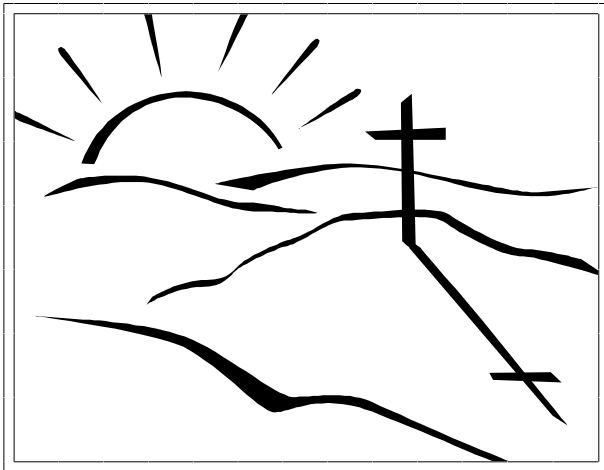


**The Parish Magazine of  
Whitchurch-on-Thames  
and Whitchurch Hill**



**May 2001**

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## **A LETTER FROM THE REVEREND FATHER PETER JEFFORD**

**Dear People of the Parish,**

**A long time ago I remember going to sea on a Troopship and not knowing quite what to expect. Except that at the time I was very excited by the prospect!**

**I can recall now those first four days of continual sea sickness as in the winter time we first sailed through the stormy Irish Sea and then on to the Bay of Biscay in a very small vessel. But things got better and life became much more rewarding in terms of human experience. One of the delights that I can remember still today was rising early, climbing out of my hammock (not easy) and going up on deck before dawn to see the sun rise over the sea. For this became a magical experience. At first the vast sea was just a great swirling grey mass of ocean, grey flecked with white. A vast swirling mass. And then quite suddenly up would come the bright sun in the eastern sky and the scene was now transformed...for the sea was now blue, full of colour and light. A glorious light filled the great vista of the ocean and it even began to get warm! It seemed that at dawn that life had come back into the world, and that life was for all the living creatures.**

If we think back to the Eve of Easter Day, that first Holy Saturday in Jerusalem, we must try to imagine the feelings of the friends of our Lord and how they then felt. We realise that they all must be dead in heart and dead in spirit, for the Lord of Life was dead. He had gone. What is so important for us now is to examine clearly the words that were used at that time, for words are so important. They were vital then, they are no less vital today. And on that First Easter Day the first message that they were given was that of the Angel-Messenger and this is what he said:

***“Do not be amazed, you who seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified...HE HAS RISEN. HE IS NOT HERE IN THIS SEPULCHRE.”***

When Cleopas and his companion returned from Emmaus on that day, the news that they were both given in the Upper Room was this:

***“The Lord has risen indeed and has appeared to Simon.”***

That is why it is quite insufficient to say at Easter time that “Jesus is Alive” for the Resurrection is so much bigger than that statement. What is important to state is this: that he was Alive; that he had both been crucified, and died, and buried; and that he has risen. He has now risen.

Just as both life and death in this world are great mysteries so also is the Resurrection of our Lord a very great Mystery. But it happened. We do not know how it happened...but like that rising sun that brought light and splendour before my eyes on the great ocean so Christ's Easter rising—His Resurrection—brought an everlasting life into the lives of His friends.

And that life brought other things as well. It brought JOY, HOPE, PROMISE AND LAUGHTER. For them it had become their great shared dynamic and many years later St. Paul was to write of the "**POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION**" FOR THEN IT GAVE THE PEOPLE THE POWER TO BELIEVE.

We need that power today.

So to us this time of Easter has come to bring purpose into our minds, hope into our hearts and joy into our souls. And Easter stays with us for ever for every Sunday is a memorial of that first Easter Day.

A very happy Easter to you all.

Peter Jefford

**STOP PRESS:** At the Annual General Meeting of the Parochial Church Council, following the retirement of Eiluned Jones and John Dolby, Jo Adams and Alan Matthews were elected Church Wardens. More PCC news in next issue.

## NOTICES FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

### Holy Baptism

On March 18th at St Mary's, William George, son of Guy and Emma Barker of Myrtle Cottage, Hardwick Road.

On April 29th at St Mary's, Olivia Frances, daughter of John and Deborah James of Swanston House.

### Burial

On February 23rd at St John's, Joan Ann Kenneally, aged 70 years, of Rangitiki, Hill Bottom.

### Cremation

On January 16th at Reading Crematorium, John Edward Kerswill, aged 85 years, of No.18 Manor Road.

On March 29th at Reading Crematorium, Peter Wilkinson Hope, aged 84 years, of Rosemead, Eastfield Lane.

On April 12th following a Service at St John's and at Reading Crematorium, John William Anthony Pragnell, aged 64 years, of No.1 Hocketts Close.

On April 27th following a Service at Reading Crematorium and Memorial Service at St Mary's, Pam Frankenburg, aged 68 years, of Bridge Cottage, Whitchurch Road, Pangbourne.

### Burial of Ashes

On January 11th at St John's, the Ashes of Pamela Yvonne Crocker, aged 58 years, of No.56 Cleeve Down Goring on Thames.

**On January 22nd at St John's, the Ashes of Frank Outram de Nobriga, aged 77 years, of Westwood Nursing Home, Well Street, Cheshire, formerly of Whitchurch Hill.**

**On April 1st at St Mary's, the Ashes of Jean Lesley Hoare, aged 51 years, who died on 26th July 2000 at Duchess of Kent House, Reading.**

**On April 21st at St John's, the Ashes of John William Anthony Pragnell.**

*"Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord. May light perpetual shine upon them."*

### *Easter Day Celebrations*

On behalf of the parish, we pass on thanks to all the many people who decorated the two churches most beautifully—not forgetting the tomb and Calvary Hill inside the door of St Mary's. Plus great appreciation to all who provided the excellent eats.

Further thanks are due to Kay for having the Rectory spick and span and full of flowers for our reception—to say nothing of the constant interruptions she tolerated over several days.

*Eiluned Jones*

*John Dolby*

*Churchwardens  
15th April 2001*

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## A PARISH OPINION POLL

Your opinion on our churches would truly help us to plan the future of the parish. This short survey should take only a minute or so to complete, but will provide us with powerful evidence of the opinions of residents. Please, please give us your views, and return this form during the month of May 2001 to one of the addresses given at the end.

**About Yourself:** (Delete as appropriate)

1. Would you describe your churchgoing as:
  - Monthly
  - Weekly
  - Christmas, Easter, Weddings, Funerals
  - Never
  - Non Christian
  
2. If you attend church, would you more normally attend:
  - St Mary's, Whitchurch
  - St John's, Whitchurch Hill
  - Both equally
  - Neither

**Your views:**

3. If you are the parent of a child aged 5 to 10, would you like to see a Sunday School re-established?
  - Yes
  - No

4. If you have young children, would you attend a Pram/Young Mothers Service?
  - Yes
  - No
  
5. If you answered “yes” to Question 5, please indicate which would be the best time for you to attend:
  - Morning
  - Afternoon
  - Weekend
  - Midweek
  
6. Would you attend either of the following events in the church:
  - a) A suitable play
    - Yes
    - No
  - b) An organ recital, choral or other musical performance
    - Yes
    - No
  
7. Would you like your children to be baptised in church?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I would like a non-faith Naming Ceremony
  - (Grinning wryly) I am unlikely to have any more children in need of baptism

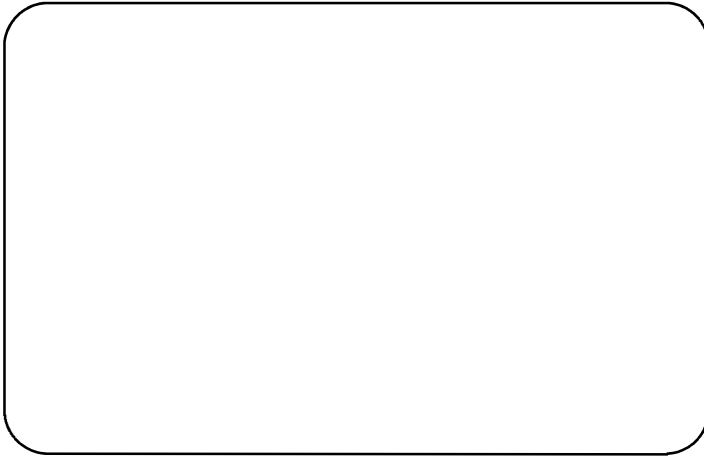
## **Can you help?**

- 8. Would you be prepared to help the parish in any of the following ways:**
  - a) Arranging flowers for the churches (about every six months)**
    - Yes
    - No
  - b) Providing coffee after the Sunday 10:00 service (not every week, on a rota basis)**
    - Yes
    - No
  - c) Preparing a faith related article for the Parish Magazine**
    - Yes
    - No
  - d) Selecting hymns for any of the services**
    - Yes
    - No
  - e) Joining the choir (for either or both Churches—rehearsals to suit participants)**
    - Yes
    - No

## **And Finally:**

- 9. Would you like to be visited by your Parish Priest?**
  - Yes
  - No

If you have any suggestions for the future development of your churches and of the Parish, please add your comments here (or on a separate sheet if needed):



This survey is being conducted on an entirely confidential basis. If however you answered “Yes” to Question 4, or Question 9, or any of the points in Question 8, please contact Wendy Ferguson, Jo Adams or Alan Matthews (tel. nos. page 18).

Thank you for your time and co-operation.  
***The Churchwardens***

Please return this form to one of the below:

Wendy Ferguson  
21 Swanston Field  
Whitchurch  
Reading  
RG8 7HP

Jo Adams  
Windings  
Whitchurch Hill  
Reading  
RG8 7NU

Alan Matthews  
Ashdown  
Duchess Close  
Whitchurch  
Reading  
RG8 7EN

### ***Mothers Union News***

Rev. Nelva Moss took our Lady Day Celebration Service at St. Leonard's Woodcote in March which we much appreciated and were only sad that several members were unable to be present. Dot Hayes was admitted as a new member and 4 other members were officially welcomed from other branches.

Our May meeting is on Thursday May 24th. at 2.15p.m. at Abbots Lodge when Rev. and Mrs. Vail will make a return visit and share some of their experiences during their 3 month Chaplaincy in Ibiza last year. (this is a change in the programme). Our Prayer Group will be meeting on Thursday May 10th. at 2.30p.m. at Roxana, Dorothy Baty's home. Anyone is most welcome to any of our meetings. Phone 680288 if interested.

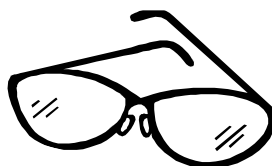
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## *Notes on the Church Calendar*

### *May*

Like many of the events in the church calendar, **Ascension Day** is a moveable feast, coming as it does forty days after Easter. The earliest possible day for Ascension Day is 30 April, and the latest is 3 June. This year, it's on 24 May. The feast celebrates Christ's ascension into Heaven, having spent the intervening six weeks since the Resurrection quelling the doubts of Thomas, walking and talking with his disciples, etc.

Ascension Island in the South Atlantic is so called because it was discovered by the Portuguese on Ascension Day in 1502. Since, in that year, Ascension Day coincided with the feast of St Helena, the island is also called St Helena. Napoleon was exiled there from 1815 until his death in 1821.

*Peter Mottley*

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### **Choir Practice**

Following the great success of the new choir who added a great deal to the Easter Day service **Anne Bolam, our new organist**, is keen to build on this and establish a permanent choir.

To this end she intends to hold singing practices each Friday, 7.30 p.m. at St Mary's and would welcome all budding singers of all ages. Please let her know of your interest on 942 1020.

---

### **Fancy living in Switzerland?**

Au Pair (male/female) required for a Swiss/English family, 2 children aged 3½ and 1½.

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If you are interested please give my mum (Jo Adams) a call on 0118 984 3362 (Whitchurch Hill).

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<p><b>Whitchurch Theatre Club</b>  ...takes you to plays and  concerts about once a month;  matinees &amp; evenings, London  &amp; provinces. If interested,  contact Mr &amp; Mrs A.Seager,  'Little Court', Swanston Field,  Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8  7HP  Tel: 0118 984 3521</p>	<p><b><i>Chiltern Domestic  Appliances</i></b>  Guaranteed repairs and  servicing for Hoo-  ver,Hotpoint, Zanussi, Ben-  dix, Indesit and all major  brands. Washing machines,  tumble dryers and dish-  washers. Low call out fee.  Free estimates and  prompt attention.  Tel: 01491 681526</p>

## J O H N     A N D     E I L U N E D

It was a remarkable experience, after some eight months of retirement, to sit at the back of St Mary's on Easter Sunday morning. I was reminded that my first celebration of the Eucharist in that church was on Easter Day, 1979. (The churchwarden doubted my ability to cope and laid on another priest!) A great deal has happened in the interim. The most traumatic period was when the then treasurer decided to discipline the Rector . . . the rules of strict accountancy (unwavering attention to the jots and tittles) were to supersede my attempts at being a prophet of the Lord (headstrong, wilful, a pain in the neck).

The crisis eventually went away. But it gave rise to two important developments. The first was the churchwardenship of Eiluned Jones. Nowhere could you find a more shining example of unstinting care and devotion. Woe betide anyone unwilling to sell raffle tickets or to lay on the necessary for the Harvest Supper. For over a decade she persuaded, cajoled and delighted all who were privileged to cross her path.

The second was the churchwardenship of John Dolby. There were other churchwardens who made invaluable contributions. But his genius was to give a tangible form to the treasury of goodwill which was built up . . . a scintillating fundraising campaign

followed by the refurbishment of St Mary's and much else. As the inimitable George W. Bush would say, on no account can he be underestimated.

I understand that both John and Eiluned are to relinquish their churchwardenships at the AGM. All I can say is that the parish owes them a great deal more than can be encompassed within in a short tribute written for the Parish Magazine.

*Richard Hughes*



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January  
to  
December

## **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

*Honorary Secretary:*

Wendy Ferguson, 21 Swanston Field.  
0118 984 1262

*Organist and Choirmaster:*

Anne Bolam, 6 Hillview Close, Long Lane  
0118 942 1020

*Honorary Treasurer:*

Robert Plumb, Uplands Cottage.  
0118 984 4838

*Assistant Treasurer:*

Fred Phillipson, 2 Duchess Close.  
0118 984 3181

*Captain of the Bellringers:*

Stephanie May, 0118 957 2596

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# Services for . . . .

## MAY

### **6th May, 3rd Sunday after Easter**

St John's                      8 a.m.      Holy Communion

St Mary's                     10 a.m.     Parish Communion

### **13th May, 4th Sunday after Easter**

St Mary's                     8 a.m.      Holy Communion

St John's                     10 a.m.     Parish Communion

St Mary's                     6 p.m.      Evensong

### **20th May, 5th Sunday after Easter Rogation Sunday**

St John's                     8 a.m.      Holy Communion

St Mary's                     10 a.m.     Parish Communion

### **27th May, Sunday after Ascension Day**

St Mary's                     8 a.m.      Holy Communion

St John's                     10 a.m.     Parish Communion

St Mary's                     6 a.m.      Evensong

### **3rd June, Whit Sunday**

St Mary's                     8 a.m.      Holy Communion

St John's                     10 a.m.     Parish Communion

St Mary's                     6 a.m.      Evensong