



# **ST. PHILIP & ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH WHITTINGTON PARISH NEWS**

**MAY 2020 – 50P**

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**Curate** Rev'd Dr Robin Parry 01905 764651

### **Holy Trinity & St Matthew Ronkswood**

**Vicar** Rev'd Rob Farmer

### **Associate Priest to the Team:**

The Rev'd Canon Stephen Buckley

### **Readers in the Team:**

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### **Team Administrator:**

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*For enquiries about Baptisms, Thanksgivings, Marriages and Blessings,  
please contact the Team Administrator as above.*

***The Team Office is closed until further notice.***

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## **Coronavirus 2020**

The May edition of this magazine comes amid the continuing lockdown to combat the worst effects of Corvid-19. Attention is now focussed on the ways in which the lockdown may be eased and we may begin to come out of these restrictions. The magazine remains an important means of communication in these challenging times and will continue in its new format. Once again if anyone would like to offer any contribution, particularly of encouraging news or interest, these will be gratefully received. Good reading! Editor

# *Letter from the Vicarage*

*May 2020*



I recently received, through the post a copy of one of my cycling magazines. It arrived in an envelope which was loudly proclaiming “Bike week” as being 6th -14th June. Even as I read it, I was saying to myself, “that can’t still be happening, can it?” Sure enough, as I actually opened the magazine and began to read the editorial on the first page, the editor acknowledged that as far as that issue of the magazine was concerned, the ‘elephant in the room’ would be Corona Virus - pretty much all of the copy of the magazine had been compiled before anyone imagined the current state of lock down! So an edition, that was looking forward to warmer days and the freedom of Summer conditions to roam further afield on our bikes, was very much out of touch with the realities of life.

Life, for most of us, has had to be put on hold, as we are encouraged to stay at home and stay safe. For others, of us, it may well be that we find ourselves working harder than ever in order to keep up with the impact of the virus!

I wonder, how you are coping with social distancing and being unable to see in the flesh, friends and family?

At the time of writing, we have just marked St. George’s Day, and at Morning Prayer, heard the opening lines of the Book of Joshua, the sixth book of the bible: Moses the leader of the Israelite people, who was commissioned by God to bring them out of slavery in Egypt and into the Promised Land, has died, and it falls to Joshua as Moses successor to complete the Exodus journey; to cross the river Jordan and enter into the land that God had promised Abraham He would give to his successors.

*Continued.....*

God speaks to Joshua, instructing him to do this, and bolstering his and the Israelites' fortitude. God repeats three times in this passage the instruction to be "strong and courageous", or as one of our worship songs puts it, "Be Bold! Be strong!" On the third occasion, God says, "I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.'" (Joshua 1: 9).

In our All Age worship services, beginning in September last year, we have been thinking about Heroes and Villains of the Bible. The heroes at least, have exemplified in some way, that boldness and inner strength, that God is exhorting Joshua to.

In the last few months, I have made reference to different books that I have read, or been reading. When I think of courage and strength, I think of another book, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. The whole book is an exploration what it might mean to have courage in the face of battle that cannot be won. The main story surrounds an unjustified accusation of rape against a black man in pre-war America, and the courage and strength of character exhibited, by the lawyer appointed to defend him; there are though side stories that are further examples of the need for courage and strength. One of the neighbours - an unpleasant and bad tempered woman - is strengthened and encouraged by the children having to go and read to her, each day. The children are frightened of her, because of her temper, but don't realise that their going and reading to her, despite their fears, is actually helping her to find the courage and strength to overcome her dependence upon morphine. In the end she is enabled to achieve her goal of dying free from her addiction.

What strength and courage, I wonder, are you having to find as we journey through this season of lockdown?

We journey also, through the Easter season, which comes to its end, at the end of this month, when we mark and celebrate the feast of Pentecost (31st May).

*Continued.....*

On that occasion we will hear how the disciples, still coming to terms with the events of Jesus' death and resurrection; still frightened for themselves and hiding away in Jerusalem, are released by the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them, imbued with courage and strength to proclaim God's message of salvation. Their lives had been effectively on hold, while they determined what they were going to do, and who they were called to be, after Jesus's death. Now they are strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit.

Our lives are on hold: In the last 6 weeks or so, we should have held our Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs) - these will need to be rearranged for the autumn; this month we were supposed to be welcoming and licensing Peter Hart as the new Team Rector - he and his wife are unable to move house at the moment and so are continuing to minister in his parish in Kew, in London; many people are unable to celebrate life events, (weddings , baptisms, funerals) in the manner that they would have wished.

We may have additional fears and anxieties, brought about by this disruption to the normal pattern of life.

And yet, the world continues to turn, and times and seasons continue to pass, as they always have.

God instructed Joshua to be bold and strong with the assurance that God was with Him.

May I encourage you, during this time of lockdown, to seek God's presence with you; to allow it to deepen your relationship with Him, such that you may be encouraged and strengthened through the difficulties of this season of our lives.

May God bless you all.

Stay safe. Stay faithful. Stay in touch.

Andy

## **Coronavirus - Covid-19**

In the light of Government guidance around non-essential contact, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued advice that public worship and all other use of the church is suspended until further notice.

**Consequently the church at Whittington is closed.**  
**Whittington churchyard will remain open.**

The Worcester South East Team of clergy continue to work on ways of serving the needs of our parishes.

The Team Office at St Martin's is closed to visitors but can still be reached by phone and email, see inside cover page.

For Pastoral Support please contact Revd Andy Stand on 01905 358150 or [andy.stand@sky.com](mailto:andy.stand@sky.com)

## **LIVE ON-LINE VIDEO SERVICES**

**For all churches in the South East Team**

We are continuing to meet for worship using the zoom app downloadable from the zoom.us website: The way of accessing Zoom meetings has changed and you will need to use the password to join the worship, and will also need to join a 'waiting room' to be admitted to the meeting. To join any of the services please email the contact person who will send you a link:

For Sunday services or midweek Eucharist:  
email [andy.stand@sky.com](mailto:andy.stand@sky.com)

For Morning Prayer or Stations and Compline:  
email [mbunclark@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:mbunclark@tiscali.co.uk)

For Monday or Saturday Prayer meetings:  
email [joanhazz@gmail.com](mailto:joanhazz@gmail.com)

### **SERVICE PATTERN MIDWEEK**

Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday at 8.30am

Compline: Monday to Friday at 8.30pm

Midweek Eucharist: Wednesday at 10am

**SUNDAYS** Morning Worship: Sundays at 10am

# A letter from the Bishop of Dudley



These are strange times. I'm the new Bishop of Dudley, and should be living in that area, but I'm writing this letter from under 'lockdown' in our old house in Oxford, unable to move.

It feels as though everything is disrupted and where nothing can be taken for granted. Our church buildings have been closed, and just when we want to gather together and encourage one another, we cannot.

We live in a world filled with fear, attacked by a virus we cannot cure. We can fear death and disease, poverty and unemployment; we can fear for loved ones isolated and far away. We can feel powerless and alone.

When Jesus was taken to be crucified most of his friends ran away, fearing for their lives, afraid that they would be next. But others stayed, mostly women like Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome. And then at the foot of the cross, James, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and Mary, Jesus' own mother. They must have been filled with grief and fear, but their love for Jesus was stronger still. Their love was stronger than their fear. They just had to be present with him.

I thank God for shopworkers, health workers, cleaners, carers, foodbank drivers and everyone else who set out to be present for others during this crisis. All those whose love for humanity proves stronger than their fear.

This is the Easter season when we celebrate Jesus risen from the dead. The fear and isolation of Holy Week is past and a new age has begun. In these days between Easter and Pentecost we stand confidently in the warm sunlight of the resurrection, knowing that suffering and death will never have the last word; that God's love is real and unshakeable and in the end will prevail. The bible says, 'Underneath are the Everlasting Arms' and that is true for us as Christians, both in this life and, I believe, when we die.

As we move towards Pentecost we pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to bless and inspire us for the road ahead. We pray 'Thy Kingdom Come' not with big gatherings and events this year, but online, in prayer, alone or in family groups. We pray for God's kingdom to come on earth as it already is in heaven. A kingdom of love, compassion, justice and freedom.

*Continued.....*

## Bishop's Letter continued

Where the people we all depend on in these days: health and care workers, shop staff, drivers and crop pickers, cleaners and refuse collectors and all the rest will no longer be seen as menial or unskilled, but celebrated members of our society on whom we all depend. We need to find a new way of living in tune with the earth and creation, where global riches can be shared and where all can be fed.

I am living through the only global pandemic I have ever known. Its effects are tragic for some, and far reaching for us all. When all this is over we will need to build a better future. And that is something we can all be part of.

### Ascension Day May 21st: 40 Days with the Risen Christ



40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection!



## **Replacement of the Jubilee Room A new building for the Church**

Last month it was reported that the PCC had agreed a modified design for the replacement of the Jubilee Room - the portakabin - to reduce the anticipated cost. The changes would mean that the feature window at the west end would be changed to normal French doors and the room would no longer be open to the roof space but have a flat ceiling. The two entrance doors at the eastern end however would remain with the attractive pointed arch design. Nonetheless grants would still be required to enable the work to proceed.

Applications have now been made to the District Council for planning permission and the Diocese for a faculty to allow the scheme to be carried out.

### **A Poem to lift the spirits!**

#### **Perhaps when things get back to normal?**

Immortal, Impossible, God only knows,  
How tenors and basses, sopranos, altos,  
At service on Sunday are rarely the same,  
As those who on Thursday to choir practice came.

Unready, unable to sight-read the notes,  
Nor counting, nor blending, they tighten their throats.  
The descant so piercing is soaring above,  
The melody only a mother could love.

They have a director, but no-one knows why  
No-one in the choir designs to give him an eye,  
Its clear by his waving, he wants them to look,  
But each of them stands with their nose in the book.

Despite the offences, the music rings out,  
The folks in the pews are enraptured, no doubt.  
Their faces are blissful, their thoughts are so deep,  
But it is no wonder, for they are asleep.

## A Reminder for all garden lovers!



My plant seeds were sown and germinated before the current crisis became a pandemic so I am growing summer bedding this year. Many people have already ordered their plants and I expect some of them to be ready by early May and the remainder during the month.

If you would like plants for your garden this summer and you haven't already ordered them, please contact me and I will do my best to help. I must warn though that my stocks now are limited. Please also let me know when you would like to collect them within the terms of the current travel restrictions.

In the meantime stay safe.

Brenda Giles 01905 25709

[brenda.giles@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:brenda.giles@tiscali.co.uk)



*Our church warden is not letting people into the church just now*

### Asleep?

A young man fell asleep in the Sunday morning service, and soon began to snore.

The preacher stopped and impatiently motioned to the young boy beside the man to wake him up.

The boy said: "Wake him up yourself, you put him to sleep."

# **Whittington Parish Council**

Despite the lockdown, Parish Council business continues. Modern technology allows us to continue with Parish Council meetings through the use of Zoom. You can still join us. All you need is a computer. Email the Parish Council Clerk at [whittingtonpc@live.co.uk](mailto:whittingtonpc@live.co.uk) and you will be given instructions on how to join the meeting.

Some parishioners may be aware that within the South Worcester Development Plan there are proposals to develop the area within the Parish of Whittington east of the M5 motorway. Whittington Parish Council continues to monitor progress in respect of these proposals and comment where appropriate and believe necessary. The views of Parishioners are important and will be included in representations made by the Parish Council. Your views can be expressed through the Parish Council [whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk/menu/contact/comments/](http://whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk/menu/contact/comments/). Alternatively you can make your views known directly to a Parish Councillor. For more information regarding the proposals go to [www.swdevelopmentplan.org](http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org)

Coronavirus. Whittington Parish Council needs your help to identify the people in the parish most at risk or who are otherwise isolated or vulnerable. The Parish Council is working with other authorities to use this information to be able to help those most in need. The Parish Council would like to hear from anyone who might feel vulnerable or from any parishioner who knows of any vulnerable person within the Parish. Contact the Parish Council Clerk at [whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk/contact/](http://whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk/contact/) or go to the Worcestershire County Council #Here2Help scheme, launched to provide support to people who are having to self-isolate, have additional needs and cannot get help from family, friends or neighbours. (See the Parish Council website for more detail).

Within the Parish of Whittington, we have a handful of 'volunteers' who are happy to help any parishioner who, due to the lockdown, is in need of assistance, for example, shopping, collecting prescriptions or simply checking on the welfare of someone in isolation.

Stay safe!

Your Parish Council.

[www.whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk)

[facebook.com/whittingtonpc](https://facebook.com/whittingtonpc) (or search @whittingtonpc)

Email: [whittingtonpc@live.co.uk](mailto:whittingtonpc@live.co.uk)

# Whittington Village Hall

Further inspections of the Village Hall to check on the presence of asbestos have now taken place as a part of the preparations for reconstruction.

The tenders from several contractors to undertake the work have been evaluated and are being further assessed to ensure a satisfactory and cost effective result. We would hope to select a preferred contractor before long. Whilst the impact of the Coronavirus on all our lives will slow the process down it is still intended to proceed with the rebuilding when this becomes possible.



The 'Whittington Project' is regarded by the senior management team at **Wychavon District Council** as a '**Flagship Project**'.



## Some Parental excuses for missing school

*With actual spelling!*

My son is under a doctor's care and should not take P.E. today. Please execute him.

Please excuse Lisa for being absent. She was sick and I had her shot.

Please excuse Jason for being absent yesterday. He had a cold and could not breed well.

Chris will not be in school cus he has an acre in his side.

Please excuse Ray Friday from school. He has very loose vowels.

Please excuse Tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea and his boots leak.

Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.

Sally won't be in school a week from Friday. We have to attend her funeral.

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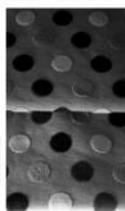
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## And now our current conflict with an invisible enemy - Corvid-19

It was Harold Wilson who allegedly said that “a week is a long time in politics”. In these recent momentous days, it looks as if that should be reduced to five minutes.

In the space of a very short time, life has been turned upside-down. Work, school, family life, daily routines, leisure activities, as well as that number one pastime – shopping – have changed for all of us, almost overnight. It's easy to see why our nation – nay, our world – is uneasy. You may feel it yourself, identify it in friends and colleagues, or see it reflected in your social media feeds. We're experiencing what theologian David Ford has called 'multiple overwhelmings'. Whether personally, professionally, or politically, it's one thing to have a single event that knocks us off our feet.



But what if the knocks continue to come thick and fast? Is it any wonder we're confused, anxious, distrustful, and fearful? In all this, though, shafts of light manage to break through – the neighbours forming WhatsApp and other groups to support people in their street, many individual's acts of kindness, the already exhausted NHS workers coming in for the next shift, clapping for them regularly, the rainbows in windows of houses saying more than the occupants of those homes perhaps know about the commitment of God to his creation. They're all traces of grace, showing something of a refusal to be shaped by the prevailing culture, which Christians of all people should understand. Because while some 'overwhelmings' wound and crush us, others are lifegiving and transformative.

As David Ford says, the wisest way to cope is 'not to expect to be in control of everything', but 'to live amidst the overwhelmings' in a way that lets one of them shape the others. Christians remember that Christ himself embodied 'multiple overwhelmings' – baptised in the Jordan, driven into the wilderness, tempted by the devil. Then, at the climax of his life, betrayed, deserted, tortured, crucified.

But, as Ford writes, 'then came the resurrection, the most disorienting and transformative overwhelming of all'. Given that death-and-resurrection pattern, what would it look like at this time to be overwhelmed with an assurance of God's love? Overwhelmed with gratitude? Overwhelmed by generosity? Overwhelmed by a commitment to pray? Overwhelmed by a desire to see others thrive, even if it comes at our expense?



**Whittington Church is dedicated  
to St Philip and St James - their  
Patronal Day is 1<sup>st</sup> May  
Philip, the apostle with  
common sense**

Is there someone in church and in the community whom you respect for their spirituality and common sense combined? Someone you feel easy about approaching to ask questions? That person's patron saint should be Philip.

Philip came from Bethsaida and was a disciple of Jesus from early on. He knew how to lead others to Jesus; he brought Nathanael (or Bartholomew) to Him in a calm, kindly way. He knew how to do some financial forecasting: at the feeding of the 5,000 it was he who pointed out that without divine help, even 200 pennyworth of bread wasn't going to feed that crowd. He was the one whom the Greeks approached when they wanted to ask Jesus to show them the Father, but didn't quite have the nerve to approach Jesus directly.

People had confidence in Philip's spirituality, common sense and kindness. Such a person is a gift to any church! In art, the Apostle Philip has been represented either with a cross, or with loaves of bread.

## **And James the Less, quiet son of Alphaeus**

One thing for sure: the apostles were not self-obsessed. In fact, many a church historian has wished that they had left us just a few more personal details about themselves in the New Testament. James the Less is an excellent example.

This is the name we give to James the son of Alphaeus, but beyond that, who was he? Sometimes he is identified as the James whose mother stood by Christ on the cross. Sometimes he is thought to be the James who was 'brother of the Lord'. Sometimes he is thought to be the James who saw the risen Christ. He has also, and often, been called the first bishop of Jerusalem. And finally, sometimes James the Less has been thought of as the author of the Epistle of James.

*Continued.....*

## James the Less continued

But, who really knows? If none of these identifications are correct, we know practically nothing about James the Less. So perhaps on this day we can simply recall 'all' of the James' above, and thank God for the mother who stood by the cross, the brother that supported Jesus, the apostle who saw his risen Lord and gave his life to proclaiming the truth, the first bishop of Jerusalem, and the author of the marvellous Epistle of James.

Whether it was one James or several, they were all faithful to Jesus, and proclaimed Him as the Messiah. So perhaps that should make them James the More!

James the Less has been given an unusual iconographic emblem: a fuller's club. Tradition has it that he was beaten to death with one, after being sentenced by the Sanhedrin in AD62. In England there are only 26 churches which are dedicated to James the Less.



### Christian Aid Week 2020

Although we are no longer able to meet up for the fundraising events we were planning for Christian Aid Week, it will go ahead, with what we can do online. Fortunately we had already collected just short of £200 at the joint Pancake Party on Ash Wednesday and this has been sent to Christian Aid.

The focus for prayer and fundraising has changed and will now concentrate on the Covid19 virus and its impacts in the global South. There are so many places where people are crowded together, living in one room houses or shacks, with no amenities and no space. Refugees in overcrowded camps, slum-dwellers in teeming cities, people scratching a living wherever they can, short of food, short of water, short of work, and without medical help. When the virus takes hold there will be no refuge.

This year, in terms of giving, those who are happy to connect online will be able to make donations through the Christian Aid Week 2020 webpage (<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>), or through a special JustGiving webpage, which is already available (<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/CAWeek2020>) and through links on email, Twitter and Facebook. Those who would prefer to post their donation will be able to send cheques to Christian Aid, 35-41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL; and if you can and wish to GiftAid your donation, just include a note to that effect in the envelope, giving your name and address and the amount of your gift.



# St Mark in the Cherry Orchard Diocese of Worcester



## News from St Mark in the Cherry Orchard

Well this is a fine kettle of fish we find ourselves in – how are you coping with the ‘lock down’, well I hope. I fear that it could have been considerably worse had the weather not been so favourable. Those of you who know me personally will be aware that I am fortunate to have a large garden to get out into but I have found it hard to get motivated to get things done out there. One bright spot is that I have had the time to sit and watch frogs, newts and 1000s of tadpoles in our ‘puddle’ and it is a joy to listen to the bird song and see them on the feeders. Highlights to date is the sighting of a gold crest having a drink and we have a single magpie that visits several times a day to partake of a free feast of tadpoles so it is just as well that there are so many. I have noticed that they tend not to spend much time on the surface anymore so perhaps they have learnt to dive, dive, dive, when it swoops down!!

You may be aware that whilst St Marks is closed, virtual services are available on line for those with access to the internet. For further details, please contact Revd Andy Stand 01905 358150 or [andy.stand@sky.com](mailto:andy.stand@sky.com) Andy has been working hard to stay in touch with as many people as he can and the workload has been added to because the new Team Rector has yet to arrive in the area.

\*\*\*\*\*

As reported for April, for the greater part of the working day, I have been self isolating down in the church hall with just the radio for company. It has been a hard slog but I have completed the re-decoration of the walls and paintwork and am about to make a start on sanding the worst parts of the floor before it is washed, dried and at least two coats of varnish applied. The cause of the state of the floor has raised concern and it is believed that the damage is being caused by the feet of the chairs that are in situ. The cost of replacing all of the chairs is being investigated not least because the insurance assessor was uneasy about the number that have had to be removed for one reason or another and placed outside the north side of the hall to await disposal. The radiators and all feeder pipes have been smartened up, having been treated with black Hammerite; a final coat will be applied in a month's time.

*Continued.....*

The whole project will hopefully be completed in approximately two weeks so that when St Marks is open for business again, long term hirers and party folk will be greeted with a much cleaner and brighter venue.

St Marks Church Hall has permanent space available for hire on Monday and Friday afternoons. If you or anyone you know is interested in running a group of any kind, please get in touch with me 01905 351392 [janvale810@gmail.com](mailto:janvale810@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

The front lawn and garden border are looking lovely at the moment (if you don't look for the ever increasing amount of weeds). However, since the council has suspended brown bin collections until further notice, the question arose as to what to do with the grass cuttings and I suggested that we could step back in time to when I was a child (a very long time ago). With no brown bins or access to a tip, my parents used to put them around the roses and under the hedge so why not spread them on the unloved cycle path border and the patch of 'garden' at the bottom of the car park to suppress the weeds that go to seed and spread onto church property. I approached the council long ago to complain about the state of the land, asking when it was going to be maintained and the response I received was that they did not have the funds to keep it tidy; surprise, surprise!!

\*\*\*\*\*

The following is an extract from the April 1955 parish magazine. Local Malcolm Copson found his baptism certificate together with a few pages of the edition among some of his parents' papers. He and his family were our next door neighbours when we first arrived in the area in 1983 and his father, Frank, was a very keen gardener as is Malcolm. This was obviously typed on a typewriter and probably took a long time to complete so, having used one in my secretarial days, I appreciate how lucky I am to have a computer to tap away on, easily correcting and re-arranging as I go with reasonable ease.

Sorry folks, but the article ends abruptly because Malcolm's parents only kept part of the magazine. In the June edition I will add some of the announcements and, whilst it is unlikely, some of you might recognise some of the names. I tried to find out what happened to the Revd A Dawson-Catterall but was unsuccessful. *Continued.....*

THE ORCHARD ORACLE  
and St. Mark's Magazine

St. Mark's in the Cherry Orchard, Little Venice,  
Easter 1955 Worcester. No.97.  
Rev.A.Dawson Catterall, Curate of St. Mark's,  
Chaplain of Shrub Hill Hospital, Hillborough,  
Oaklands, Worcester B Scout Group and Severn,  
Leader of St. Mark's Youth Fellowship, President  
of St. Mark's Social Club and Dramatic Society.

Coincidence has dogged the chief events of my life. It has been most perverse where cherished hopes are concerned. On Wednesday I received precisely two letters. They both bore the date of my father's birthday anniversary. In the one of those letters, the Church Commissioners gave information which we have been awaiting for some time. A draft copy of the Order in Council which must be signed by the Queen and a map of the proposed new Parish were enclosed. The story of the protracted negotiations of which this is the culmination, were recorded in the September issue of the St. Mark's Magazine. Every effort had since been made by a contrite authority, to expedite matters. At the request of the Secretary to the Diocesan Board of Finance, I walked over the boundaries on the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels. With the help of 25" maps these were exactly defined and the scheme of the Church Commissioners was based upon that description. This was received, checked, amended and returned on the 31st December. The slight corrections were accepted. A further enquiry in February elicited that "all necessary information has now been received...and the maps...are in the course of preparation..." By now there was an intrusive element with which the second of my two letters is concerned. I do not think my claim to be the founder of St. Mark's as a parish can well be disputed. The wish to be its first incumbent was merely to give visible expression to that fact. Our Bishop is a true father in God to his clergy and it is difficult in words for us to express our deep affection for him. Hartlebury and its homes

Finally, once again, if you are reading this and are short of supplies or need any help at all, please get in touch with me and if I can't help, I can certainly find someone who will be able to assist you; there is definitely no need for you to feel alone in this crisis. Please do not lose heart, keep your chin up and, as someone said, concentrate on what you can do and not what you can't.

Keep safe and well.

**Jan** [janvale810@gmail.com](mailto:janvale810@gmail.com) 01905 351392

## **St. Peter's W.I. in the Lockdown**

Most of us are self isolating in lockdown at home and doing our daily walk, and all of us are missing our families, clubs, meetings, a trip out in the car or just a coffee in town, but on the bright side our houses and gardens have never been so clean and looked so good !!

Julie rang everyone to see how they were and wish them a happy and peaceful Easter I'm sure it was much appreciated. Are you looking after your Geranium? Hopefully we will be able to bring them to our July meeting, but if not please take a photo of your beautiful plant and they will be displayed at a later meeting.

If any of you want any information or you just want a chat please feel free to phone Julie or any of the committee members who would be pleased to talk to you. Hopefully we will be back together again before too long. Please look after yourselves and above all keep safe.

### **Some light relief courtesy of Pam Ayres!**

I'm normally a social girl  
I love to meet my mates  
But lately with the virus here  
We can't go out the gates.  
You see, we are the 'oldies' now  
We need to stay inside  
If they haven't seen us for a while  
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did  
Before we got this old  
There wasn't any Facebook  
So not everything was told.  
We may seem sweet old ladies  
Who would never be uncouth  
But we grew up in the 60s -  
If you only knew the truth!

*Continued.....*

## Pam Ayres continued

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll  
The pill and miniskirts  
We smoked, we drank, we partied  
And were quite outrageous flirts.  
Then we settled down, got married  
And turned into someone's mum,  
Somebody's wife, then nana,  
Who on earth did we become?  
We didn't mind the change of pace  
Because our lives were full  
But to bury us before we're dead  
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside  
For 4 weeks, maybe more  
I finally found myself again  
Then I had to close the door!  
It didnt really bother me  
I'd while away the hour  
I'd bake for all the family  
But I've got no flaming flour!  
Now Netflix is just wonderful  
I like a gutsy thriller  
I'm swooning over Idris  
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze  
For when I'm being idle  
There's wine and whiskey, even gin  
If I'm feeling suicidal!  
So let's all drink to lockdown  
To recovery and health  
And hope this awful virus  
Doesn't decimate our wealth.  
We'll all get through the crisis  
And be back to join our mates  
Just hoping I'm not far too wide  
To fit through the flaming gates!

## A Birdie Quiz for you: what can you see in your neighbourhood?

with thanks to Gail Rowley from St Martin's – observed end of March



1. Struts his stuff in pied plumage stealing from other nests.
2. Tiny with shrill song. Female rating.
3. Speckled chest and trilling song.
4. A waistcoat of russet.
5. Stealthily climbs trees.
6. Drumming on hollow boughs:-
  - a) ground feeder; and b) more common than its small cousin.
7. The lady is brown.
8. It carried the olive branch but doesn't wear a tie!
9. This one likes woods unlike its cousin that would race home!



10. The Queen's majestic birds.
11. Three cousins: a) sky colour; b) has achieved status; c) tail length.
12. Resembles ones that live in houses. Can be called another name.
13. Shiny as coal. The area at the top of a mast.
14. Should be at the coast catching its name!
15. As it glides, its call is like a cat's mew.
16. Single letter of the alphabet.
17. This quiz could send you quackers!!



# Joan of Arc: saving France from the English!

## 30th May 1431

How far would you go to respond to God's call on your life? When, as the daughter of a peasant family in Champagne in 1426, 14-year-old Joan heard heavenly voices calling her to 'save France' from the English, she decided to obey the call, no matter what the consequences.

Teenage girls who want to rescue their country from foreign troops were considered every bit as crazy back then as they would be now. But Joan eventually came to the notice of the Dauphin (Later Charles VII) who decided to make use of her obvious ability to inspire people – in this case, the French, to fight. And so Joan, dressed in white armour, rode at the front of the French army when they relieved Orleans in April 1429.

Her presence and belief in her divine calling to get rid of the English, did wonders for the morale of the troops, who loved her even more when she sustained a wound in the breast, and made little of it.

A campaign in the Loire followed, and then in July the Dauphin was crowned at Rheims with Joan at his side, carrying her standard. More battles followed that winter, until Joan was captured and sold to the English. They attributed her success to witchcraft and spells, and imprisoned her at Rouen. She was brought before judges, where her spirited and shrewd defence were outstanding.

But the judges declared her false and diabolical, and she was condemned to die as a heretic. She was burnt at the stake in the marketplace at Rouen on 30 May 1431. Joan died as she had lived; with total faith in God and certainty that she was obeying His will for her life. She died with fortitude, looking at a cross and calling on the name of Jesus. Her ashes were thrown into the Seine.

Joan's integrity and courage are what shine down the centuries. Here is a patron saint for you if you feel that God is calling you to do something extraordinary: something that is way, way beyond your comfort zone; but something that could right wrongs and make a difference in the world. Are you up for it?

### **Solomon?**

"Father," asked the little boy. "Did Solomon have 700 wives?"

"I believe so," said the father.

"Well, Father, was he the man who said,

'Give me liberty or give me death?'"

## St James the Least of All

**On the perils of a Scout camp:** *The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters as we hope for better times!*



The Rectory, St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

It seems that the basics of parish ministry are no longer taught in theological colleges. Don't you know anything about consulting your diary in public? When you are asked if you are free on a certain date, accepted practice is to open it so that the enquirer cannot quite see. You then shake your head sadly, saying you are committed to blessing a new tea urn, or on some other vital ecclesiastical activity that day. Then you regretfully give your apologies. You do not open the thing in full view of your enquirer, so he can see the blank pages! Really, it serves you right that you are now committed to going on Scout camp.

The last time I agreed to pay the Scouts a visit was when I found that there was a splendid restaurant only a mile away from their camp. I arrived and parked my car by the side of the river where they were all canoeing, wound down the car window and made encouraging noises for some minutes before explaining I had to find a garage for petrol.

Several hours later, after an excellent lunch, I drove to where they were now rock climbing, wound down the car window and made encouraging noises for some minutes before explaining that I had a standing committee to return to that evening. It was a splendid day.

You, however, will experience the charms of two days under canvas. Whatever site for your tent you choose, it will be the one that floods first. The early hours will undoubtedly find you wading about in water in the pitch dark, retrieving your sleeping bag and clothes – which you will then have to wear for the rest of the day. Watch out for the food, as well: all camp food contains grass and usually sheep droppings. This will make you ill, though for some reason Scouts thrive on it.

Whatever the weather and whatever activities you do each day, you will end up wet, chilled and bruised. At least your evenings will be warm, for you are bound to spend them at Casualty, with youngsters suffering from sprained ankles or dislocated shoulders. My only advice is to use those hours in Casualty to practise the art of opening your diary in a way that only YOU can see it.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace



May  
2020

