

NEWSLINK



Saint Faith's Church, Great Crosby
December 2010

Worship at Saint Faith's



- **SUNDAYS**

- 10.30am Morning Prayer
- 11.00am Solemn Mass and Children's Church**
- 1.00pm Holy Baptism (2nd Sunday)
- 7.00pm Compline and Benediction (1st Sunday)

- **WEEKDAY MASSES**

Monday 10.30am, Tuesday 9.30am, Wednesday 10.30am (1662 Book of Common Prayer in S. Mary's), Thursday 9.00am (Holy Days only), Friday 6.30pm, Saturday 12.00noon (or Midday Prayer – please check notices)

- **THE DIVINE OFFICE (The Prayer of the Church)**

Morning Prayer: 9am daily (except Thursday & Friday)

Evening Prayer: 6pm daily (except Wednesday & Thursday)

Please consult the weekly sheets or online bulletin for any variation in times for the Daily Office

- **SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION**

Fr. Neil and Revd. Denise are available by appointment to hear confessions or to talk about any matter in confidence. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available in preparation for Christmas and Easter and at other advertised times.

- **ANOINTING OF THE SICK AND DYING**

Please contact Fr. Neil at any time, day or night, if someone is ill and requires the ministry of a priest.

- **HOME VISITS to the sick and housebound
and those in hospital**

If you, or someone you know, are unable to get to church and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, or be visited in hospital or at home, please ring the Vicarage or another member of the Ministry Team. We are always happy to make home or hospital visits to the sick and housebound so please call us to arrange this.



From the Ministry Team December 2010

Secular or sacred?

The Christian church in our country could be described as an embattled organization - with falling numbers, an ageing population, a shortage of ordained ministers and a legacy of expensive church buildings to maintain. Were this not enough, we are at best tolerated by secular society as a harmless but ineffectual anachronism.

The forces ranged against us are powerful indeed. Eminent scientists like Richard Dawkins and Stephen Hawking tell us that there is no need for any God, that there is no logical reason to believe that life and the universe arose other than by chance. The global economy has forced upon us an ethic of consumerism, materialism and individualism which threatens to overwhelm the whole Christian idea of responsibility to our 'neighbour'. And we live in an age of moral relativism, where there is no longer any objective measure of right and wrong, and where standards of behaviour are determined by the circumstances, and by the power of individuals to choose what suits them.

This then, was the arena that Pope Benedict entered when he visited the UK earlier this year. His message to our nation was straightforward: use the weapons of faith, and of the church's teaching, to fight the evils of secularism and to restore Christian values to our society. He was if you like 'preaching a crusade'. Few Christians, whether Roman Catholic or not, would find fault with such a call to arms. To be sure, we might disagree about some of the tactics: there is much diversity of opinion, even among Catholics, over matters such as contraception and homosexuality. But most of us recognize that to be a Christian in the twenty-first century requires us to make a stand against secularism, even if that risks being at odds with our own culture and society.

The analogy with a crusade is perhaps a little misleading. The conflict in which we are engaged is more like guerilla warfare in occupied territory, where we must

learn to distinguish clearly between friend and foe. Much of the secular world, far from being hostile, is on the side of the angels – and it would be tragic to damage it with ‘friendly fire’. We need reminding that Christian values are firmly embedded in many of our secular institutions: in our health service, in education, in social welfare legislation and provision, and in our system of justice.

But there may be more to it than this. Could it be that the work of the Holy Spirit is not confined to traditional Christianity? Could it be that there are those in secular society who also have a gospel to proclaim, if only we would listen? Rather than bringing Christ to the world, might our mission be rather to discover Him within it?

I confess that I have some sympathy with those who reject ‘religion’ because of its self-righteousness. At its best, our society can be remarkably humane and tolerant: at its worst religion can be arrogant, bigoted and inhuman - and there is something inherently ugly in the way that some Christian fundamentalists view human nature and human behaviour. So I thank God for the social pioneers and legislators, of all faiths and of none, who preserve our freedoms and our civil rights.

There has been some criticism, and not a little ridicule, of the current fashion for political correctness. But before we dismiss it out of hand we should ask ourselves the question – over the last two decades who has been most effective in championing the cause of the vulnerable: the churches or civil society? In the protection of the elderly, and of children, the racially alienated and those with disabilities, it has often been those outside the church who have taken the initiative. When it comes to taking issue with the minutiae of child protection measures, the Christian churches should perhaps be particularly wary of throwing stones.

During the Pope’s visit upward of 50,000 people attended the Mass of Beatification for Cardinal John Henry Newman. The church rightly rejoices in the saints and martyrs that it knows and recognizes. But there is another ‘noble army’ of extraordinary men and women, often unseen and unknown, who offer their lives for others, selflessly and unconditionally. They are found around the world in charities and NGOs and as individuals: often risking their lives as peacemakers or medics in conflict zones; and selflessly helping to relieve suffering in famines and natural disasters. And there are many others, far too many, who are imprisoned for their beliefs and principles and who face isolation, neglect and ill-treatment. Maybe none of these individuals qualify as saints, but their lives are no less inspirational.

As we prepare to hear again the story of the Incarnation, we should perhaps remember that the Christ child was born in strange and unexpected circumstances. After a long search the wise men discovered Him, not among their own people, but in an alien and unfamiliar culture. In the newborn Christ heaven meets earth, but the point of intersection is not of our choosing. He may appear where we least expect Him.

God bless.

Fred Nye

What's on this month: the full, updated

December Diary



... details of all Advent and Christmas services and events

Sun 5 ADVENT 2	9 .30 am	Family Eucharist, Parade Service, Offering of Toys and First Holy Communions (SM)
	11am	Family Eucharist, Parade Service, Offering of Toys and First Holy Communions (SF)
	12.15pm	Waterloo Grammar School Old Boys' Service (SM)
	1-5pm	Christmas Tree Festival open to public (SF)
	3-5pm	Joint Sunday Schools' Christmas Party (SM)
	5.30pm	Celebration of Advent in Words and Music (SF) with actor Andrew Lancel followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Church Hall
Mon 6 – Sat 12	Various times	Christmas Tree Festival: see page 7 for details (SF)
Mon 6 – Fri 10	N.B. No weekday masses in SF this week Weds 8 th Conception of the B.V. M. 1030 Eucharist (SM)	
Sat 11	11.30am	Rosary (SF)
Sun 12 Advent 3		Christmas Tree Festival closes
Mon 13	9am-4pm & 7-9pm	Chesterfield High School Christmas Celebration (SF) (1030 mass in Vicarage)

Wed 15	9am-5pm	Merchant Taylors' School Christmas Services: Junior at 10.45am and Main School at 2.45pm (SF)
Thu 16	All day	Waterloo Primary School Christmas Service: rehearsals & service at 7pm (SF)
Sat 18	10.30am	Mass (after which the Sacrament of Penance will be available for those wishing to make their confession in preparation for Christmas) (SF)
Sun 19 Advent 4	1pm	Normal morning services in both churches United Benefice Senior Citizens' lunch (SF)
Fri 24 Christmas Eve	4pm	Christingle Service, Blessing of the Crib and First Eucharist of Christmass (SM)
	6pm	Christingle Service (SF)
	11pm	Vigil of Carols and Readings (SF)
	11.30pm	Blessing of the Crib, Procession and Solemn Midnight Mass (SF)
Sat 25 Christmas Day	9.30am	Eucharist with hymns (SM)
	11am	Solemn Mass (SF)
Sun 26 Holy Family	9.30am	Eucharist with hymns (SM)
	11am	Solemn Eucharist (SF) followed by sherry and mince pies at back of church

During Christmas Week the Eucharist will be celebrated each day at 10.30 am.



'Generation Y has no use for God'

Religion is largely irrelevant to most young people, who rely instead on a 'secular trinity' of themselves, their family and friends to give meaning to their lives, it has been claimed.

A study for the Church of England concludes that people born after 1982 – Generation Y – have only a 'faded cultural memory' of Christianity. Fewer than one in five of them believe in a God 'who creates the world and hears my prayers' and teenagers were more likely to believe in the 'nicer' parts of religious doctrine than those about sin and punishment.

Pop songs are played at memorial services 'because the young congregations do not know any hymns'. The study, whose authors include the Bishop of Coventry, suggests that the 'chain of Christian memory' has become eroded in Britain as the authority of the churches has declined. 'It is undoubtedly the case that the Christian memory is already very faint and in many respects Generation Y are a largely un-storied and memory-less generation,' the study said. The young people interviewed for the study were not looking for answers to 'ultimate questi

Thought-provoking indeed. Congregations in general, ours of course included, are dominated by the middle-aged and elderly. Teenagers, especially male, are indeed very few and far between in the pews. It is still probably true that some may come to church in their later years, but with the parallel continuing decline in attendance by pre-teenage children, it is difficult to see how the 'chain of Christian memory' can be re-forged for the future. Ed.

Here Come the Trees!

Margaret Houghton



The 2010 Tree Festival is almost upon us. Much work has been done planning, shopping, sewing, all the things which create a successful event. This year, not only has the number of trees sponsored by charities increased, now fifty, but concerts, carol singing to a military band, a recital and school choirs performing throughout the week, are sure to make spirits soar. Last year the trees were

decorated in splendid style, but this year the incentive to create an even greater spectacle is bound to be encouraged by the handsome cash prizes offered to the three best-dressed trees and you will be the judges, so how can anyone stay away! Bring friends for lunch or coffee, enjoy the exceedingly good cakes offered, do a little Christmas shopping at the stalls, listen to the entertainment - all that makes a visit worthwhile.

We look forward to seeing you. Entry and entertainment are free of charge!

Opening Times



Sunday 5th	1 pm to 5 pm Advent Celebration 5.30 pm
Monday 6th	12 noon to 5 pm
Tuesday 7th	12 noon to 5 pm
Wednesday 8th	12 noon to 5 pm Carol Singing 7 - 9 pm accompanied by a Military Band!
Friday 10th	12 noon to 8 pm
Saturday 11th	10 am to 5 pm

... and see the back cover of this issue for details of a very special event at 5.30 pm on the opening day..

Believe it or not...



A **consultant** at Southampton General Hospital has advised people taking part in the traditional Halloween game of apple-bobbing to use bottled water, because of the 'waterborne organisms' in tap water, and to wear protective goggles in case of a 'high velocity impact' with an apple. But for complete peace of mind, Parvez Hussain suggests that players simply remove the fruit from the water by hand.

A '**Nonfire Night**' party, in which laser fireworks were projected on to a screen, was praised recently night for being a safer alternative to traditional displays.

100 young people sat inside a community centre at Pulham St Mary, Norfolk, watching images on a screen. Organisers said the event was simpler than outdoor events, which have to meet stringent council safety regulations.

'It is completely safe for people who don't want to stand out in the cold' said an organiser, and a spokesman for Play England declared: 'This is a good way of teaching children the dangers of fire and how to treat it with respect.'

Opting Out

There are 566 members in our Church,
But 100 are frail and elderly;
That leaves 466 to do all the work
But 80 are young people at college;
That leaves 386 to do all the work
But 150 are tired business men.
So that leaves 236 to do all the work.
And 150 are busy housewives with children,
So that leaves 86 to do all the work;
A further 46 have most important outside interests,
That leaves 40 to do all the work;
But 15 live too far away to come regularly,
So that leaves 25 to do all the work;
And 23 say they've already done their bit for the church,
That leaves you and me,
And I'm exhausted,
Good luck to you!



From a Bolton Church magazine

Amazing Grace?

Young James and his family sat down to Sunday dinner at his grandmother's house. When James received his plate he started eating right away. "James! Please wait until we say our prayer," said his mother. "I don't need to," the boy replied.

"Of course you do," his mother insisted. "We always say grace before eating at home."

"That's at our house," James protested. "This is grandma's house and she can cook!"

(From the magazine of St Mary, Davyhulme, Manchester)

R.S. on the Rise!

It's not all gloomy news...

This past summer's A-level results saw the seventh consecutive year-on-year increase in the number of students taking Religious Studies A-level, with a total increase of 47.3 per cent in the five years since 2004.

Church educationalists interpret the continued increase as further evidence that young people are interested in exploring religious perspectives on the big questions in life, and in studying how different moral and cultural frameworks shape people's understanding of the world around them.

The growing popularity of Religious Studies has been called one of post-16 education's 'best kept secrets'. As one clergyman said: 'It's rather an inconvenient fact for those who seek to portray the world in purely secular terms, and who like to suggest that young people have no interest in religion.'

Help Those Far From Home



With the Christian Aid Advent Footsteps and Christmas Appeal 2010

As we enjoy Christmas in the security of our homes and families, remember those who have lost their homes through conflict or disaster. Bethlehem was not a place of safety or security for the Holy Family. Jesus was born into a world of despotic rulers, politics and pain.

As we journey through Advent, follow the Christian Aid Advent Footsteps Calendar given to you in church. Spare a thought and a small coin each day for those far from home and for whom return is a distant hope

Christian Aid works with displaced people around the world, supporting families forced from their homes in places as varied as the Thailand-Burma border and Sudan. This Christmas, we are asking you to give generously to support our work with people displaced by conflict or natural disasters, all over the world.

CHRISTIAN AID IN BURMA

Home for Kayroh and Rhaimae was once a village in rural Burma, where they farmed rice and their land was regularly patrolled by the Burmese army. This all changed in 2009, when Kayroh was wrongly accused of belonging to an ethnic nationality. After months separated from his family, Kayroh is now safe in Nai Soi camp in Thailand and has been joined by his wife Rhaimae and their two small children. They have a temporary home here, in which they are starting to feel secure – an empty bamboo shelter, perched high up on the hillside of the camp. Kayroh is still coming to terms with the fact that he and Rhaimae have become refugees. ‘In our village [in Burma], nobody knows what a refugee is. We didn’t know what the situation would be like in the camps before we came here.’ Thanks to the work of Christian Aid partner the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC), Kayroh and Rhaimae have been welcomed to the camp community and offered food rations and housing. ‘We came with only the clothes we were wearing, but we have been given clothes now.’ TBBC will ensure that Kayroh and Rhaimae’s basic food and shelter needs are met, and that their children can attend nursery and school.

CHRISTIAN AID IN HAITI

The Haiti earthquake in January 2010 left thousands of families without homes. Many of those left homeless have sought shelter with family members or friends living in rural areas in Haiti. Homes are being shared, and families devastated by the impact of the disaster are helping one another to rebuild their lives.

Christian Aid is working with seven partner organisations across Haiti to support vulnerable families who have lost everything following the earthquake. We are providing food and shelter for those left homeless; healthcare and counselling for those injured and traumatised by the disaster; and distributing seeds and fertilizer to poor farmers, for them to take advantage of the planting season and provide food for their families. Thanks to your generous donations we are reaching the most vulnerable families in Haiti and giving them support to rebuild their lives.

POSTSCRIPT: *THANK YOU!*

The story of these two situations brings home to us the benefits our Christian Aid donations give. Many thanks to all who generously contributed to our Harvest Appeal and helped us to raise the magnificent sum of £303.54, and by gift aiding adding £188.29 of this total. The combined efforts of the United Benefice enabled us to send a gift of £396 to our local Christian Aid office.

Kathy Zimak

Christmas Parcels for British Troops

On November 3rd, 125 boxes were packed with Christmas goodies by our Services Family Support group and will soon be on their way to British troops serving in Afghanistan. It seemed a rather daunting task with such a large number of boxes and an equally large amount of Christmas fare, but with a master plan(?) and a group of willing helpers there was no need for alarm. Everybody got 'stuck in' and very soon a production line of sorts was in operation and the task was no longer so daunting. In fact, in a relatively short space of time, all 125 boxes were packed and a hand-written Christmas card placed in each one. The daunting task had been achieved!

A huge thank you to all who came along to help pack and to all who generously gave biscuits, sweets, chocolate, puzzle books, Santa hats etc, all of which will go towards making Christmas a happier time for those such a long way from home and their loved ones.

Our next meeting on Wednesday 8th December at 7.30pm features carol singing to the accompaniment of a military band. As always, all are welcome and we look forward to seeing you there at this very special event. The church will be open as part of our Christmas Tree Festival so there will be lots more to do and see.

Ennice Little

Exchange and Smart

To add authenticity to the village Nativity Play the vicar arranged for a local farmer to loan a live donkey. As he delivered the beast, a passer-by asked what the donkey was for.

'Oh, we got it for the vicar,' said the farmer.

'By gum', came the reply, 'tha's got a good swap there!'

(Cumbria Magazine, thanks to Rick Walker)



Poetry for the Advent Season

Advent 1955

The Advent wind begins to stir
With sea-like sounds in our Scotch fir,
It's dark at breakfast, dark at tea,
And in between we only see
Clouds hurrying across the sky
And rain-wet roads the wind blows dry
And branches bending to the gale
Against great skies all silver pale.
The world seems travelling into space,
And travelling at a faster pace
Than in the leisured summer weather
When we all sit out together,
For now we feel the world spin round
On some momentous journey bound -
Journey to what? to whom? to where?
The Advent bells call out 'Prepare,
Your world is journeying to the birth
Of God made Man for us on earth.'
And how, in fact, do we prepare
The great day that waits us there -
For the twenty-fifth day of December,
The birth of Christ? For some it means
An interchange of hunting scenes
On coloured cards. And I remember
Last year I sent out twenty yards,
Laid end to end, of Christmas cards
To people that I scarcely know -
They'd sent a card to me, and so
I had to send one back. Oh dear!
Is this a form of Christmas cheer?
Or is it, which is less surprising,
My pride gone in for advertising?
The only cards that really count
Are that extremely small amount

12



From real friends who keep in touch
And are not rich but love us much
Some ways indeed are very odd
By which we hail the birth of God.

We raise the price of things in shops,
We give plain boxes fancy tops
And lines which traders cannot sell
Thus parcell'd go extremely well
We dole out bribes we call a present
To those to whom we must be pleasant
For business reasons. Our defence is
These bribes are charged against expenses
And bring relief in Income Tax
Enough of these unworthy cracks!
'The time draws near the birth of Christ'.
A present that cannot be priced
Given two thousand years ago
Yet if God had not given so
He still would be a distant stranger
And not the Baby in the manger.

John Betjeman

In Mary-Darkness

I live my Advent in the womb of Mary
And on one night when a great star swings free
From its high mooring and walks down the sky
To be the dot above the Christus 'I'.
I shall be born of her by blessed grace.
I wait in Mary-darkness, faith's walled place,
With hope's expectance of nativity.
I knew for long she carried me and fed me,
Guarded and loved me, though I could not see,
But only now, with inward jubilee,
I come upon earth's most amazing knowledge:
Someone is hidden in this dark with me.

Jessica Powers



There Was A Time

There was a time when there was no time,
When darkness reigned as king,
When a formless void was all that there was
in the nothingness of eternity,
When it was night.

But over the void and over the night Love watched.
There was a time when time began.
It began when Love spoke.

Time began for light and life, for splendour and grandeur.
Time began for seas and mountains, for flowers and birds.
Time began for the valleys to ring with the songs of life,
And for the wilderness to echo with the wailing of wind
And howling of animals.
And over the earth, Love watched.

There was a time when time began to be recorded.
A time when Love breathed and a new creature came to life.
A new creature so special that it was in the image and likeness of Love
Of Love who is God.
And so man was born and the dawn of a new day shone on the world.
And over man, Love watched.
But there came a time when the new day faded.
A time when man who was like God tried to be God.
A time when the creature challenged the creator.
A time when man preferred death to life and darkness to light.
And so the new day settled into twilight.
And over the darkness, Love watched.

There was a time of waiting in the darkness.
A time when man waited in the shadows,
And all creation groaned in sadness.
There was waiting for Love to speak again--for Love to breathe again.
And kings and nations and empires rose and faded in the shadows.
And Love waited and watched.
Finally, there came a time when Love spoke again.
A Word from eternity - a Word
Spoken to a girl who belonged to a people not known by the world
Spoken to a girl who belonged to a family not known by her people
To a girl named Mary.

And all creation waited in hushed silence for the girl's answer.
And Mary spoke her yes.
And Love watched over Mary.

And so there came a time when Love breathed again
When Love breathed new life into Mary's yes.
And a new day dawned for the World
A day when light returned to darkness, when life returned to dispel death
And so a day came when Love became man--a mother bore a child.
And Love watched over Love - a Father watched His Son.
And, lastly, there came a time when you and I became a part of time.
Now is the time that you and I wait.
Now we wait to celebrate what the world waited for.
And as we wait to celebrate what was at one time, we become a part of that time
A time when a new dawn and a new dream and a new creation began for man.
And as a part of time, Love waits and Love watches over us.

Advent Prayer



Like foolish folk of old I would not be,
Who had no room that night for Him and thee.
See, Mother Mary, here within my heart
I've made a little shrine for Him apart;
Swept it of sin, and cleansed it with all care;
Warmed it with love and scented it with prayer.
So, Mother, when the Christmas anthems start,
Please let me hold your baby - in my heart.

Sr. Maryanna, O.P.

Church or ‘Failing Coffee Chain’?

Chris Price



The seemingly never-ending saga of the tribulations of the C of E and how it treats what John Knox memorably called ‘the monstrous regiment of women’ is continuing. Those newspapers which care about such things are full of the much-heralded defection of five bishops, ‘hundreds of worshippers’ and apparently a handful of complete congregations to Rome as the prospect of women bishops draws ever nearer.

The Church of Rome is setting up a new section, known by the catchy title of the English Ordinariate, into which those who make the move will be welcomed, and their path made smooth. This writer, having given voice in the last issue to ‘Pontifications’ critical of the Pope on the particular issue of the validity or otherwise of Anglican priestly orders, does not want to make waves of any depth this time on that issue. But a few comments may still be in order, to put this issue into some perspective.

Five bishops sounds a major leakage – but two of them are retired, and the other three are ‘flying bishops’, appointed to have episcopal oversight of priests and parishes who sign up as unwilling to recognise women priests – and they were probably never likely to stay long anyway. ‘Hundreds’ of worshippers may well leave, as they had always threatened to do, and they will follow their consciences and find a new home, but they seem likely to amount to a minute fraction of committed Anglicanism’s numbers. And transfers go in both directions, and always have done so, as the steady flow of converts both to and from both churches has always shown. When the dust dies down, nothing much will have changed. The exodus of priests to Rome when women were first ordained has, in any case, been tiny when set against the steady and continuing flow of women being ordained into our communion. We may still face a problem in staffing our parishes, but without women it would be a full-scale crisis, as is indeed the case with the Roman Catholic church, at least in Ireland and France, where vocations are totally inadequate to staff their churches.

What prompted this piece, however, were the reported comments of two of the departing bishops. One said his objections went further than the ordination of women. ‘There has been a lax attitude on moral issues: the question of blessing gay marriage, abortion and death issues’ are what prompt him to leave. But it was the other, Bishop Andrew Burnham of Ebbsfleet, who made the comment that features in the title of this article.

He entertainingly likened the Church of England to a chain of coffee shops that loses customers because it does not offer the same menus in every branch. Worshippers no longer knew what they would find in an Anglican church, with some offering highly traditional services and others employing women as priests.

‘There are signs the Church of England is losing a sense of where it came from,’ Bishop Burnham declared. ‘If Costa Coffee did something different in every branch and you didn’t know what the product was, they would go out of business. In the Church of England there are so many products that you don’t know what you’re going to get.’

This comic comparison is just asking for a comment. Surely one of the great and continuing strengths of the good old C. of E. is exactly its diversity. With a presence still just about maintained in every town and village in the land, the would-be worshipper can find, within convenient distance, a church whose patterns of worship are right for his journey of faith, whether it be High or Low, male or female priested, yet under the same tolerant, compassionate and caring Christian umbrella that we are happy to call the Church of England. The bishops, and those who feel like them, may no longer wish to recognise the value and validity of the ancient pattern of the established church. Most of us, I suspect, enjoy more than one brand of coffee, even the Fairtrade at the back of our church.

Just one more thought. Commentators are already beginning to speculate as to the nature of the welcome the ex-Anglican influx will receive in Rome. The growing liberal tendency in their church, including many at the highest level, may well have no wish to accommodate incomers who represent the blinkered, traditionalist attitudes against which these cardinals, priests and people are battling in their own church. They are said to be unhappy with the arrangement and with its implications for their own church. Their message, as well as ours, could well be summed up in the fashionable phrase: ‘Wake up and smell the coffee!’



All Souls Day Sermon 2010

I suppose you might say that mortality has played its part in my life, both when I was working and afterwards. As a doctor, part of the job was to care for the dying, and how difficult that was! You had to recognize that moment when it was no longer the role of the doctor to do tests and investigate and treat and cure. What

was needed was to try and help another human being, physically, emotionally and spiritually, to make their final journey: to recognize that dying is itself part of living. It was humbling and inspiring work, but also harrowing. I spent a little time training in paediatrics but soon decided that it was not for me – I just couldn't take the tragedy and grief of a child's death; and I still have the greatest respect for the dedicated medics who choose to work with sick children. But there was an aspect of my job that strangely enough I didn't find particularly disturbing and that was the inevitable visits to the dissecting room and the mortuary: the body after death seemed to hold no horrors, because wherever the person was, he or she was not *there*.

Both before and after retirement from medicine I've been privileged, as a Reader, to visit the dying and the bereaved, to take funeral and memorial services, and to struggle with that great challenge which faces all preachers and ministers – how to express the faith of the Church in a loving God, in the face of the dark and brutal fact of death. And as both doctor and minister I have at times felt very exposed – exposed to the raw feelings and emotions of both the dying and the grieving: those well-recognised feelings of shock, denial, anger, regret, guilt, depression: and also the questioning – why me, why my husband, why my daughter? So many things can stand in the way of a good death, both for the person dying and for the loved ones they leave behind: the regrets and unfinished business, the loss and the parting, the emptiness which nothing can fill, the physical and emotional turmoil that seems to go on and on. Even the very circumstances of a death can for a time blot out for us all the happy memories, and the legacy for good that the loved one has left behind

Our experience of death is always complex, never easy and sometimes utterly devastating. But if we are honest with ourselves the first step we must take is to accept that our experiences are true and real, that they are *ours* and that they matter to *us*. Sometimes the well-meaning comforting of our friends can make matters worse: yes life has to go on – but must it be like this? And no, the person whose death I grieve is not just in the next room, even though I keep thinking and hoping that they are. Even the teaching of the church can sometimes fail us: in our grief and distress the idea of heaven may seem unimaginable and the souls in it as far removed from us as life is from death.

But there is another quite different sort of experience which is just as real as anything we've mentioned so far. It happens not so much to individuals as to groups of men and women and children united by a common bond. And the bond that unites them, strangely enough, is the experience itself.

I'm sorry to talk in riddles – let me try to explain by taking you on a journey. Step

down, if you will, into a pitch-black labyrinth of underground tunnels on the island of Malta, where St. Paul was shipwrecked. These are the ancient Christian catacombs, almost as old as the Christian church itself. And among the hundreds of stone tombs carved out of the rock you will be startled to come across a wall-painting, bright in white and yellow, as fresh as when it was painted by the flickering light of the oil lamp all those centuries ago. It shows another tomb, but one framed in a garden, and flooded with light. In the garden a man and a woman are kneeling on either side of a figure standing between them, whose face is difficult to make out. It is of course a picture of the Resurrection of Jesus, a loving and joyful record of the experience of the church, not just on that first Easter Sunday, but of the church of the catacombs and of all Christian communities in every generation.

The picture is not about *belief* in the Resurrection, it is a wonderful expression of how Christians *experience* the Resurrection. It is an affirmation of how in following the Risen Christ, in the church's life and worship, and above all in the love we show each other, God makes all things new. It is not a denial of the fact of death: but it does put death firmly in its place. It expresses not the belief, but the experience: that it is not death that is at the heart of the universe, but life itself. Like the Jews before us who saw in their deliverance from slavery the hand of God, we see in every sign of renewal and deliverance in the world the signature of the Resurrection.

None of this necessarily makes death and separation any easier for us to accept, nor heaven any easier to understand. But it is, if you like, death's antidote, death's anti-matter. Cutting across any arguments for and against belief, the Resurrection is something we can know and experience. In the Risen Christ the renewal of life becomes woven into the fabric of the universe, it is written into the very constitution of existence. 'Our lives are hidden with Christ in God' and nothing, not even death itself, can separate us, or our loved ones, from God's love.

The Resurrection of Our Lord cannot remove the pain of death and parting. But I am certain that is the starting point for acceptance, when denial subsides and the questions stop. It heralds the release of the 'letting go', and the coming of inner peace. And it is the beginning of re-growth and new life. And as the experience unfolds there can come a time when we can find it in us to whisper, even through the tears: 'Alleluia, Christ is risen!'

Fred Nye





Christmas Crackers from the Capriol Singers

The Capriols are celebrating the spirit of the season with three Christmas concerts this year. Please join them and St Mary's Choir at St Mary's Walton on the 4th of December for an Advent Journey; at St Michaels's Church Hall Blundellsands for a mix of secular and sacred music in their Christmas Cracker on the 11th; and at Hightown Cricket Club on the 16th for their fourth annual Cricket Carols, where members and visitors are all welcome

All concerts start at 7.30 pm. If you would like tickets (£7) for these concerts please contact members of the choir or Mike on 0151-924-2007.

A Window on Nyasaland

Chris Price

Trawling through my none-too-efficiently catalogued computer files recently, I unearthed a newspaper cutting from 19th June, 1938, recording in detail an episcopal visit to St Faith's for the unveiling of a window to one of its curates. The window – the third one along from the Lady Chapel in the South Aisle - depicts St Oswald. The report, presumably from a local paper, gives a glimpse of church life in the 1930s, and faithfully reproduces the Bishop's sermon.

‘The Rt Rev F. O. Thorne, Bishop of Nyasaland, paid a visit to St. Faith’s Church, Gt. Crosby, on Sunday morning, for the service of dedicating the window of Herbert William Cockett, a former assistant curate at St. Faith’s, who died at the end of 1936, while serving as a priest in Nyasaland. The window was unveiled at the commencement of the service while the choir and clergy were proceeding in procession round the church, by Miss Cockett, his sister. The window was then dedicated by the Bishop. The service was conducted by the Rev. J. Schofield (vicar); the Rev. G. S. How and the Rev. D. Ford, also took part in the service.

‘The window depicts St. Oswald, and the inscription reads: “To the Glory of God and in memory of Herbert William Cockett, priest, who passed to higher service at Mantope, Nyasaland, 18th November, 1936. Assistant curate of St. Faith’s, 1931-1933. This window was given by his friends. R.I.P.”

‘The church was well filled, and Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Rangers were present. After the service the young people lined up at the side of the church, and the Bishop, accompanied by the vicar, reviewed them.

The Bishop, the paper reports, took as his text ‘The Labourers are Few’ and spoke movingly of Fr Cockett’s life and death.

“How holy a priest he was. How full of a simple goodness wherever he went. The Africans found that out very quickly. Long before he could speak their language his life had begun to speak and to reap its harvest. The Africans knew he was a man of God who passed constantly in and out among them. The parish he was given was at least half the size of Lancashire, and he attended to it by himself. He had 17 villages to look after, and the only way he went from one to the other was walking. When you walk in Africa you meet people by the roadside and stop and talk. He would not spare himself at all if he could win a soul.

“For three weeks in each month he was away from his own house visiting his flock, arriving at their villages in the afternoon or evening, and staying there a night and then moving on. I had the joy of going with him round some half-dozen of his villages, and saw the joy with which his parishioners welcomed their priest.

“That was his life for two and a half years in Africa - walking in the heat and rain, and as if that was not enough, mosquitoes and all kinds of insects made it still more uncomfortable. He bore all that for his flock. Just think of it - one priest to serve 17 churches - congregations scattered over such a huge area. That is one of the things that being under-staffed means.

“Then he found that the two ladies working in the parish - a nurse and a teacher – were both due for England. They had to go and there was no-one for the time being to take their place. He was there alone with only a monthly visit from the nurse of a neighbouring parish - not just round the corner but three or four days’ walk away. He fell ill with the dreaded black water fever and the nurse arrived too late.

“I have told you he spent three weeks in every month visiting each village in his parish, and so the villagers were only able to see their priest for one night in each month and only able to be at a service 12 times in a year. Will you people with your church in your midst, which you can attend every day and each Sunday, and your three priests, think of my African people seeing their priest 12 times a year only?

“The time is short because the civilisation of the world, without the Christian religion as its foundation, is sweeping further into Africa. Roads are being pushed further into the bush and motorcars are bringing the intoxication of our civilisation without the foundation of Christianity. The African tries to follow the European as he lives and dresses as he dresses. If civilisation overtakes these people before we have given them the foundation of Christianity then it is hopeless. It is your concern. This country has done so much to abolish slavery and exploitation in Africa, and it is your concern that the people do not get civilisation with no Christian foundation.”

The Bishop’s words from over 80 years ago speak of a vanished age, when Christian missionaries were spreading the word in difficult and dangerous conditions, and often gave their lives for the faith. But they serve today to remind us of the dedication and sacrifice of priests and lay people from this church over the past century whose commitment in Africa and elsewhere throughout the world serves as an example to us today. Bishop Mark Way, and more recently Fr Peter Roberts, are just two of those associated with our church whose memory we honour alongside that of Herbert William Cockett.

I looked with fresh insight at that window – and put ‘Nyasaland’ into the ubiquitous Google search engine. Perhaps I should have known – it is the territory now known as Malawi. And of course, through our connections with Medic Malawi, we support a thriving Christian mission hospital, by whose ongoing efforts health and education are dispensed in that needy nation. It is so good to make an unexpected living connection with the past and to think that, at least in some small way, the Bishop’s plea in 1938 for support in what was then a far-flung corner of the Empire is being answered today. The Labourers may still be few, but they continue to work for the Kingdom throughout the world.

(see the end of this online edition for his photograph)

The Parish Directory & Church Organisations



VICAR

Fr. Neil Kelley, The Vicarage, Milton Road, Waterloo. L22 4RE
928 3342; fax 920 2901

ASSISTANT PRIESTS

Revd Denise McDougall, 27 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 2TL. 924 8870
Canon Peter Goodrich, 16 Hillside Avenue, Ormskirk, L39 5TD. 01695 573285
Fr. Dennis Smith, 16 Fir Road, Waterloo. L22 4QL. 928 5065

READERS

Dr Fred Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813
Mrs Jacqueline Parry, 21 Grosvenor Avenue, Crosby. L23 0SB. 928 0726
Mrs Cynthia Johnson, 30 Willow House, Maple Close, Seaforth, L21 4LY. 286 8155

CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs Margaret Houghton, 16 Grosvenor Avenue, Crosby. L23 0SB. 928 0548
Mrs Maureen Madden, 37 Abbotsford Gardens, Crosby. L23 3AP. 924 2154

DEPUTY CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs Christine Spence, 52 Molyneux Road, Waterloo. L22 4QZ. 284 9325
Mrs Rosie Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267

TREASURER

Mr David Jones, 65 Dunbar Road, Birkdale, Southport PR8 4RJ. 01704 567782

PCC SECRETARY

Mrs Lillie Wilmot, Flat 7, 3 Bramhall Road, Waterloo. L22 3XA. 920 5563

PARISH OFFICE MANAGER

Mr Geoff Dunn 32 Brooklands Avenue, L22 3XZ • Tel & fax: 0151 928 9913
Email: sfsmparishoffice@btinternet.com

GIFT AID SECRETARY

Mr Rick Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267

TUESDAY OFFICE HOUR: 6.30 – 7.30 pm (wedding and banns bookings)

Mrs Lynda Dixon, c/o the Vicarage. 928 7330

BAPTISM BOOKINGS

Mrs Joyce Green, 14 Winchester Avenue, Waterloo, L22 2AT. 931 4240

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr Sam Austin, 42 Arch View Crescent, Liverpool, L1 7BA. 07921 840616.
email samOaustin@googlemail.com

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr Stephen Hargreaves, 86 Molyneux Road, Waterloo. L22 4QZ. 07939 119220

SACRISTAN

Mrs Judith Moizer, 1 Valley Close, Crosby. L23 9TL. 931 5587

ASSISTANT SACRISTAN

Mr Leo Appleton, 28 Hougomont Avenue, Waterloo. L22 0LL. 07969 513087

SENIOR SERVER

Ms Emily Skinner, 1 Valley Close, Crosby. L23 9TL. 931

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Sunday 11.00 am in the Church Hall. Angie Price 924 1938

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

Mrs Linda Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813

CHURCH CENTRE

1, Warren Court, Warren Road, Blundellsands

UNITED BENEFICE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

James|Roderick 0141 474 6162

CUB SCOUTS

Tuesday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Adam Jones 07841 125589

Thursday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Mike Carr 293 3416

SCOUTS

Tuesday 8.00 - 9.30 pm. George McInnes 924 3624

RAINBOWS

Monday 4.45 - 5.45 pm. Geraldine Forshaw 928 5204

BROWNIE GUIDES

Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Sue Walsh 920 0318; Mary McFadyen 284 0104

CHOIR PRACTICE

Friday 7.15 pm - 8.30 pm. Sam Austin 07921 840616

MAGAZINE EDITOR

and WEBSITE MANAGER

Chris Price, 17 Queens Road, Crosby. L23 5TP. 924 1938

The **January 2011 'Newslink'** will be distributed on or before **Sunday, December 19th**. Copy by **Sunday, December 5th**, please ('write early for Christmas!') - but all contributions are welcome at any time.

Church website: <http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk>

Online magazine accessed at <http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/magazine.html>

Email: cdaavidprice@gmail.com



Designed and printed at
THE IMAGE PRESS
Marchant Taylor's School, Crosby



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Diocese of Liverpool

Online picture bonus....

A gallery of (mostly) black and white pictures from the early years archives of St Faith's.

They are taken from the recently uploaded annotated slideshows of our church: there are two sequences of archive photographs, one of the church and its furnishings and features inside and out, and two (one currently still in preparation) showing services and events throughout the church's year.

To access the index to these and other picture features (including a rooftop panorama!), go to the link 'St Faith's in pictures' on the website front page.

The photograph below is of Fr Herbert William Cockett, whose story is told on page 14ff, above.





Above The laying of the foundation stone in 1898

Right: Before the addition of the chancel screen; gas lighting

Below Founder William Douglas Horsfall and his son Robert Elcum Horsfall (the boy in the top picture, killed in WW1)



Top 1920s view, showing empty roads, few surrounding buildings and the remains of the tram system.
Centre Group photo in 1935. Douglas Horsfall, in skullcap, centre front; the vicar is Canon Brierley
Bottom An early coloured commercial postcard. Merchant Taylors' field is offstage left of the trees



The Parish of Saint Faith, Great Crosby
CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2010

Sunday 5th December at 5.30pm

"A CELEBRATION OF ADVENT"
in words and music



with Andrew Lancel

In a candlelit church and with the lights of 50 Christmas Trees, come and enjoy a special service of poetry, plainsong, hymns and reflective music

Musical offerings performed by a String Quartet (members of Crosby Symphony Orchestra) and students of the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield.

A retiring collection will be taken to benefit the work of

Bat-1 About Kidz

a charity set up to provide holidays for children and young people with disabilities and complex ill health needs

www.batiaboutkidz.org