A JOURNEY TO THE HOLY LAND?

I am making plans to lead a Pilgrimage Party to the Holy Land in April/May 20115 and hope that members of St. Michael's and St. David's may be interested in joining this trip.

A leaflet about the Pilgrimage will be available in both churches very soon and which will include an enquiry form. If you would be interested in this visit then please let Fr. David know so that plans can begin to be made.

Fr. David Hastings



AVISITING PREACHER

on Sunday 16th. February Fr. Darren Smith,

General Secretary of the Additional Curates Society

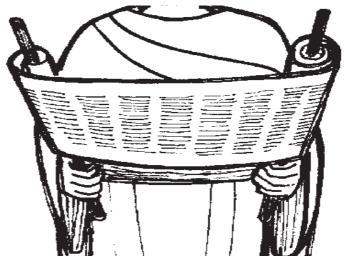
will be at

St. Michael's for the Sung mass at 10.45 a.m.

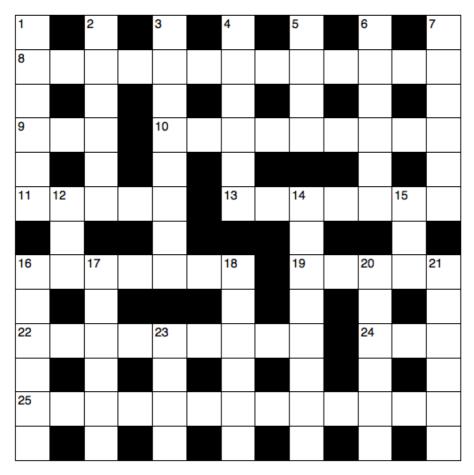
to speak about the work of ACS.

All are welcome to join us on this occasion.

Fr. David



February crossword



Across:

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)
- 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)
- 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)
- 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)
- 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)
- 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)
- 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to your bod-

- ies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)
- 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On —
- let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)
- 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

Down:

- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)
- 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)
- 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)
- 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)
- 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
- 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
- 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: '— salt to your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
- 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
- 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)
- 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)
- 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
- 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
- 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
- 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
- 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to (Genesis 8:5) (6)
- 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

Solutions later in the magazine

St. David's Parent and Toddler group

If you're walking past the Parish Room on a Thursday morning around midday you may well hear several voices singing out the Okey Cokey and wonder what's going on. In fact this song has become the informal signature tune of the Toddler Group thanks to the enthusiasm of the children and their parents/carers.

The weekly session is 10:00am to midday, all year (except August and Christmas).

We charge £1 per child plus 50p for a sibling and this funds the cost of our art and craft resources, snacks, milk and Christmas party. We usually have ten to twelve children in the age range from new born up to four. There is a rota of helpers; Barbara, Freya, Julia and myself, who are all CRB checked.

As soon as they come in the children get stuck in to playing with the many toys which have been donated to us over the years. By far the most popular is the sandpit, but the children also love the mini-slide, the ride-on toys, painting on the easel and shopping for plastic fruit in the tent. There is usually a simple activity on the table such as playdough, puzzles, drawing or glueing. We have even managed cooking on occasions.

The adults have a tea or coffee and then at about 11:00am it's snack time and the children sit down to fruit, milk and rice cakes. The fact we offer a healthy snack is an important issue for many parents.

When it's tidy up time, we wind down the play and get the children involved in clearing up. They love to join in putting the toys away in the cupboards and getting the musical instruments out ready for our nursery rhyme singing and the grand finale of the Okey Cokey.

Our thanks go to the Church for letting us use the Parish Room for the last seven years, thereby supporting what is a very necessary resource for parents of young children. Over the years we have had several parents who have made lasting friendships through the group and given each other a lot of practical and moral support in child-rearing. This can be a really good way of combatting the sense of isolation that some parents of toddlers may experience, especially, for example when people are new to the area, if they don't have family living nearby or their partners have come to work/study at the university for short periods of time. Toddler groups are also a great way of introducing young children to some of the activities that they will encounter in pre-school.

Toddlers is great fun for children and a nice break for adults. The St. David's group is (so we are told by current parents) one of the friendliest in Exeter. If you know anyone with pre-school children or grandchildren, then please do recommend us.

They are welcome to pop in any Thursday.

Contact:

toddlers@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk or ring Julia on 07729 068 567

Sam Wellbelove

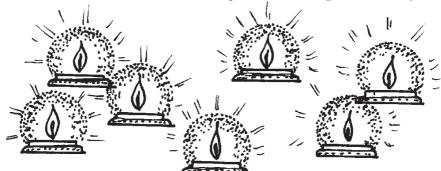
Dates of Note

6 The Martyrs of Japan - courage in persecution

Persecution of Christians in various countries is making the headlines these days. Believers facing such opposition might well find inspiration from the courage of the Japanese Christians of the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

The Jesuit Francis Xavier had first brought Christianity to Japan in 1549, when he persuaded Shimazu Takahisa, the daimyo of Satsuma, to give him permission to build the first Catholic mission in Japan. All went well at first, and the Japanese responded to the message of Jesus Christ more warmly than anyone could have foretold. By the end of the century, it has been estimated that there were nearly 300,000 baptised converts to Christianity in Japan.

But soon the very success of the Japanese Church led it into trouble: its vibrant growth as an indigenous community believing a faith brought in from the West meant trouble. It was caught up in a maelstrom of tensions between the shogunate, imperial government, Buddhist monks, Shintoists, and colonial ambitions of Spain and Portugal. Gradually, the



Japanese rulers came to see Christians as a threat. So Christianity was banned, and those Japanese who refused to abandon their faith were to be killed.

Trouble flared at Nagasaki on 6 February 1597, when six European Franciscan missionaries, three Japanese Jesuits and 17 Japanese laity, three of whom were young boys, were executed in a form of crucifixion by being elevated on crosses and then pierced with spears. Within a year, more than 130 churches had been burned. The persecution subsided, then flared up in 1613. Japanese Christians were beheaded, burned alive or imprisoned. They responded with courage and a willingness to sing praises and preach the gospel even as they were led to their deaths.

Such was the brutality of the persecution that by 1630 the Japanese Church had been driven underground, and was thought to be lost. So when missionaries arrived in the 19th century, they were astonished to find a community of Japanese Christians. It had survived for 250 years without clergy, churches, the Bible and only a sketchy idea of the Christian faith beyond one main thing: that Jesus Christ was Lord.

10 Scholastica (d. c. 543) the persuasive sister

Scholastica should be the patron saint of any woman who can bend her brother to do her will - no matter how 'powerful' that brother might seem to other people.

For Scholastica's brother was no less than the great monk Benedict, who founded the famous Benedictine order and lived at Monte Cassino. In no way over-awed, Scholastica simply became the first ever Benedictine nun, with a nunnery five miles down the road – at Plombariola.

Now Scholastica greatly enjoyed her annual meetings with her brother at a house nearby, but the time passed too quickly. One year she begged him to stay longer, to discuss "the joys of heaven", but he refused. So Scholastica took swift action: she prayed up such a mighty thunderstorm that her brother was forced to spend the rest of the night talking to her. Or maybe – she talked and he listened? No one knows for sure. In any case, Scholastica died happy three days later, and was buried in the tomb Benedict had prepared for himself. She became the patron of Benedictine nunneries.

27 Gabriel Possenti (1838 – 1862) – and the enjoyment of romance

If you have been hurt in your search for romantic love, Gabriel Possenti may be a good saint for you. Because Possenti, born to the governor of Assisi, began by having it all. He grew up doing the mid-19th century equivalent of ebay, nightclubs, cinema and online dating, only in those days it was done by having a tailor who made you an exquisite wardrobe, and going often to the dances and the theatre with as many young ladies as he could possibly find. Gabriel loved romance; he loved women: his friends called him Il Damerino (the ladies' man).

But the beautiful young ladies were not there for him when Gabriel fell gravely ill. Lying alone in bed Gabriel turned to the only One who could still be found. He prayed that if God would heal him, he would devote his life to him. Sure enough, Gabriel got well. But - he forgot God, and returned to his insatiable search for romantic love.

Gabriel fell ill again, and again the doctors despaired of his life. Again

Gabriel fell ill again, and again the doctors despaired of his life. Again he prayed, again he was healed, again he returned to his women. But then one night, when he had joined a sacred procession of the miraculous ikon of Spoleto, something suddenly happened to Gabriel Possenti. He was suddenly overcome by a sense of the presence of God, and the love of God. It was a love he had never dreamed of, and far better than anything he had found with his many women. That night Gabriel decided to forsake the search for the perfect romance, and return to the Lover of his soul.

He joined the Passionist monastery at Morrovalle in 1856, and although his new life was very austere, Possenti was now full of joy that depended on no one but God, and so could never be taken away from him. Sadly, he died young of tuberculosis – at only 24, but his sunny personality and love for God were so outstanding that he became patron of youth. Immense numbers of pilgrims have visited his shrine down the years.

Crossword solutions

February answers

ACROSS: 8, Cross-examined. 9, Ash. 10, Apocrypha. 11, Sci-fi. 13, Typical. 16, Visited. 19, Offer. 22, No account. 24, RAC. 25, Sovereign Lord.

DOWN: 1, Oceans. 2, Hophni. 3, Islamist. 4, Exhort. 5, Omar. 6, On spec. 7, Add all. 12, CBI. 14, Plotting. 15, Awe. 16, Vanish. 17, Starve. 18, Daub it. 20, Furrow. 21, Recede. 23, Cure.

Crosswords reproduced by kind permission of BRF and John Capon, originally published in Three Down, Nine Across, by John Capon (£6.99 BRF)



St BERNADETTE

In February 1858 Bernadette was 14 years old and lived with her family in the little town of Lourdes in the Pyrenees in France. While she was out collecting wood to keep the family warm Bernadette had a vision of St Mary, the Mother of Christ. The lady in blue and white appeared 18 times in all and asked Bernadette to tell the priests to make a procession to the grotto where she appeared and to build a chapel there. At first the priests didn't believe Bernadette's story because she was only a poor, uneducated girl.

People who were ill came to bathe in the spring of water that appeared at the Grotto and in time a large church was built. And still today pilgrims from all over the world visit the shrine.

What happened to Bernadette? She became a nun. When they asked her if she was sad that the visions had ended she answered: 'I was like a broom. When the sweeping is finished you put it behind the door and forget about it.'

WATER WORDS

All the answers to this Bible Quiz are to do with water. Answers at the bottom of the page.

- 1. Where the disciples fished (Mark 1).
- It parted to allow Moses and the Israelites through (Exodus 14).
- 3. Jacob met his future wife here (Genesis 29).
- 4. Paul was on his way to Rome when this happened (Acts 27).
- 5. How Jonah travelled when the sailors threw him overboard (Jonah 1).
- 6. The river in which Jesus was baptised (Matthew 3).



Why was Moses hidden quickly? It was a rush job.

What do you call small rivers that flow into the Nile?

Juveniles.

1.Sea of Galilee 2.The Red Sea3.at a well 4. he was shipwrecked 5.in a large fish or whale 6.River Jordan

arbara`s Edible Stall

Please keep bringing and buying. We need you!

NEXT DATE:

SUNDAY 23rd February

Barbara's Edible Stall made a profit of £448.94 in 2013 slightly up on the previous year. Well done all, buyers and bringers alike, and a special thank you to some new hostesses. We hope to see you in the future, as I gather you enjoyed yourselves! Please may we have lots of items to sell, too. Very encouraging!

Many thanks. Jane Woodman





Pilgrimage to

Assisi

Led by **Bishop Martin Shaw**2nd - 8th October 2014

DAY ONE - THURSDAY 2ND OCTOBER

Bristol - Assisi

We fly from Bristol on a scheduled direct flight to Rome. On arrival in Rome, we transfer by coach to Assisi where we check into our guesthouse, the Casa S Brigida, situated just outside the town walls, for a 6-night stay. Dinner will be in the guesthouse on each evening of our stay.

Day two - Friday 3RD October

Assisi

This morning, we walk through the streets of Assisi as Saints Francis and Clare would have known it. Visit the Cathedral of San Ruffino, the church of Santa Maria Maggiore and the Chiesa Nuova (New Church), built on the site of Francis' house. Afterwards we visit St Clare's Basilica, which now houses the Crucifix that called to Francis and the tomb of St Clare. This afternoon we travel the short distance into the valley below Assisi and visit the Porziuncola and the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli. We are welcome to stay for the Solemn Commemoration of the death of St Francis (Transitus di San Francesco) in the Basilica. Afterwards return to our guesthouse.

Day three - Saturday 4th October

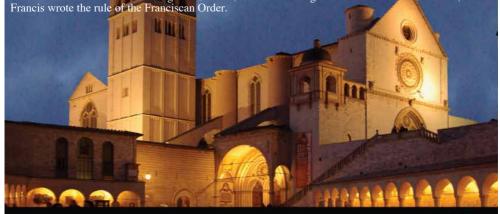
The Feast of St Francis

This morning will be free to attend services to celebrate the Feast of the Saint. There will be many festivities in Assisi to mark the Feast Day. This afternoon there will be the opportunity to attend Vespers in the Lower Basilica.

Day four - Sunday 5th October

Greccio and the Rieti Valley

After breakfast we leave Assisi by coach and head south into the province of Rieti and the area called 'Holy Valley' because of the particular attention that St Francis paid to this particular region. We stop mid-morning at the sanctuary of Greccio, where Francis brought home the mystery of the Incarnation by portraying a live nativity scene in 1223 and we see the grotto where this occurred and the early community buildings of St Francis and St Bonaventure's time. We enjoy a lunch in the picturesque Belvedere Restaurant in the village of Greccio, before returning to Assisi via Fonte Colombo, where









The deadline for inclusion of articles for the March issue of the parish magazine is Sunday February 09th 2014

Any information and articles you'd like to submit for inclusion in future issues should be sent to Ashley and Johanne via St David's Church or our email: thedairy@btclick.com

If you have images of any events of interest to the Parish community please send them to us.

Please send digital files via email if at all possible and please make the subject header fit the content of the email - thanks!



Thank you to Graham Lerwill for organising the printing of this magazine - his hard work is much appreciated.