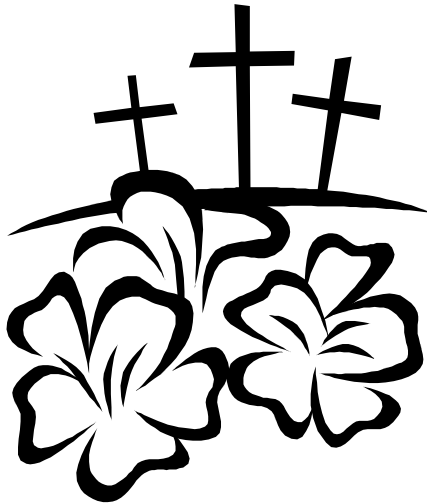


**The Parish Magazine of
Whitchurch-on-Thames
and Whitchurch Hill**



MARCH 2002

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A letter for Passiontide and Easter from the
Reverend Father Peter Jefford

Dear People of the Parish,
There is a simple child's Nursery Rhyme which has
these words: Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat,
 Where have you been?
 I've been to London
 To Look at the Queen.

Perhaps the easiest way to understand the great
mystery of life is to see that life really is a journey.
We are all on the journey through life and none of us
travel alone.

But where is God in relation to that journey?

He is both the starting point and the ending point, the
Alpha and the Omega. And if there is one sentence in
the whole of the New Testament Writings that takes
us to the heart of The Passion of Our Lord is has to
be this one that comes from St Matthew's Gospel:

*And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve
disciples apart in the way and said to them "Behold,
we go up to Jerusalem".*

How do you think he said these words? Was it a
command as the Nazis used to say to the prisoners,
"COME WITH ME". Was it an instruction? I think
that it was an invitation to make what was for him his
final journey to the great city of Zion, "*Please come
with me on the road to Jerusalem*".

Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat,
What did you there?
I frightened a little mouse
under her chair.

So it was that Our Lord qualifies his invitation with
these sad and sombre words:

*And the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief
priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn*

A Prayer in the time of Lent, and of the Passion of our Lord

These are great days for all of us to be people of prayer for there is just so much to pray about at the present time, as there always has been.

But this prayer somehow takes us through the great progression in the life, the vision, and the understanding of our Lord. It is a prayer which I believe could never be improved.

So here is the Collect for the Sunday next before Lent, as found in the book of Common Worship:

*Almighty Father, whose son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.
Amen.*

And the Old Prayer for Passion Sunday, which is full of such profound comprehension:

*Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace: through Jesus Christ Our Lord.
Amen.*



NOTICES FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Cremation

On Friday, 1st March, at Reading Crematorium, Thomas Edgar Goodall aged 81 years of 7 Manor Road, who died on 17th February.

He lived in the village all his life as had many generations of Goodall before him.

Boze Down Vineyard, Hardwick Road



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*Notes on the Church
Calendar—March*

Sunday 25 March is
the Feast of the
Annunciation, when the
Archangel Gabriel appeared
to the Virgin Mary to tell
her that she was to become
the mother of the Messiah.
This feast is also known as
Lady Day, and is one of the
four quarter-days (the
others being *Midsummer*,
Michaelmas and *Christmas
Day*).

Until 1752, when
Great Britain adopted the
Gregorian Calendar, *Lady
Day* was legally the
beginning of the year. The
Gregorian Calendar had
been introduced in 1582 by
Pope Gregory XIII – but,
since it was a Roman
Catholic initiative, the
Protestant countries in
Europe preferred to stick
with the old Julian
Calendar. This is why dates
between 1 January and 25
March during these 170
years are usually written as,
for instance, 20 February
1652/3.

Peter Mottley

Children's Page

Shimon's story

Have you ever done something without thinking and then wished with all your heart that you hadn't? That's what happened to Shimon in this story.

Yeshua and his friends had been having the special Passover meal. It should have been a happy time, but somehow it wasn't. It seemed dark and serious, as if something dreadful was going to happen. Yeshua said sadly, 'You're all going to run away and leave me.'

'I won't!' Shimon, or Peter as we're calling him now, declared. 'I'll never abandon you!'

'Oh yes, you will,' Yeshua told him. 'Even before the cock crows tomorrow morning, you will have disowned me three times.'

'No I won't.' Peter insisted. 'Not even if I have to die with you.' He was so sure of himself.

But things went from bad to worse. First Peter fell asleep when Yeshua had asked him specially to stay awake and pray. Then the soldiers came and arrested Yeshua – and all his friends ran away in panic in case they got taken away too. Even Peter, strong, brave Peter, who didn't go very far and crept back to see where they were taking Yeshua. They took him to the High Priest, to stand trial, and Peter crept into the courtyard outside the building, and waited there.

Suddenly a servant girl came up to him and said. 'You were with that Yeshua.'

'I don't know what you're talking about,' Peter replied, without thinking, and he moved away. (*once*)

But someone else came up to him and said, 'You were there. I saw you with Yeshua.'

'I tell you I wasn't,' he insisted. 'I don't even know the

Further to Peter Mottley's letter about the choir robes in the February edition, I received the following letter from **Peter Hawley**:

Dear Editor,

Peter Mottley has drawn attention to the special significance of the red choir robes used at Whitchurch. He quotes Richard Hughes who is quite decisive about the Royal connection in his book on the History of St Mary's. He goes on in the book to tell us of an important episode for the village which perhaps few today know about. "The King (Edward II) was in residence at the village" (probably at the old Manor House on the site of the present day Walliscote) "from 1st—4th May 1318. Some twenty royal charters were issued from Whitchurch".

Robert Noble in his Article "The Wealth of Old Whitchurch" on page 119 of the recently published collected edition "Footprints and Cyphers" was equally definite. "In mediaeval times Whitchurch was a Royal Manor, chiefly used as a cash bonus for favoured Royals and Notables by lease to them (for life only) of its Lordship and revenues."

Sir Rickman Godlee on page 262 of "A Village on the Thames" gives a list of half a dozen or more Monarchs or senior Royals (including the Black Prince) who were patrons of the living and probably also Lords of the Manor up to the fifteenth century. Our other village historian, Canon Slatter, refers to the ultimate grant of the manor of Whitchurch by Henry V to Thomas Walysh, a court official, celebrated in one of our brasses at St Mary's.

It is clear enough from the above that the historic case for the red choir robes is truly made. I do not know what the exact regulation says, but we would be surrendering something special to change the colour and I entirely endorse Peter's sentiments on that.

Unfortunately, not many of the above authorities have identified



Notice outside a small church: "Emergency prayers only during revarnishing of pews."

*From 'Peterborough' in The Daily Telegraph,
Submitted by John Dolby*

The Tablecloth

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to his first pastorate, arrived in suburban Brooklyn in early October excited about their opportunity to reopen a church. When they saw their church it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, and what-not, and on Dec 18 were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On Dec 19 a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm hit the area and lasted for two days.

On the 21st, the pastor went to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high. The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stopped in.

One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory coloured, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colours and a cross embroidered right in the centre. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church. By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later.

She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder and hangers to put the tablecloth up as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area. Then he noticed the woman walking down the centre aisle. Her face was like a sheet. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?" The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials ZBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just got the tablecloth. The women explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. She was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again.

The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made him keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, feeling that was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a house-cleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve! The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return. One older man, whom the pastor recognised from the neighbourhood, continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he had got the tablecloth on the front well because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two table-cloths so much alike?

He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety, and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in prison. He never saw his wife or his home again in all the 35 years in between. The pastor asked him if the man would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island, to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier. He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.

This is a true story - submitted by Wendy Ferguson from the original by Pastor Rob Reid

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Who is responsible for what in our Churches

Breakfast Rota for Father Peter

Jo Adams 984 3362

Readers/Intercessions List

St Mary's Eiluned Jones 984 4839

Tony Voysey 984 3946

St John's Jo Adams 984 3362

Sidesmen

St Mary's Alan Matthews 984 4489

Tony Voysey 984 3946

Peter Mottley 984 2826

Jo Adams 984 3362

St John's John Baty 01491 680381

Jo Adams 984 3362

Flower Rota

St Mary's Pam Phillipson 984 3181

(Festivals) Barbara Aldridge 984 2962

St John's Ingrid Dreweatt 984 2251

Brass Cleaning

St Mary's Lesley Landen 984 2414

St John's Pat Turner 984 4200

Locking/Unlocking

St Mary's Fred Phillipson 984 3181

St John's Pat Turner 984 4200

Coffee Rota

St Mary's Sally Woolhouse 984 4365

St John's Jo Adams 984 3362

Kate Giles 984 1590

Choir Contacts

Kate Giles 984 1590

Tanya Hawley 984 3069

Deanery Synod

Wendy Ferguson 984 1262

Kate Giles 984 1590

All Churches Together (ACT)

Tanya Hawley 984 3069

Carolyn Greenford 984 4147

Geraldine Witcher 984 4959

Officers of the Parish

Officiating Priest:

Reverend Father Peter Jefford
27 Ashlong Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 0NH
01865 760593

Churchwardens:

Alan Matthews, Ashdown, Duchess Close
0118 984 4489
Jo Adams, Windings, Whitchurch Hill
0118 984 3362

Vergers:

St Mary's	Eiluned Jones	984 4839
St John's	Pat Turner	984 4200

Honorary Secretary:

Wendy Ferguson, 21 Swanston Field.
0118 984 1262

Organist and Choirmaster:

Julian Oxley
01491 671415

Honorary Treasurer:

Robert Plumb, Uplands Cottage.
0118 984 4838

Assistant Treasurer:

Tony Voysey, Mow Cop, High Street.
0118 984 3946

Captain of the Bellringers:

Stephanie May, 0118 957 2596

Editor, Parish Magazine

Sue Matthews, Ashdown, Duchess Close
0118 984 4489 or email: suematt@waitrose.com

Services for

March

3rd March, The Third Sunday of Lent

St John's	8 a.m.	The Holy Communion
St Mary's	10 a.m.	Parish Communion

10th March, The Fourth Sunday of Lent Mothering Sunday

St Mary's	8 a.m.	The Holy Communion
St Johns	10 a.m.	Parish Communion
St Mary's	6 p.m.	Evensong

17th March, The Fifth Sunday of Lent

St John's	8 a.m.	The Holy Communion
St Mary's	10 a.m.	Parish Communion

24th March, Palm Sunday

St Mary's	8 a.m.	The Holy Communion
St John's	10 a.m.	Parish Communion
St John's	6 p.m.	Evensong

29th March, Good Friday

St John's 12 noon An Hour by the Cross

31st March, Easter Day

St John's	8 a.m.	The Holy Communion
St Mary's	10 a.m.	Parish Communion