

New Leaves

March 2022



The flowers are blooming, the time of birdsong has come! Song of
Songs 2:12

**Parish Magazine
of St David with
St Michael and
All Angels, Exeter**

50p

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WELCOME



To all Readers of “New Leaves”, the
magazine for the Parish of St David’s with St.
Michael and All Angels.

**The editorial team invites you to submit appropriate articles
which reflect Church, Parish or Community interest**

Please send as Word documents to: newleavesnews@gmail.com

Please note that all articles will be printed with the author’s name

Enjoy this month’s read.

We will welcome critical comments on the magazine

Editorial Team: Bill Pattinson and Clive Wilson supported by
Stephanie Aplin

New Leaves



March
2022

From the Vicarage

Keeping Lent Together

‘Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.’ (James chapter 4 verse 8)

That verse from the letter of St James leads us rather well into the season of Lent. This ‘springtime of the soul’ brings with it an encouragement for us to return to God in prayer, worship and service of our neighbours. It also urges us to look carefully, honestly, but caringly at our lives and to ask God to show us where we are ‘double-minded’, fooling ourselves that we are serving God when we are really serving ourselves. So it’s not meant to be a comfortable season, but may it bring growth, hope and joy for us all.

We will be celebrating Ash Wednesday together at evening communion services on Wednesday 2nd March at 7.30pm in both of our churches.

We will also be offering a range of Lent group and talks as follows:

On Tuesday afternoons 2pm at 95 Howell Rd on 8, 15, 22, 29 March and 5 April

We will follow the York Course ‘**Caring for Creation**’ Please email me nigel.mguthrie1@gmail.co to book a place or sign the list at the back of church. A course booklet will be available for £4.

And on Tuesday evenings at 7pm on 8, 15, 22, 29 March and 5 April Belinda Speed Andrews will lead the **Sanctuary Mental Health**

Course: <https://www.sanctuarymentalhealth.org> at a venue to be confirmed. If you would like to join or know more details, please contact Belinda on bspeedandrews@gmail.com

On Wednesdays 16, 23 and 30 March at 7 pm the **Lent Reading Group** at St Michael's will discuss Bede's *Historia* with Oliver Nicholson. And Richard Parker will continue to offer Sung Vespers and meditation at 6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Also on offer locally in city centre churches Chris Bryan will be running a Lent course: on *Thursdays 3, 10 & 17 March* from 10.30am to 11.45am in St Petrock's church. 'Son of God': What does this term really mean? How is it used in the bible? Over the three sessions Chris Bryan will examine and discuss the matter, expanding our understanding of this and related enigmatic expressions. Everyone is welcome to join this group.

And, finally, Clare Bryden from the Cathedral will lead a series of Compline services in St Olave's on Monday evenings at 8pm during Lent.

Men's Walk for Hospiscare 12 March

I'm delighted to say that we already have a team for the Men's Walk but it is not too late to join! Please just have a word with Clive Wilson as further entries can be linked to our Just Giving page. As you may have seen from local press fundraising for Hospiscare has taken a real hit during the pandemic so it would be good to raise as much as we can to help support their services. We would be delighted if you would be willing to support the Men's Walk fundraising effort please find the Just Giving page at <http://www.justgiving.com/team/StDavidsExeter22>

Tuesday Café

Plans are also progressing for a Tuesday café time at St David's Church – as a drop-in for people to find a Christian welcome and company. Our initial plan is to open St David's from 10.30am to 12noon on Tuesdays from 8th March and we are recruiting a team who would not

only help to serve tea and coffee but also to talk with people. Is this something you would like to be involved with? Or would you like to bake a cake for us? If so please sign up on our “Tuesday Café” sheet at the back of church. Thank you to those who already offered to be part of this. It will be great to get St David’s Church open more often during the week and to make good use of the space at the back of church for our local community.

Parish Quiz – coming shortly

St David’s Social Committee is running a Quiz on **Friday 18th March** at 7.30pm in aid of St David’s church funds. Tickets are now available for £10 including Ploughmans Supper and a drink. Under 16 tickets are £4. Please aim to make up teams between 6 and 8 people, although you are welcome to do this on the night, of course and please just come along and enjoy!

Church Meeting – Sunday 6th March

You will know from last month’s magazine that we are planning a church meeting at St David’s after the 9.30am service on Sunday March 6th to learn about the role of Churchwarden and to hear from some of those who have served in the role. We would like to establish a small group of people who would be willing to share in the work of churchwarden and who would be willing to take on the role for a year or two ... or more. This is crucial for the well-being and future of our parish and I would ask you to pray for the right people to be called forward to represent our parish and her people.

Consultation at St Michael’s

Also, following up from last month the consultation about the future pattern of ministry at St Michael’s will take place this month and I would appreciate your prayers for all those involved in discerning the right direction for St Michael’s and for the relationship between our two churches.

Two years on

I hardly seems possible that two whole years have passed since the first pandemic lock-down. Although it is beginning to feel more like business as usual we know that certain aspects of life have not returned to 'normal' and that in some cases there will be a new normal. One aspect of our worship which has not yet returned is the shared chalice at communion but this is now increasingly under consideration. But it is likely to be on an 'opt-in' basis as we recognise that a significant number of people may not feel comfortable returning to shared cup. I will keep you updated, of course.

We must continue to recognise that many people have been deeply shaken by all that has happened during the pandemic. Our response must be one of care for ourselves and each other so that we can regain confidence and hope. My prayer is that Lent will encourage us in our turning to God and help us to renew our confidence in God's love for us, and for our community and world.

With every blessing

Nigel Guthrie



Some Thoughts from St Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham

My diary has a quotation for the start of each week; sometimes these are words of famous people, sometimes they come from a person less well-known. Often the words are taken out of context; occasionally they seem to be inane. I have been reading ahead, and find the words for the week beginning 18th April (Easter Monday) are from J.K.Rowling. I'm not sure if I am allowed to re-quote them (is it like re-tweeting?) especially as she is not popular with, if not even cancelled by, the woke brigade. However, here goes: 'The truth. It is a beautiful and terrible thing, and must therefore be treated with great caution.' Interestingly, the quotation for this week (21st February) comes from John Lubbock: 'What we see depends mainly on what we look for.' I think these quotations both deal with the notion of validity. My research shows John Lubbock to be a nineteenth century (mostly) philosopher, though that's a broad term for the polymath he was. The statement comes from his book *The Beauties of Nature and the Wonders of the World We Live In*. It continues: 'In the same field the farmer will notice the crop, the geologists the fossils, botanists the flowers, artists the colouring, sportsmen(sic) the cover for game. Though we may all look at the same things it does not all follow that we should see them.'



At home, we wait for the investigations into Downing Street parties and for whatever truth emerges from them. There has been falling on swords and some unpalatable glee in the media with the departure of people who have held office and responsibilities. There is a great deal of finger-pointing and calling-out of perceived wrongs. The words 'moral' and 'immoral' don't feature very often; moral codes are now flexible and do not appear to be yardsticks for behaviour. There is little reference to absolute standards or even religious teaching.

Abroad, we have seen and heard a great deal of sabre-rattling recently, with

all contenders claiming to have the truth. Observers are recalling Chamberlain, and muttering about appeasement. The final speeches at the close of the Winter Olympics seemed to have a different truth, suggesting that the host nation had encouraged nobility in competition and recognition of excellence. Apparently millions of people living in China now engage regularly in winter-sports and will do even better in the next Winter Olympics. Young contenders who achieve high standards with the help of drugs must keep their status because to reduce this would seriously affect their mental well-being. *'It's a mad world, my masters'* is a Jacobean play by Thomas Middleton. It could easily describe our times.

So how to make some sense of this 'mad world'? Is there order, purpose, future, sanity, kindness? Well, yes, if we look at the words of the Bible and in the Prayer Book. The Creation stories in Genesis make clear the role of God in ordering the cosmos and of ours in acting as stewards. Leviticus gives sensible guidance for agriculture, long before bio-ethical and organic farming was vaunted as the way to do all things. Psalm 19 reminds us to look at the universe as it declares the glory of God. The *Venite* reminds us that 'all the corners of the earth' are in God's hands and frequently in the Psalms we find 'comfortable words' to soothe our souls. 'Speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed' are words we find during the Eucharist. A loving God has plans and reasons we cannot fathom; now we see 'through a glass, darkly'.

Mother Julian of Norwich has the words for us to hold in times of anxiety and darkness:

'All shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well'



Stephanie Aplin

 **LENT**
2022

Readers and Leaders in Prayer for March 2022 at St David's

Sunday 6th March (1st Sunday of Lent)

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 26:1-11

2nd Reading: Romans 10:8b-13

Gospel Reading: Luke 4:1-13

Preacher: Nigel Guthrie Bible

Reader: Sarah Rimmington

Leader in Prayer: Nigel Walsh



Sunday 13th March (2nd Sunday of Lent)

1st Reading: Genesis 15:1-12,17-18

2nd Reading: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Gospel Reading: Luke 13:31-end

Preacher: Ash Leighton Bible Reader: Gina Redman

Leader in Prayer: Deborah Leighton-Plom

Sunday 20th March (3rd Sunday of Lent)

1st Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Gospel Reading: Luke 13:1-9

Preacher: Belinda Speed-Andrews Bible Reader: Robin Thomas

Prayer Leader: David James

Sunday 27th March (4th Sunday of Lent/Mothering Sunday)

1st Reading: Exodus 2:1-10

2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12-17

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:33-35

Preacher: David James Bible Reader: Alan Baker

Prayer Leader: Bill Pattinson

Sunday 3rd April (5th Sunday of Lent/Passion Sunday)

1st Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21

2nd Reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

Gospel Reading: John 12:1-8

Preacher: Bill Pattinson Bible Reader: Cathy Knowles

Prayer Leader: Alistair Mackintosh

Services & Events for St. Michael's –

March 2022

Our thanks to all who have joined us in worship at St. Michael's during the month of February. Also, many thanks to our visiting clergy (Fr. Dominic Cyrus and Fr. Robin Eastoe). The continued success of the Bountiful Table on the first Sunday of the month is due to the organisation of both Stephanie Aplin and Elizabeth Hughes and to those that support them in cooking and providing goods as well as those who buy them! Thanks, also, to Adrian Hewitt and Barry Mather for the organisation of the newspaper collections. Please continue to support both ventures. This month sees the beginning of Lent which has many added occasions for worship and reflection, such as Stations of the Cross on Wednesday evenings at 6pm and the Lent Reading Group, also on Wednesdays 9th, 16th and 30th March at 7pm, following Stations of the Cross. Please come to one or both of these! The Lent Reading Group, led by Prof. Oliver Nicholson will return to the Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English Speaking People*. This work was completed in 725 AD and is the fullest account that we have of the earliest English Christians and is interesting both from the historical and the spiritual point of view. Books provided. All welcome. Further information available from Oliver.

Lectures will resume after Easter. To join the lectures mailing list please send an "e-pistle" to: mountdinhamlectures@gmail.com

Below are our regular patterns of worship in Church and on-line:-

Sundays 11am Sung Mass & Sermon, in Church only.

First Sunday in the month – 6pm Evensong & Benediction (check regular notices for variations)

Wednesdays Matins at 9.30am and Low Mass at 10.00am, the latter is also broadcast to (and viewable later) <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsmtdinhamexeter>

Plainsong Vespers led by Dr. Richard Parker on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6pm is public worship, also broadcast to <https://facebook.com/groups/2227703237>

Friends of St. Michael's Facebook Group
website is [https://
www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk](https://www.stmichaelsmountdinham.org.uk)

St. David's Facebook page [https://
facebook.com/stdavidschurhexeter](https://facebook.com/stdavidschurhexeter) will
"stream" their 9.30am Sunday Eucharist
and Morning Prayers on Thursday and
Friday.

The weekly Parish Notices and pew sheets
will keep you informed. Our thanks to
Oliver Nicholson for typing these and sending them out by e-mail each week.

Choir rehearsal – this takes place immediately after Vespers on Tuesday
evenings at 7pm. If you are interested in joining the choir please contact
Tasha Goldsworth – Musical Director or speak to a choir member.

Services and events for March are:

Tuesday 1st March – St. David's Day & Shrove Tuesday

Wednesday 2nd March - Ash Wednesday
9.30am Matins only

7.30pm Sung Mass (with Imposition of Ashes)
Setting: Mass in C – *Ireland* Motet: Lord let me know mine end - *Greene*

Sunday 6th March – The First Sunday in Lent
11am Sung Mass
Setting: Mass in Dorian Mode – *Tallis* Motet:– O Lord, increase our faith -
Loosemore
After Mass – Bountiful Table

6pm Evensong and Benediction
Responses: Smith Canticles: Sumsion in G Motet: Wash Me Thoroughly –
Wesley

Wednesday 9th March
9.30am Matins 10am Mass
6pm Stations of the Cross
7pm Lent Reading Group

Sunday 13th March – The Second Sunday in Lent
11am Sung Mass

Wednesday 16th March – Boniface, Bishop of Ross (8th century)
9.30am Matins 10am Mass
6pm Stations of the Cross
7pm Lent Reading Group

Thursday 17th March – St. Patrick of Ireland

Saturday 19th March – Joseph of Nazareth

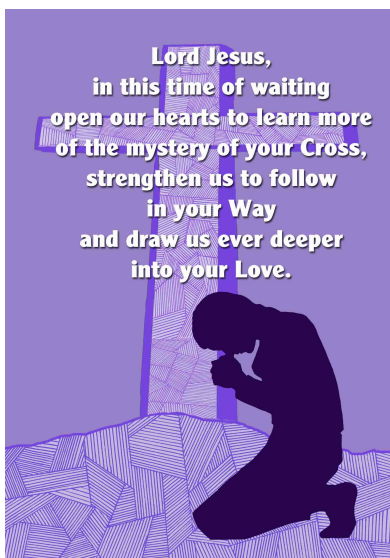
Sunday 20th March – The Third Sunday in Lent (also remember St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne)
11am Sung Mass

Wednesday 23rd March
9.30am Matins 10am Mass
6pm Stations of the Cross
No reading group this evening

Thursday 24th March
3pm St. Michael's Committee Meeting

Friday 25th March – The Annunciation of Our Lord (also known as Lady Day)

Sunday 27th March – The Fourth Sunday in Lent – Mothering Sunday (also known as Refreshment Sunday)
10am Sung Mass



Wednesday 30th March
9.30am Matins 10am Mass
6pm Stations of the Cross
7pm Lent Reading Group

THE BIG CLEAN!

Please put in your diary and come and help!

Saturday 2nd April 9.30am to noon

Bring your own dusters, polish and elbow grease! Details from Elizabeth Hughes and Stephanie Aplin

Of various groups that use St. Michael's one is the Devon Recovery Learning Community and for the Spring Term, 2022, they are again running some of their courses, details of which were given in last month's magazine.

This term, courses at St. Michael's include the following:

Mondays: Ukulele – Learning to play music for your recovery 12noon – 2pm
Ukulele – Taking your recovery further 3pm – 5pm

Thursdays: Yes, You Can Sing! Singing course for all 10am – 12noon
Introduction to African Djembe Drums 1pm – 3pm
Taking recovery further with African Djembe Drumming –
Intermediate 3pm – 5pm



Anthony Pugh – 20. II. 2022



Pope Francis: "Let Us Dream - The Path to a Better Future" (2020 - Simon & Schuster)

Pope Francis sees covid as a time of crisis that sifts and changes us. This is his meditation on what we can do, individually and collectively as church and society, to make the crisis an opportunity for positive change.

He says there needs first to be a time of seeing, then of choosing, and only after that a time to act.

In order to see the world as it really is, we have to go to the margins. Jesus chose to go to places of sin and misery, of exclusion and suffering, of illness and solitude, because they were also places full of possibility. We have to make it real and concrete: the theoretical and the abstract tend to overwhelm us, but listening to the stories of real, individual people invites us to ponder, and to respond with hope. We have to reject the "technocratic paradigm" that makes us impatient of any limits on our freedom of action, and think instead of an "integral ecology" in which care for humanity goes hand in hand with care for the created world.

Between seeing and acting, there needs to be a time of choosing and discerning. "We need not just openness to reality but a robust set of criteria to guide us: knowing we are loved by God, called to be a people in service and solidarity. We need, too, a healthy capacity for silent reflection, places of refuge from the tyranny of the urgent. Most of all, we need prayer..." As church, we need to learn to walk together and to allow our differences to be not polarising contradictions but rather sources of creative tension.

When it comes to acting, the church needs to rediscover its sense of being a community within the broader community of a nation, serving the nation, helping to shape that nation's self-understanding, while respecting the role played by other religious and cultural institutions. Pope Francis goes on to propose a remarkably radical agenda, focussed on the "three Ls" of land, lodging and labour as well as education and health care - land being about a healed earth as well as proper space for the excluded, lodging being about

healthy cities as well as space to live, and labour being about self-expression as well as the means to earn a living, achieved perhaps by means of some form of Universal Basic Income.

So what must I do? I must decenter myself, become a pilgrim: one who goes out, opens up to a new horizon and comes home changed. So when you feel the "twitch upon the thread... stop and pray. read the Gospel, if you're a Christian. Or just create a space inside yourself to listen... And then act. Call up, go visit, offer your service. Say you don't have a clue what they do, but maybe you can help. Say you'd like to be part of a different world, and you thought this might be a good place to start".

Pope Francis has his red lines - on abortion, euthanasia, the death penalty, male priesthood - some of which I would prefer to be a little more negotiable. But I found this book an unexpectedly refreshing read with much to say to us as we ponder the way forward for St David's and St Michael's.



Robert Mitchell



Photo by Jon Tyson on Unsplash

Revelation: Four views on this sometimes tricky book!

The lectionary had me preach recently at St Michael's on the book of Revelation. Conversations in all our congregations encouraged me to take the opportunity to outline four schools of interpretation for Revelation, but I want to suggest they each share a common "hermeneutic key" for unlocking the book's meanings: they all depict a battle between good and evil, and they all emphasise the goodness and divine sovereignty of Jesus.



Two Spectrums: Symbolic/Literal and Past/Future

The four views are basically on two maximalist/minimalist scales of symbolic to literal, and past to future.

One end of the symbolic to literal scale says the book is *entirely* symbolic, while the other end says it is *entirely* literal, and there are a range of positions between these poles, i.e. "*some* of it is symbolic", and "*some* of it is literal". The symbolic extreme of this spectrum is often called the "idealist" position, because adherents here look for the 'ideals' or idealism behind the symbols as the main point of the book. Conversely, we can call the opposite extreme of this spectrum the "literalist" end, meaning they take Revelation at face value to say exactly what the words seem to say in modern translations. So those are our first two views: symbolic (or "idealist") at one end, and literalist at the other.

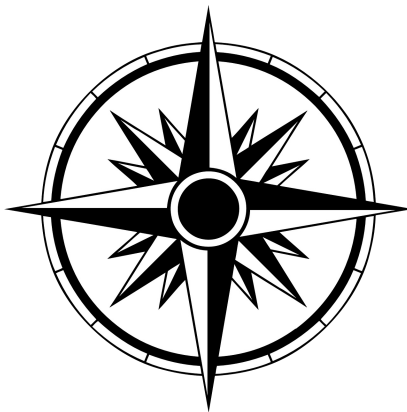
Next, there is a scale that has one end saying the book is *entirely* referring to the future, prophesying events that have not happened yet, and the opposite end of this scale says the book is *entirely* referring to the author's historical context, about events that have now already happened. Again, there are a range of positions in between, like "*some* of it is about the future", or "*some* of it is about the past". These two poles are called "futurist" at one end, and "preterist" (from Latin for "past") for the other

end.

So, to sum up so far, we have one spectrum of idealist vs. literalist, and another spectrum of futurist vs. preterist, to give us our four extremes, with a range of positions between them.

Compass Points

It's possible to put these four points into a compass, to explore a fun range of positions belonging more or less to each view. So, picture a compass, with futurist at the north and preterist at the south, idealist at the west and literalist at the east. You can then pinpoint where some readers fall on this compass. Someone who says Revelation is a literal explanation of what will happen in the future would be in the north-east corner, being both futurist and literalist. Whereas someone else might be in the south-west corner, seeing Revelation as using symbolic language to narrate events that have happened in the past – an idealist preterist. You could have someone in the north-west corner who says Revelation uses symbolic language to prophesy what will happen in the future (an idealist futurist). However, I've never met anyone who inhabits the south-east corner, arguing that Revelation is a literal historical record of the past! Hard to imagine that these monsters and marvels, disasters and divine interventions literally happened in Late Antiquity and nobody recorded them except John the Revelator!



Either way, whenever I teach on interpreting the Book of Revelation to theology students, I like to map this compass onto the corners of the room and invite them to stand up and put themselves somewhere in the room to show their own position or current understanding of Revelation. This does lead to interesting conversations! I wonder which corner of the compass you default to, and whether you might gain something from some of the other perspectives?

Strengths and limitations of each model

What I want to propose is that each of the extreme north/south/east/west points are unnecessarily self-limiting, and that probably the best reading of Revelation allows for *some* aspects to be symbolic, *some* literal, *some* historic, and *some* future. So, let's finish by considering the strengths of each of the views:

The idealist view rightly understands that much of the rich language of Revelation arises from 1st Century Jewish symbolism. For example, the 24 Elders in Revelation 4 could be symbolic of the Twelve Tribes of Israel and the Twelve Apostles, representing how God bridges the Old Covenant and the New.

A literalist critique would of course ask where you draw the line as to what is symbolic and what is literal. This sort of debate plays out in interpretive schools across the whole of Scripture – some commentators have voiced the extreme anti-literal view that the resurrection didn't actually happen and is only symbolic, whereas others say this would be a hugely problematic interpretation, because unless it literally happened then the symbol is essentially powerless.

But then again, if all of Revelation is literal, then the 24 Elders we mentioned are worshipping a dead lamb, a literal baby sheep. Yet, any literalist I've spoken to does concede that the lamb symbolises Jesus, his death being the sacrifice for our sins. This shows that even most "literalists" accept that there's an extent to which Revelation is symbolic. So, on balance, it may be that deploying both symbolic and literal lenses in our read of Revelation are helpful, some parts being more obviously symbolic, and some potentially more literal.

What of the futurist – preterist spectrum? Futurists believe that Revelation prophesies events that will take place in the future, and may well think most of it is literal. But the same critique as above can apply here: clearly some of Revelation is meant by the author to be understood as symbolic, like the lamb that was slain symbolising Jesus' death *in the past*, not a literal lamb dying *at some point in the future*.

The preterist view argues the whole book is a symbolic commentary on events that happened in the author's own time. This is an effective fusion, acknowledging that the symbols are culturally contextual to the author, and so getting into the context to understand what they mean. The other views can miss a lot of this, if they're ignorant of 1st Century Jewish Christian symbolism.

However, a futurist critique might rightly point out that some of the author's plain statements clearly imply events that had not happened yet, and so tying the entire thing down to a point in antiquity could rob Revelation of meaning or applicability today.

It may be worth reiterating here, then, that a number of common views exist along the spectrum between the preterist and futurist extremes, saying "some of it" has happened in history, "some of it" will happen in future history. These views are usually called "historicist", arguing that some of the prophecies have already been fulfilled in historic events, such as the fall of the Roman Empire, the French Revolution, and so on, and expect other events to be fulfilled in the future.

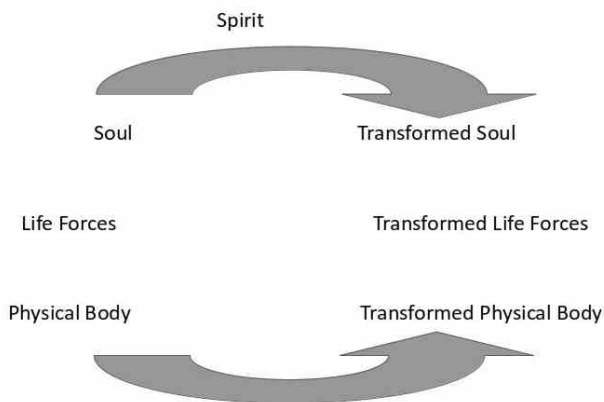
Synthesis

I want to suggest that all the schools of thought have a view in common: that there is a battle between good and evil, and Jesus is both good and powerful. Whether the text is understood to be depicting future or past events, more symbolically or literally, it can be understood as emphatic that Jesus is good, and worthy of honour and praise as divine sovereign, and ultimately victorious over evil, sin and death. We all need to avoid the trap of removing Revelation to some distance (whether in the future, or the past, or getting lost in the symbols or overly literalising what is meant to be symbolic). All four views can agree that Revelation says good defeats evil through self-sacrifice, and Jesus is King.

Ash Leighton-Plom (11.02.2022)

The Case for a More Complex Human Psycho-Physiology.

The often slow process of “waking up” of a morning can be seen as one of re-entering our bodies. Who is this “we” or, rather “I” that re-enters the body? Older and more esoteric psychological systems would have named these: “Soul and Spirit”, working together, at least they would have until 869AD at the Eighth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople when the Church officially hereticised the idea of the individual human spirit; “soul” being thought of as the aggregation of our feeling life, of our emotionality, and “Spirit” as our capacity for clear objective thinking. Diagrammatically, these interpenetrating “bodies” can be represented like this:



Currently, as Christians, we are mainly working on taming and ordering the wildness of our soul life, enabled by the power gained by Christ through the Mystery of Golgotha. The other transformations constitute the future of Human Evolution, stretching almost inconceivably far into the future, partly as outlined in Saint John’s Book of Revelations. This, our human status as the Tenth Hierarchy, presupposes individual human endurance and survival through ages, and achievable only through the process of Reincarnation – as asserted by a majority of Humankind, though in the form of Human reincarnating in time as Human, like waves of the sea.

This more detailed physiology helps towards an understanding of

phenomena such as Sleep, Death, Health and Illness, Drug Addiction, the Hierarchies and the Second Coming of Christ.

The claims of Religion and the claims of contemporary (materialistic) science lie in uneasy juxtaposition, fundamentally irreconcilable. The comfortable assumption of every “scientist” appearing on mainstream media is that there is no life after Death. And yet a more sophisticated physiology holds promise of a harmonization of the two: Religion and Science.



John Hammond – February 2022



The fan-heater under the cassock idea
proved not to be such a good one

Green Matters – More Fruit Trees

The second batch of 6 fruit trees arrived at the beginning of February and have now been planted in St David's churchyard. Thanks to all who have sponsored the trees, stakes, ties etc. As for the first batch, they are dormant bare-rooted trees and so we will await signs of new growth in spring to see if they have successfully taken.

The list of additional trees:

Scrumptious apple

Katy apple x 2

Malus 'John Downie' (Crab Apple Tree)

2 x Cox apple

The crab apple has been planted on the south side of the church to replace the crab apple that has now died there. The other apple trees are on the north side.



Clive Wilson

21 February 2022



The Queen's Green Canopy Project - Correction

Due to a technical problem the link did not print from last month's article by Hilary Todd. Here it is:

Lots of information about how individuals, communities and schools can get involved so do please read all about it at: <https://queensgreencanopy.org/>

Clive Wilson



Artist Luke Jerram's touring artwork, 'Museum of the Moon' at Exeter Cathedral

Letter from Edinburgh

At home we all like watching Quiz programmes. One recent answer was 'Usher' - an American singer / songwriter. We chipped in with other ushers - someone who shows you to your seat, or tells you to be quiet. I added 'the bishop who worked out the date of Creation.'

James Usher, Archbishop of Armagh, was far from the only scholar in the 17th century interested in when Creation had begun, when God spake and it was done.

Already there was a consensus in Europe on around 4000 BC. Johannes Kepler, who formulated the Laws of Planetary Motion, and Isaac Newton, who defined Gravity, were content with this age of the world.

Bishop Usher made the most detailed analysis of the available data – the date of the Hebrew Exile in Babylon from various sources, the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, the genealogies and history recorded in the Bible.

From all this, and when the Autumnal equinox and Sabbath should have been, he came down to the morning of Sunday 23rd October 4004 BC, and published his findings in AD 1650.

Since then, of course, the newer sciences of geology, thermodynamics, palaeontology and cosmology have gradually pushed the origins of the Earth and the Universe back to millions and now billions of years ago, allowing time for the formation of galaxies, several generations of stars, planets, life and intelligence.

Armagh in Northern Ireland now has two cathedrals and a famous astronomical observatory. Nor should we be too hard on Bishop Usher. When I graduated from St Andrews 44 years ago with a degree in Astronomy and Theoretical Physics, the Dark Matter and Dark Energy that now seem to hold the key to the structure and destiny of the Universe were yet to be discovered. And over those years the best estimate for the age of the Universe has reduced by nearly a billion years to a mere 13.6 billion years or so. The age of our Earth itself is about a third of this figure at 4.5 billion years old.

We have at least two other important beginnings to mark this March.

The season of Lent starts on Ash Wednesday, 2nd March. We'll be singing SS Wesley's 'Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness' here at St Peter's.

With Shrove Tuesday falling on St David's Day this year, does anyone have a recipe for Leek Pancakes?

Then there is Friday 25th March, the Feast of the Annunciation.

As I wrote in New Leaves Magazine last March when describing the Annunciation Windows at St Michael's, I see the visit of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary at Nazareth as the beginning of the Christian story of salvation.

Luke chapter 1 is more than a prelude to Christmas; its theology is as deep and beautiful as that of the Prologue in John chapter 1.

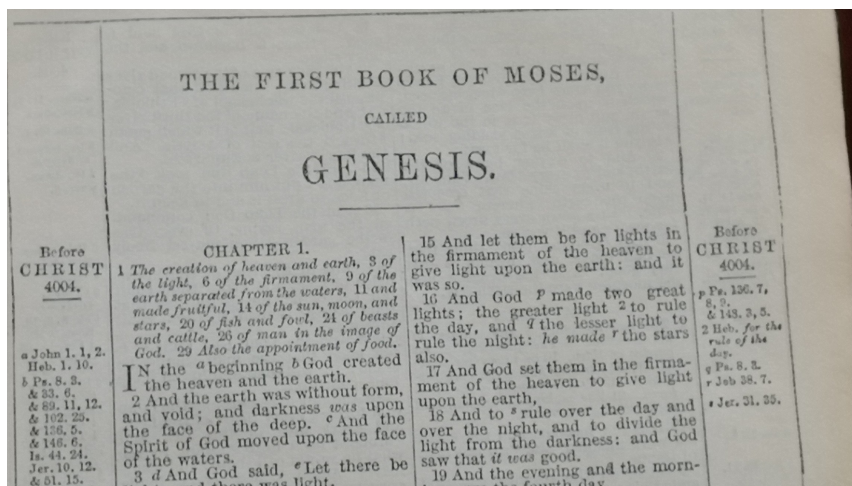
That's why it is so good to hear the Angelus sung when I listen to Vespers on the Friends of St Michael's Facebook group on a Tuesday or Thursday.

Much like Bishop Usher, medieval Christians tried to make sense of the evidence they had. Many of them believed the world began on or near the Spring equinox, when nature is full of potential for growth. And it was the time when they celebrated Lady Day, the Annunciation, ushering in the new creation in Christ Jesus.

Best wishes for a Holy Lent and Joyful Feast Days



Richard Barnes – 20/02/22.



My Friendship with Kate (Kathleen)

Kate and I met at the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Walsall when we were three; we are, now, ninety-six. We didn't realise about this early meeting until some twenty-odd years later. I will explain. When I was eleven years old I won a scholarship to the local High School. To celebrate, my father took me to the pictures to see George Formby. In the foyer we saw his friend, Charlie. Charlie had his own daughter, Kathleen, with him who had also gained a place at the same school. When we started there, we, naturally, gravitated towards each other and became almost inseparable – going on bike rides, to the cinema, other's homes etc. We left school at sixteen. It was 1942 and we were eager to start work. I joined the Post Office and she the Ministry for Labour. When I married Alan she was a witness. When our first son was born, she was his godmother and Alan's younger brother, Brian, was godfather. A few years later they married, so Kate and I were sisters-in-law and shared the same surname. After the ceremony we all went back to her family home. Our mothers were looking through their family album, when my mother exclaimed that she had the same photo. Sitting cross-legged in the front row of the Primitive Methodist Chapel's Sunday School were all the youngest children and Kate and I were sitting near each other. What a coincidence! Some years after they married Kate and Brian went to Australia and I have never seen her since. But, we have kept up our friendship with letters and phone calls. Now, both widows, we share memories of when we were young and commiserate about our aches and pains.... but our love is still strong.



Eileen Jarman

29/01/2022



Mind-doodling

Do you mind-doodle? It's simple, when sitting comfortably, after a meal, reading, watching TV etc. , just gaze in front of you and let your mind wander where it will. For example, recently I switched off the TV , where I had watched an estate agent's ad. It showed couples explaining how much their homes mean to them. Then they are shown the monetary value of their houses. The ad says, ***** know the value of a home. I think that they mean the price, not how much it means to the owners. Homes are, should be, places of comfort and safety, though some are not. The ad led my mind to the simplicity of them when commercial TV appeared. Gibbs toothpaste, and a picture of the sea, ebbing and flowing while a voice murmured "Tide clean" several times. My young nephew hadn't really spoken until he saw this, and one day, watching a film about the sea, he called out "Tide clean", and never looked back, chattering non-stop. Thinking of this reminded me of a letter I had the day after my son died, in October last, saying that Alan had just died, too. A friend said that they would have family and friends to greet them in the afterlife and that this was a comfort to her. My mind went to the Resurrection and Easter. So, the mind wanders to strange places and can make you think of other things than the worries of everyday activities. I find this refreshing. But, please, don't try this when driving or using a power tool.



Eileen Jarman

21/01/2022



Annual Revision of the Parish Electoral Roll

Revision of the parish electoral roll will begin on Thursday 31st March 2022 and end on Wednesday 13 April 2022.

In order to be entitled to attend the annual parochial church meeting on Thursday 28th April 2022 at St David's, 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 Sue Wilson at St David's or Paula Lewis 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 PAULA OR SUE OF ANY CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Sue Wilson

Electoral Roll Officer

Parish of St David with St Michael and All Angels

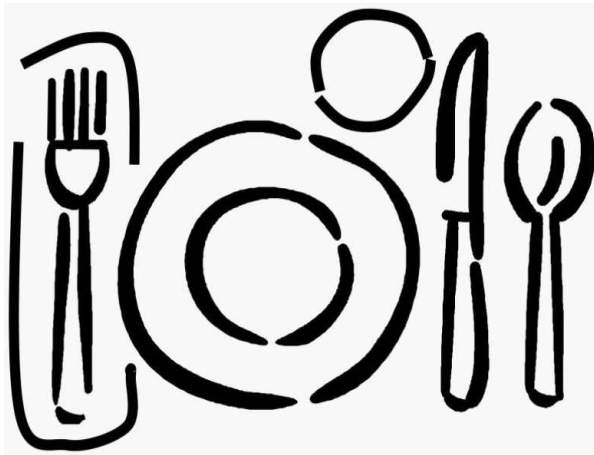
electoralrollofficer@stdavidschurchexeter.co.uk

Parish Lunch Club Dates- Spring 2022

Our next monthly Parish Lunch at @34 Restaurant, Exeter College is on Thursday March 31st at 12 noon

Do join us for a tasty and reasonably priced meal with friends from St David's and St Michael's.

Details and booking sheets can be found at the back of both churches. Please sign-up by 13th February. Any queries including the College's Covid safety measures please contact Sue Wilson on 01392 437571.





AN HOUR OF MUSIC



Christabel invites you to join her for an
assessed performance

Solo piano Mendelssohn and Chopin

Solo violin Lindsey Stirling

A small ensemble performing her arrangement
of three pop songs.



St DAVID'S CHURCH
THURS 17th MARCH
7:30pm





ST DAVID'S PLAYERS

A GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY

Publicity for March Concert – “Press-release”

St. David's Players are delighted to be presenting an evening concert of Gilbert and Sullivan music at our birthplace St. David's Church, Queen's Terrace, Exeter EX4 4HR on Saturday 26th March at 7.30pm. To include solos and chorus numbers from members of the Company. Tickets for the Concert are priced at £10.00 to include a glass of red or white wine, or fruit juice. Tickets can be purchased on the door or in advance via the eventbrite website <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-davids-players-spring-concert-tickets-255536595837?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

The concert is a warm-up event before starting rehearsals on 26th April 2022 at 7.30pm at Preston Street for our next show “HMS Pinafore” at the Barnfield Theatre, Exeter 11th-16th October 2022. New members are warmly welcomed. Contact: stdavidsplayers@gmail.com or via the website <http://www.stdavidsplayers.co.uk>

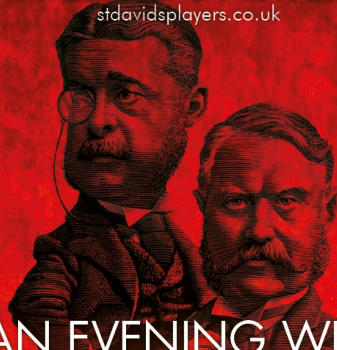


...I haven't the heart to tell her the bishop went home 20minutes ago!



ST DAVID'S PLAYERS

stdavidsplayers.co.uk



AN EVENING WITH

WILLIAM & ARTHUR

St David's Players are delighted to return with a Spring concert of favourite **GILBERT & SULLIVAN** choruses and ensembles

26 March 2022

7.30pm

ST DAVID'S PARISH CHURCH • EXETER

All tickets £10 available on-line:
<https://stdavidsplayers.eventbrite.co.uk>
or scan the QR code
Tickets also available on the door



Design:  halo-creative.co.uk • 01626 798 505

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 15:11-32

Jesus told stories about a lost sheep and a lost coin, then one about a man with two sons. The younger son said to his father...

I want my share of what I'll inherit from you now!



So the father divided his property between his sons.

The younger son took his money and went to another country.



Then his money ran out and there was a famine.



The only job he could get was feeding pigs.

He was so hungry he would have eaten their food.



Then he came to his senses -

I'll go to my father, say sorry, and ask him for a job as a workman!



He set off for home.

His father saw him coming, ran to him and hugged him.



Father, I am so sorry. I am not good enough to be your son...



But his father sent servants to get clothes for his son and prepare a feast to celebrate his return.

The older son came back from work and heard the noise.



Your brother has returned and your father is having a feast.

The older son was so angry he wouldn't go into the house...

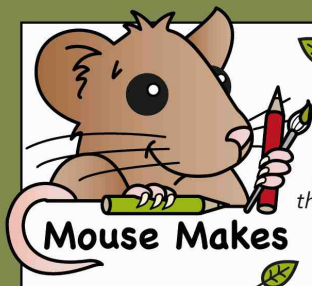


so his father came out to see him.

For years I've slaved for you and you've given me nothing. He returns after wasting your money and you give him a feast!



My son, all I have is yours, but we should celebrate because he was lost and now he has been found.



GOOD FRUIT OR BAD FRUIT?

Jesus said:

*"No good tree does not produce bad fruit,
nor does a bad tree produce good fruit. Each
tree is known by its own fruit..."*

*...Good people bring good things out of the good
things stored in their hearts. But evil people bring evil
things out of the evil they stored in their hearts.
People speak the things that are in their hearts."*

- Luke 6: 43-45

During LENT ask God to help you through His Holy Spirit to turn your hate to **love**, your impatience to **patience** and your unkindness to **kindness**, so we can be like a good tree that grows good fruit.



READ
Luke
6: 27-45

How did Jesus
say we should
treat others?

Look up
Luke 6:31



to everyone
who asks you
Luke 6:30

those who
curse you
Luke 6:28

for those who
are cruel to you
Luke 6:28

Do
to those that
hate you
Luke 6:27

and you will be
forgiven
Luke 6:37

Find these words from **Luke 6** in the word search above.

GOOD • BAD • FRUIT • TREE • HEART • EVIL • EACH • OWN • STORED
PRODUCE • BRING • SPEAK • REPENT • FORGIVE • LOVE • BLESS • PRAY • GIVE

The gardener and the Vine



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS ALL
ABOUT A GARDENER.

THE GARDENER'S JOB WAS
TO CARE FOR THE VINES



HE WOULD LOOK AT EACH
BRANCH CAREFULLY..

... AND IF IT WAS PRODUCING
GOOD FRUIT, HE WOULD CARE
FOR IT AND NOURISH IT.



IF IT WAS PRODUCING BAD
FRUIT...



...OR NO FRUIT AT
ALL...



...THEN THE GARDENER WOULD
CHOP IT OFF, AND BURN IT IN
THE FIRE!!

JESUS WANTED HIS FRIENDS TO SHARE
THE GOOD NEWS - THAT'S LIKE THE
VINE BEARING GOOD FRUIT.



YOU CAN READ THIS SPECIAL PARABLE IN JOHN'S
GOSPEL, CHAPTER 15.

Smilelines

Best

The reporter was interviewing the town's oldest woman. "And what do you find is the best thing about being 104?" he asked.

"That's easy," she said. "No peer pressure."

Young and old

A baby-sitter is a teenager acting like an adult, while the adults are out acting like teenagers.

Have you ever considered that..

~ A bird in the hand is safer than two over your head.

~ A narrow mind and a wide mouth usually go together.

~ A penny saved is a ridiculous waste of time.

~ A stitch in time would have confused Einstein.

~ We need to save the earth. It's the only planet with chocolate.

~ Some people have a way with words, others not have way.

It helps

Laughter is like changing a baby's nappy: it doesn't permanently solve any problems, but it makes things more acceptable for a while.

Daily prayer

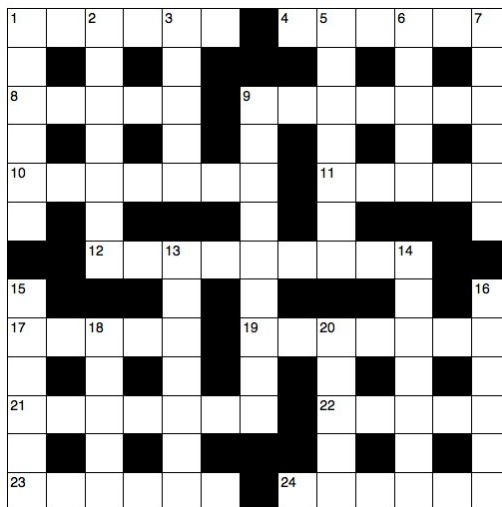
Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth.

Hereafter

The minister came to see me the other day. He said that at my age I should be thinking of the hereafter. I told him, "Oh, I do it all the time. No matter where I am – in the bedroom, upstairs, in the kitchen, or down in the basement – I ask myself, 'Now, what am I here after?'"

Sermon

When a minister rehearses his sermon, is he practising what he preaches?



Across

- 1 Arouse (Song of Songs 2:7) (6)
- 4 Extinguish (Isaiah 1:31) (6)
- 8 ““They — — ,” you will say, “but I’m not hurt!”” (Proverbs 23:35) (3,2)
- 9 Unhappiness (Nehemiah 2:2) (7)
- 10 Jewish (7)
- 11 Dirge (anag.) (5)
- 12 ‘A truthful witness gives honest — , but a false witness tells lies’ (Proverbs 12:17) (9)
- 17 Paul quoted from the second one in his address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:33) (5)
- 19 ‘Do not use your freedom to — the sinful nature’ (Galatians 5:13) (7)
- 21 ‘As you can see, he has done nothing to — death’ (Luke 23:15) (7)
- 22 Name applied by Isaiah to Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1) (5)
- 23 ‘All the people — — one man, saying, “None of us will go home”’ (Judges 20:8) (4,2)
- 24 Lazarus, who was carried by angels to Abraham’s side when he died, was one (Luke 16:20) (6)

Down

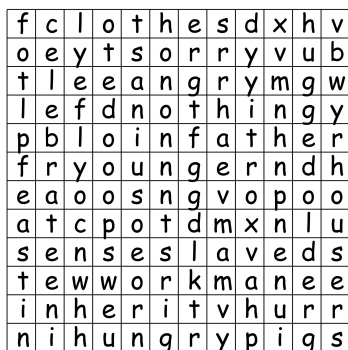
- 1 Appalled (Job 26:11) (6)
- 2 ‘In an — to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the

- sea' (Acts 27:30) (7)
- 3 Expel (Acts 18:16) (5)
- 5 'But I have a baptism to — , and how distressed I am until it is completed!' (Luke 12:50) (7)
- 6 'Of the increase of his government and peace there will be — — ' (Isaiah 9:7) (2,3)
- 7 Hurry (Psalm 119:60) (6)
- 9 'For I desire mercy, not — , and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6) (9)
- 13 One of its towns was Sychar, where Jesus met a woman at Jacob's well (John 4:5) (7)
- 14 Shouting (Acts 7:57) (7)
- 15 Arachnid (Isaiah 59:5) (6)
- 16 One of Paul's first converts in Philippi was Lydia, a — in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (6)
- 18 Donkeys (5)
- 20 Raked (anag.) (5)

Sudoku - Medium

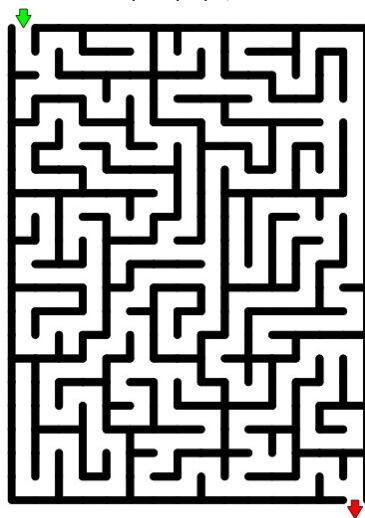
				9		5		4
	1	2		8		6		
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8		6			2		4	
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6		3		5				

Word search



inherit	clothes	hugged
feeding	money	feast
sorry	younger	house
celebrate	found	nothing
hungry	senses	father
workman	angry	slaved
property	country	pigs
son	older	lost

Maze



Days of Note - March

1st March: St David's Day, time for daffodils



1st March is St David's Day, and it's time for the Welsh to wear daffodils or leeks. Shakespeare called this custom 'an honourable tradition begun upon an honourable request' - but nobody knows the reason. Why should anyone have ever 'requested' that the Welsh wear leeks or daffodils to honour their patron saint? It's a mystery!

We do know that David - or Dafydd - of Pembrokeshire was a monk and bishop of the 6th century. In the 12th century he was made patron of Wales, and he has the honour of being the only Welsh saint to be canonised and culted in the Western Church. Tradition has it that he was austere with himself, and generous with others - living on water and vegetables (leeks, perhaps?!) and devoting himself to works of mercy. He was much loved.

In art, St David is usually depicted in Episcopal vestments, standing on a mound with a dove at his shoulder, in memory of his share at an important Synod for the Welsh Church, the Synod of Brevi.

1st March - SHROVE TUESDAY, Pancake Day

Ever wonder why we eat pancakes just before Lent? The tradition dates back to Anglo-Saxon times, when Christians spent Lent in repentance and severe fasting.

So on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the church bell would summon them to confession, where they would be 'shriven', or absolved from their sins, which gives us *Shrove* Tuesday. At home, they would then eat up their last eggs and fat, and making a pancake was the easiest way to do this. For the next 47 days, they pretty well starved themselves.

Pancakes feature in cookery books as far back as 1439, and today's pancake races are in remembrance of a panicked woman back in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire. She was making pancakes when she heard the shriving bell calling her to confession. Afraid she'd be late, she ran to the church in a panic, still in her apron, and still holding the pan.

Flipping pancakes is also centuries old. A poem from Pasquil's Palin in 1619 runs: "And every man and maide doe take their turne, And tosse their Pancakes up for feare they burne."

Some people have noted that the ingredients of pancakes can be used to highlight four significant things about this time of year: eggs stand for creation, flour is the staff of life, while salt keeps things wholesome, and milk stands for purity.

Shrove Tuesday is always 47 days before Easter Sunday and falls between 3rd February and 9th March.

2nd March - ASH WEDNESDAY, a good time to admit you are sorry

Have you done something which haunts you? Which makes you feel restless and defensive, every time you think of it? Why not deal with it this month, and put it behind you? Whatever your mistake has been, consider what the Bible has to say to you:

'I have not come to call the virtuous but sinners to repentance' (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55.7)

'Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with

weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.' (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to Him this Ash Wednesday. What a wonderful offer! Make the most of it and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

7th March: Perpetua and Felicitas, joyful martyrs of Africa

This story could come straight out of modern Africa. Perpetua was a young married woman of 22 who had recently become a Christian. But the authorities had forbidden any new conversions, and soon she and some other catechumens were arrested and sentenced to death. This was not under Islamic State, nor Boko Haram, but under the emperor Septimius Severus in Carthage, in the year 203.

Imprisoned with Perpetua was a pregnant slave, Felicitas, and seven men. Perpetua's family were frantic with worry for her, so she sent a message to reassure them: "My prison became a palace for me, and I would rather have been there than anywhere else." As the days passed Perpetua devoted herself to prayer, and experienced various visions depicting the spiritual battle storming around her.

Soon Felicitas gave birth to a girl in the prison, and she and Perpetua enjoyed a last *agape* meal together. On the day of the Games they left the prison for the amphitheatre 'joyfully as though they were on their way to heaven.' Perpetua sang a hymn of praise as animals were prepared for killing the prisoners: leopards and bears for the men, and a maddened heifer for the women. The heifer did not succeed in killing them, and after the young women exchanged one final kiss of peace, Perpetua herself guided the gladiator's knife to her throat: "It was as though so great a woman... could not be despatched unless she herself were willing."

Perpetua and Felicitas's joyful witness and unflinching courage went on to inspire many other early Christian martyrs. Down the centuries, the feast day of Perpetua and Felicitas became widely observed. In 1907 an inscription in their honour was discovered at Carthage in the Basilica Majorum, where they had been buried centuries before. Their memory still lives on: eight episodes of Perpetua's life are represented on a 14th century altar frontal at Barcelona.

8th March: Felix of Burgundy, apostle to East Anglia

East Anglia is blessed with a rich Christian heritage. Just two examples: at more than 650, Norfolk has the greatest concentration of ancient churches in the world, and at 500, Suffolk has the second greatest density of medieval churches. And that is not to

mention all the churches in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire...

And it all began with one man, back in 630 A.D, a bishop named Felix. His name in Latin means 'successful' and 'happy' – an excellent description of someone who brought great good and stability to this beautiful corner of England.

Felix came from Burgundy in France. At some point he was consecrated bishop, and went to Canterbury, to see Honorius, the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 630 the Christian King Sigebert returned from exile in Gaul to rule the East Angles, and Honorius sent Felix along with him, to evangelise the people. According to local legend, Felix went by boat, and arrived at Bablingley in Norfolk.

Felix may well have known Sigebert back in Gaul, for the two men worked exceptionally well together. Sigebert settled Felix in Dunwich, which became the centre of his diocesan 'see'. Then, with the support of Sigebert, Felix set up the first-ever school in East Anglia. He brought teachers up from Canterbury to staff it, and the school became, according to Bede, the place "where boys could be taught letters".

Felix had a fruitful ministry to the Anglo Saxons for 17 years. He preached Christianity, encouraged the school to grow, and did a lot of other good. All in all, Felix brought the love of God, the good news of Jesus, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, delivering "all the province of East Anglia from long-standing unrighteousness and unhappiness," according to Bede. Certainly, the people came to love Felix.

When Felix finally died on 8th March 647 or 648, he left the Christian faith firmly embedded in East Anglia. Six ancient English churches are dedicated to Felix, and Felixstowe bears his patronage.

17th March: St Patrick, beloved apostle to Ireland

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. If you've ever been in New York on St Patrick's Day, you'd think he was the patron saint of New York as well... the flamboyant parade is full of American/Irish razzmatazz.

It's all a far cry from the hard life of this 5th century humble Christian who became in time both bishop and apostle of Ireland. Patrick was born the son of a town councillor in the west of England, between the Severn and the Clyde. But as a young man he was captured by Irish pirates, kidnapped to Ireland, and reduced to slavery. He was made to tend his master's herds.

Desolate and despairing, Patrick turned to prayer. He found God was there for him,

even in such desperate circumstances. He spent much time in prayer, and his faith grew and deepened, in contrast to his earlier years, when he “knew not the true God”.

Then, after six gruelling, lonely years he was told in a dream he would soon go to his own country. He either escaped or was freed, made his way to a port 200 miles away and eventually persuaded some sailors to take him with them away from Ireland.

After various adventures in other lands, including near-starvation, Patrick landed on English soil at last, and returned to his family. But he was much changed. He had enjoyed his life of plenty before; now he wanted to devote the rest of his life to Christ. Patrick received some form of training for the priesthood, but not the higher education he really wanted.

But by 435, well-educated or not, Patrick was badly needed. Palladius’ mission to the Irish had failed, and so the Pope sent Patrick back to the land of his slavery. He set up his see at Armagh and worked principally in the north. He urged the Irish to greater spirituality, set up a school, and made several missionary journeys.

Patrick’s writings are the first literature certainly identified from the British Church. They reveal sincere simplicity and a deep pastoral care. He wanted to abolish paganism, idolatry, and was ready for imprisonment or death in the following of Christ.

Patrick remains the most popular of the Irish saints. The principal cathedral of New York is dedicated to him, as, of course, is the Anglican cathedral of Dublin.

19th March: St Joseph, patron saint of fathers and holy death

Why should St Joseph’s day be in March? Surely, he belongs to Advent and Christmas, at Mary’s side in millions of nativity scenes around the world.

In any case, as the foster-father of Christ and husband of Mary, Joseph played a major part in the story of the coming of Jesus Christ. All that we know about him for sure is in the gospels. Read especially Matthew 1 – 2. He was of Davidic descent, but his trade as a carpenter shows that he was not at all wealthy.

Joseph’s gentleness and decency towards Mary, and his willingness to do God’s will when it was revealed to him, portray him as a kind and godly person. Joseph is the patron saint of fathers of families, and he makes an excellent example. He comes across as a protecting, loyal, thoughtful, self-controlled person, full of integrity, and willing to work hard. Who wouldn’t want a father like that?

Joseph is also the patron saint of all who desire a holy death. Thus, countless churches, hospitals and religious congregations are dedicated to Joseph.

20th March: Cuthbert, beloved monk and bishop of Lindisfarne

Cuthbert of Lindisfarne (c 634-87) has long been northern England's favourite saint. It is easy to see why: Cuthbert was holy, humble, peaceable, prayerful, faithful in friendship, winsome, and really kind.

Cuthbert was born into a fairly well-off Anglo-Saxon family, and he became a monk at Melrose in 651. He and another monk, Eata, were sent to start a monastery at Ripon, but Alcfrith, who owned the land, insisted that they adopt the Roman customs, which Cuthbert's Celtic church did not allow. So, Cuthbert and Eata quietly returned to Melrose, where Cuthbert became prior in about 661. Then came the Synod of Whitby in 663/4, and the Celtic Church formally decided to adopt the Roman customs. After this, Cuthbert was sent on to Lindisfarne as prior, where he sensitively introduced the new ways, and won over the monks there.

Cuthbert was very much loved at Lindisfarne. His zeal was evident in his constant preaching, teaching, and visiting of the people. He was also said to have gifts of prophecy and healing. Occasionally, Cuthbert reached 'people overload'. Then he would retreat to a tiny islet called Inner Farne, where he could pray in total seclusion. When, to his horror, he was told he had been made Bishop of Hexham, he immediately 'swapped' sees with Eata, and stayed on at Lindisfarne as Bishop. Sadly, Cuthbert died on little Inner Farne, only two years later, on 20 March, 687.

Cuthbert was buried at Lindisfarne, but that is not the end of his story. For it was only now that his travels began. After the Vikings destroyed Lindisfarne in 875, several monks dug him up and set out to find Cuthbert a final, and safe, resting place. For the next 120 years Cuthbert was deposited in various monasteries around the north of England and southwest Scotland. Finally, in 999, Cuthbert was allowed to rest in Durham, where a Saxon church was built over his shrine.

All that travel must have done him good; when his body was exhumed to be put into the 'new' Norman Cathedral in Durham in 1104, it was said to be still in perfect tact, and 'incorrupt'.

25th March: Lady Day or The Annunciation

This beautiful event (Luke 1:26-38) took place in Nazareth, when Mary is already betrothed to Joseph. The Archangel Gabriel comes to Mary, greets her as highly favoured, tells her not to be afraid, that she will bear a son Jesus, and that her elderly cousin Elizabeth is already pregnant (with John the Baptist).

The church calendar is never quite as neat as some would like it. To celebrate the Annunciation on 25th March does indeed place the conception of Jesus exactly nine months from His birth on 25th December, but the latter part of March almost inevitably falls during Lent. But the birth and death of Jesus are intrinsically linked - He was born to die, and thus fulfil God's purposes.

The Annunciation is a significant date in the Christian calendar - it is one of the most frequent depicted in Christian art. Gabriel's gracious strength and Mary's humble dignity have inspired many artists. Certainly, Mary's response to the angel has for centuries been an example of good faith in practice - humility, enquiry of God, and trusting acceptance in His will for her life.

27th March: Mothering Sunday, 4th Sunday in Lent

There is an old Jewish saying: *God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.*

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families, which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed, and in many ways now resembles the American Mother's Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.

30th March: John Climacus and his ladder to Paradise

Is there something down at, say, B&Q, which reminds your friends of you? John Climacus (d 649) had a thing about ladders. He was a monk in Palestine who was only seen out at the weekends (at church, not B&Q); during the week he prayed and wrote in solitude. He wrote *The Ladder to Paradise*, a treatise of spiritual

encouragement to other monks. This gave him his name 'Climacus' (= ladder), and also led to him being chosen as abbot of Sinai when he was 70. John Climacus had a helpful picture of the spiritual life: he saw it as a ladder up which the believer slowly climbed to heaven, with God's help.

31st March: John Donne, the metaphysical poet

John Donne (1572 – 1631) was an English poet, scholar, soldier, secretary and finally Dean of St Pauls Cathedral in London. But he is most remembered for his poetry, for he is seen as the greatest of the 17th-century 'metaphysical' poets.

Donne was born in 1572 into a Roman Catholic family in London at a time when the Church of England was the dominant faith, and those who remained Roman Catholic were considered second class citizens. Although Donne studied at both Oxford and Cambridge, because of his Roman Catholicism, he was denied a degree. So, in 1592 Donne went to London to study law at Lincoln's Inn.

In 1594 Donne decided to convert to the Church of England, and this opened up a whole new life for him. In 1596 he joined the naval expedition led by the Earl of Essex against Cadiz in Spain. When he returned in 1598, he was appointed private secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Seal. All was going well, but then he fell in love with Egerton's 16-year-old niece, Anne More, and in 1601 he secretly married her. Egerton was furious, and Donne lost his job, and even ended up in prison for a short time.

For several years after that Donne worked as a lawyer. Then in 1610 he wrote a book encouraging Roman Catholics to take the Oath of Allegiance to the king. The book caught the eye of James 1, who may have suggested that Donne go into the Church. Certainly, Donne was appointed as a royal chaplain only a few months after his ordination in 1615.

In 1617 Donne's beloved wife, Anne, died. In 1621 he was appointed the Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, and proved to be a much loved and inspiring preacher.

Throughout his working life, Donne continued to write poetry, though most of it remained unpublished until 1633. It was then mostly forgotten after his death, until early last century. Then, in the 1920s, both Ezra Pound and TS Eliot openly acknowledged their literary debt to him.

Donne's place as one of the greatest of the 17th-century 'metaphysical' poets is now assured. He wrote both sacred and secular poetry, with his main theme being that of human love and divine love.

Puzzle solutions

A	W	A	K	E	N		Q	U	E	N	C	H
G		T		J			N		O		A	
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5	7	4	1	2	3	8	9	6
1	9	8	4	7	6	3	2	5
6	2	3	9	5	8	4	7	1

The deadline for inclusion of articles for the April issue of New Leaves is Sunday 27th March

If you have images of any events of interest to the Parish community please send them to us. Any information and articles you'd like to submit for inclusion in future issues should be sent to the new editorial team at:

newleavesnews@gmail.com

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

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