

MAINDEE

PARISH
MAGAZINE

JUNE 2021



After months of lockdown, the Sunday procession probably needed some practise.

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▶ POSITION VACANT

PARISH AREA WEBSITE

<http://www.stjohnsmaindee.org.uk/>

SUNDAY SERVICES

- ▶ St John's: 10.45am
- ▶ St Mary's: (Wharf Road): 9.15am
- ▶ St Andrew's Church: (Nash Road): 10.00am
- ▶ St Philip's Church: (Jenkins Street): 6.00pm

WEEKDAY & HOLY DAY SERVICES

Details appear in the Weekly Bulletin

THE COMBINED PARISHES OF MAINDEE & LLISWERRY



*The Churches of
St John the Evangelist, St Mary's,
St Andrew's & St Philip's*

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BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS, ETC.

Baptisms, Weddings and the hire of the church halls are available by appointment with the Clergy. Please telephone the Parish Office Mon - Fri 10am until 1pm on Tel: 271749 (to make these arrangements).



**The Parish Churches of Maindee & Lliswerry
The Diocese of Monmouth, Church in Wales**

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Pentecost 2021

Dear Friends:

What a strange moment we're living in. As more and more people get vaccinated and restrictions lighten, we are finally seeing real hope that life may yet emerge from lockdown. Normal (whatever that has ever meant!) may ultimately be different in many ways from the before-times. And, make no mistake, we're yet not past the possibility of greater restrictions come winter. All the same, there is an expectation that something different is finally around the corner; change is in the air.

This was true for Christ's disciples as Pentecost approached, then passed, and the Christian Church began to take shape. As is currently the case for us, there was a lot still to be discovered and decided. The coming of the Holy Spirit to "lead you into all truth" was the beginning of the journey, not the announcement of an action completed. Only when the Spirit came, would the apostles and their successors know — or at least be prepared to work out — what distinguished their fledgling faith from that which came before, and from that which surrounded them in the Greco-Roman culture of the day. Who was the Good News for? How would the faithful be encouraged to keep, display, and share the faith? How was a new movement not welcomed by its mother religion to organise itself?

I would say that the current state of Monmouth Diocese, and of our church and our neighbouring churches in particular, is — in some ways — in an analogous place. As we pray for the Holy Spirit to surround us today, we find ourselves stepping out into faith not yet entirely understood, into re-organisation, and into a society that doesn't always understand the Christian faith — yet with a firm conviction that there is Good News to be had from our encounter with the Son of God. Our prayer for the Spirit to be upon us in the midst is, therefore, not a request for all the answers to land at once, but rather for his guidance along the road. It must not have been easy at times for the apostles to hold faith — the Acts makes that clear enough! — and it may not at some points be easy for us, either.

But, with all the unknowns that the disciples faced, what did exist was a determination to take the next right step before them because God had been good — and they had seen the risen Lord. Just as in the turning point of a pandemic, we see, even amidst the chaos, evidence of God's goodness carrying us through and beginning to change our collective fortunes. For every unknown that we might be nervous about, there is also a hope that is dawning.

I pray, and would ask you to do the same, that all of these things are equally true for the Newport No. 2 Ministry Area, its leaders, and its congregations. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit, believing that he will surely be present, and step forward through fear, trusting that the God who has made himself so well known in Maindee and Lliswerry, will guide our steps into even greater places.

God bless,



From Revd. Linda Batt Associate Priest

Focusing the Lens of Our Faith

Hello Everyone,

It seems like only yesterday that I was writing my last message for the magazine. But, here we are again and I am once again sharing my thoughts with you. There has been much talk in the news about injustice; injustice due to race and colour, injustice due to physical or mental disability, **injustice due to vaccine distribution, injustice due to sexuality, injustice due to...** the list goes on for ever.

In my younger years, like most young folk, I viewed most things from the perspective of either black or white, there were very few grey areas in my life. Over the years, as I grew up, matured, and my perspective has been transformed—by the seasoning of years, the joy and the pain of disappointment, the reality of adversity, and the still small voice of God tempering my long-held convictions.

Now I'm much more uncomfortable with sweeping generalities and I find myself, not always successfully, doing my best to see things from all opposing views. I try in earnest to see things through the lens of my faith before drawing a conclusion or making a stance. This taking time to step back, pray and open my heart and mind to the still small voice of God helps to focus my faith lens.

There's a scene in John's Gospel, one we're all familiar with, where Jesus meets a woman who had been trapped in the act of adultery by a judgmental group of religious leaders. They dragged her into a public place and put her sin on full display.

These men, despite possessing years of experience and despite studying the Hebrew Scriptures for **many years, had never been transformed by any of what they'd read or learned.**

They sneered, "This woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?" (John 8:4–5).

What a moment! Such a rigid, black-and-white perspective with no room at all for grace and reflection. Then Jesus steps in:

He stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" . . . When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. (John8:7, 9)

Notice that none of these accusers considered taking a more balanced and merciful approach - they **don't see through the lens of their faith in the One God. They just walked away. When Jesus asked the woman if any of her accusers had condemned her, she said no. Then Jesus replied, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more" (John 8:10–11).**

'Go and sin no more.' My goodness, now this is amazing Grace, this is amazing love.

We all hold so tightly to values we've held for years that, sometimes, we've forgotten how to open ourselves to allow Christ to work through us with Grace, love and mercy. What will it take for us to drop the rigid, accusing spirit we've fostered over the years and allow God's Spirit to transform us from within, making us more like Jesus?

Perhaps it begins at the Eucharist when we are invited to remember our Lord and the gift of salvation, he gave each one of us. Our liturgy tells us Jesus died once for all. For ALL, not just for some.

In a world that, from outward appearances, seems to have learned little from history, more than ever we as Christians need to remember these words.

The Eucharist is a healing service but we seldom see it as such. As much as humanity needs healing so too does our earth. As world leaders gather this month for the G7 summit to discuss global warming we ask the Lord to focus us on what we as his body in the world can do. As people come together to work toward equality for all and equal distribution of medicines, food and water let ask the Lord to focus our hearts and minds to share what we have, just as the disciples did.

As we move forward as a Ministry Area, moving out of the comfort of what we have known into the adventure of what God has in store for us, we place ourselves under the gracious fountain of **God's Word**—as we leave our self-crafted, unbending idealism behind, we open our hearts and minds to His mercy. We pray that he sharpens the focus of our faith so that we may start modelling grace. That it transforms us from the inside out.

That we be open in heart and mind, open to God who has great things prepared for those who love him.

With much love,

Rev Linda





*The Parish of Maindee
St John's Choir*

I wrote last month about how I was looking forward to further easing of lockdown restrictions which will mean we can get back to choir practice and everyone, choir and congregation, singing in church services. Well, we are nearly there but not quite!! The choristers were as excited as I was when we realised that, with the new easing of lockdown restrictions on Monday 17th May, we could resume choir practice on a Friday evening. So we all met on Friday 21st May for our first choir practice for fourteen months and two weeks, albeit under unusual circumstances. As a result of the social distancing regulations we held choir practice in the church nave rather than in the choir vestry. It was strange, I have to confess. To have the choristers seated two to a row and spaced out from the front row of nave seats to the back row looked very strange and sounded even more strange than our singing in the confines of the vestry.

With Margaret ensconced on the keyboard at the front of the church and me walking (delicately!?) up and down the aisle trying to listen to the four parts singing was something none of us have experienced before. It was surreal to say the least. The sound seemed to waft up to the roof beams and I was concerned about singing on a Sunday with a reduced choir!! However, the sixteen choristers who sang on Sunday for the Pentecost service did admirably and I was a delighted bunny at the end of the service; so pleased to be back.

As a result of the social distancing requirements, we can only seat a maximum of sixteen choristers in **the choir stalls, that's half of the choir at any one service. A rota has been devised depending on the availability of the choristers and I am hopeful that we will have enough to keep the four choir parts (soprano/treble, alto, tenor and bass) in a good balance of sound. It worked on our first Sunday back!**

What we all found funny was rehearsing the Thorne Mass, which we have all been singing for some years now; how your memory plays tricks and you wonder if you have ever sung this music before!! Given the reduced numbers in the choir we will be singing well-known, simple music from our repertoire over the coming months so that everyone feels comfortable.

I'm sure it will not be too long before the congregation is allowed to sing too, and it must have been very strange, and difficult not to join in the singing of the hymns and the service music at the Pentecost service on 23rd May. Be patient, please, as we are trying to be patient! When congregational singing is allowed then I'm sure we will be able to have the full choir back in the stalls. That is my hope so fingers crossed!!

I have written several times about three of the young choristers enrolled on the RSCM Bath Abbey residential course in the summer. Yet again, I am delighted to say that I have received two further **generous donations to the choir fund to assist the girls' families in funding the course and this kindness and generosity are very much appreciated by me, the girls and their families. You know who you are! Thank you so much.**

I am pleased to report that the major refurbishment of the six organ bellows has at last been completed. **You won't really notice a difference but the organ workings are much quieter as there is no air escaping from the bellows as there was before the refurbishment.** Our thanks to Gary of Liberty Organs for undertaking this work and for the excellent finish he has made to the bellows. We are now due a tuning to make sure that everything is in good order.

We enjoyed a lovely picnic in Beechwood Park last summer because we were not able to be together for choir practice and we were joined by several members of the congregation. The weather during this month of May has been atrocious and so another picnic is being planned for June and when we are assured of a warm, sunny dry spell of weather I will announce arrangements via email and Fr Will's Sunday notices. Keep your eyes peeled and ears fully attentive!!

If you wish to learn more about the choir then please check out the church website at: stjohnsmaindee.org.uk All the music that the St John's Virtual Choir has recorded is available for you to listen to: click on 'the choir' at the top of the web page and you will be able to access the dropdown menu including 'virtual choir'.

John Granger



Mel's Meanderings

If you read last month's offering I wrote about The Nut Job, this month I have decided to write about the sequel The Nut Job 2- Nutty by Nature, and before you say anything, Yes I am. The mstory of the film is that the park the animals live in is taken over by the greedy Mayor of the city to build an amusement park making the animals homeless. So the animals decide to ban together to try and get their park back, as it says in the film "We are better together, there is nothing we can't achieve."

And that is the point, we can achieve anything we want to ,knowing it is God's will, together we can do things that seem impossible for one person. God is always with us, if we decide to do something and it is God's Will we can surpass our own thoughts and doubts. At the end of the film they get their park back. By working together they have done what they wanted. As we can when we set out to do something together.

Have to love what Surly the Squirrel says on getting on the rollercoaster to stop the Mayor getting away, Humans actually enjoy this, Yes I can agree with that. So let's work together.

Let's get Nuts

Keep God First Place

Do the Dance Now

Mel



Perhaps he's heard that we're losing our churchwarden



...I think I must have missed that module when I was at theological college!

NEWS

Churches stepped up support for their communities during pandemic

More than 4,000 Church of England parishes have stepped up their support to local communities in the face of rising levels of poverty, loneliness and isolation since the Covid-19 pandemic, according to new research.

Church volunteers have delivered food, shopped, walked dogs and collected prescriptions this past year, according to a report by the Church of England and Church Urban Fund.

Church volunteers have also done gardening projects, been 'phone buddies', aided with job-hunting, and helped people get online, as local people struggled with the social and economic effects of the pandemic.

Despite restrictions on meeting socially, nearly a quarter of churches even started a completely new activity during the pandemic. More than of them adapted two or more of their existing community activities in order to meet local needs.

Overall, 37% of churches reported that they were providing *more* support to their communities, with this figure rising to 41% in rural areas.

Food provision and pastoral support were by far the biggest area of support provided by churches, with nearly 80% of churches involved in running or supporting a food bank or similar service. Many opened food banks for the first time.

Church leaders reported that isolation, loneliness and mental health difficulties, food poverty, unemployment and debt are more widespread in their communities as a result of the pandemic.

Church buildings, because of their size and ventilation, have been well used for activities from ante natal classes to socially prescribed exercise. In fact, many became **'symbols of hope', with flags, posters and artwork as a "form of visual encouragement"**.

Church Urban Fund Chief Executive Rachel Whittington said: "2020 was a year like no other, and yet churches across the UK rose ... with undeterred compassion, displaying the love in action which lies at the heart of the Christian gospel."

LOOKING AT GOD

Grace - **God's kindness towards us**

The word 'grace' is one of the most important words found in the New Testament. It means God's loving disposition towards us as sinners. God's 'grace' is almost another word for God's love. This grace is the foundation of our salvation. So Paul can say that 'we are justified freely by His grace' (Romans 3:24); 'where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more' (Romans 5:20); 'by grace you are saved through faith' (Ephesians 2:8).

But the word 'grace' is also used in another way in the New Testament. It means the godly character being reproduced in Christians; Christ living in His people by His Spirit and making them like Himself – gracious.

Luke records that as Jesus grew up 'the grace of God was upon Him' (2:40), and that the people wondered at the 'gracious words' that He spoke (4:22). John says that Jesus was 'full of grace and truth' (1:14). The most common benediction bestowed on Christians in the letters of the New Testament is 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' (e.g. Romans 16:20; 1 Cor. 16:23).

From this understanding of grace comes the reminder and the exhortation that all of us as Christians are 'to grow in grace' (2 Peter 3:18). Our lives should manifest the grace of God in love and compassion and kindness.

But grace is not something we can achieve on our own. True grace is only found in close communion with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflected Faith: Sit and be Still

How do you 'sit' in church? I'm a wriggler and change my position on the seat often. I cross one leg over the other, then swap them over, stretch them out, then cross them at the ankles. I do the same with my arms. I lean one way and then the other.

In other words, 'I'm a fidget.' But having been absent from a church building for so long, I wanted to think this month about simply *sitting and being still* before the Lord.

I'm well aware we've done little else this last 18 months – but if you manage to get into a church building, for whatever reason I'd like to encourage us all to just sit still and breathe in the place. **To relish being 'back'!**

To sit 'heavily' in that spot. To feel the solidity of the surface you are sitting on. Lean into it. Feel how it supports you. Feel each part of your body where it is touching the chair or pew.

Look around you at all the distinctive seating set aside for the different participants of the church: the choir, the worship leader, a deacon or curate, the priest and so on.

In an Anglican church there will be a chair especially dedicated for the use of the Bishop. However plain or fancy each piece of furniture is within your building, they all have the same purpose. To hold the person and keep them safe.

This month:

As you sit in the church building – or at home if you are not able to do so – think of all those people in the Bible stories who sat with Jesus. The number of times He taught in the Temple or in a synagogue, or to crowds gathered on a hill. Recall the Last Supper and His friends gathered sitting with Him to eat and share the Passover meal, and then recall the meal with the men from the Emmaus Road. So many meal times with the bold and the weak, the saints and the sinners. With you and me.

LOOKING AT THE CHURCH

Remembering Prince Philip

"We have thanked God for Prince Philip's life of extraordinary service. There are some rare people who bring energy into a room - the Duke of Edinburgh was very much one of those people. His presence lifted a gathering. He might have challenged and interrogated, but whatever he said, he never bored anyone.

"The Duke of Edinburgh had a profound moral imagination, extraordinary foresight and even vision. He saw the world not just as it is but as it could and should be, as worked out in his commitment to young people, **especially through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, to the Commonwealth, to our Armed Forces, and to engineering, technology and design... In Edmund Burke's words, he had an instinctive sense that the social contract was found in the traditions we inherit from the past, in our obligations to the present and in our responsibility to those yet to be born.**

"His genuine and deep sense of humility and his service came from the same place, which was his faith... He had a sincere Christian faith absolutely untainted by false piety... He understood deeply how important faith is for the vast majority of the world's population. He engaged the rich diversity of faiths within the UK and the Commonwealth. He was a pioneer in recognising the crucial role that faith leaders play in advocating for creation care. He was literally half a century ahead of his time in this area."

A look at the Methodists today

The Methodist Church of Great Britain (MCGB) was formed in 1932 from a merger of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Primitive Methodist Church and the United Methodist Church (itself a merger of three groups in 1907), then with a total membership of 840,000 and 7,800 churches. In 2019 the MCGB had some 4,200 churches across England, Wales and Scotland, with membership of 170,000.

In terms of church buildings, it is the second largest denomination in England, second only to the Church of England (with 15,500 churches). There are 30 Districts currently (equivalent to Dioceses) which are sub-divided into Circuits, on average 12 Circuits in each District, but some have just one, like the Welsh-speaking churches, or those on the Isle of Man and Shetlands. The largest is London with 35. Each Circuit has on average 12 churches, or 140 per District (the Church of England has 380 churches per Diocese).

Numerically, Methodist attendance is not very dissimilar to its membership. In 2019 attendance was about 164,000, all but 20,000 attending. As with Anglican churches, they find Sunday attendance declining faster than weekday attendance, and children and young people attendance declining roughly twice as fast as adult attendance.

Individual churches naturally vary in size. A list of all 4,200 churches gave an interesting overview: Methodist churches are quite small, with two-fifths, 38%, having under 20 members per church and a further two-fifths, 39%, having between 20 and 59 members, leaving just under a quarter, 23%, with 60 members or over. The median size is 28, meaning that half the churches have 28 or fewer members while the other half have more.

The two largest Methodist churches, by congregational size, are Swan Bank, Stoke-on-Trent (465 members) **and Wesley's Chapel, in City Road (464 members)**. Two others are over 400: Bournemouth Methodist Church (429 members) and Methodist Central Hall in Westminster (422 members).

LOOKING AT YOU

Gardening really *is* good for you

According to a recent study conducted by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and two universities, people who garden every day have well-being scores 6.6 per cent higher, and stress levels 4.2 per cent lower than those who do not garden at all.

Dr Lauriane Chalmin-Pui, RHS well-being fellow and lead author says, “The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the more frequently you garden, the greater the health benefits.

“In fact, gardening every day has the same positive impact on your well-being as undertaking regular, vigorous exercise like cycling or running.

“Gardening is like effortless exercise: it doesn’t feel as strenuous as going to the gym, but we can expend similar amounts of energy.”

Beware Japanese knotweed this summer

This month (June) could see a sudden bumper appearance of the notorious garden pest, Japanese knotweed.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) experts have warned that the April frosts either delayed or killed other plants who would have helped keep it in check. Unfortunately, the pest is very hardy, and will not have been killed off.

The plant grows up to 2.1 metres (7ft) tall and can destroy the foundations of houses and run riot in gardens. It can even devalue property, and lead to the refusal of mortgages on the land.

Don’t make decisions on an empty stomach.

Scientists at Harvard have found that when you have higher levels of the body’s hunger hormone, ghrelin, in your system, you are more likely to be impulsive. This means that you will be liable to make poor decisions, tending towards instant gratification rather than long-term achievement.

In one experiment, hungry women with a higher amount of the hunger hormone chose to receive £20 the same day, instead of £80 in two weeks’ time.

So, ghrelin may well “play a broader role in human related behaviour and decision making, such as monetary choices.”

Trouble sleeping?

Try listening to ‘sedative music’, with a slow tempo, soft volume and smooth melody. Music is less invasive than sleeping pills, and may possibly work for you.

A recent study carried out at a university in Taiwan found that “listening to sedative music can improve sleep by modulating sympathetic nervous system activity and the release of cortisol, thereby lowering levels of anxiety and stress responses.”

Listening to music before bed for more than four weeks was found to be especially effective.

LOOKING AT YOUR COMMUNITY

The beginnings of Boots the Chemist

Jesse Boot, the British pharmacist and philanthropist, died 90 years ago, on 13th June 1931. He turned the Boots Company started by his father John – a former agricultural worker – **into a chain of chemists branded ‘Chemists to the Nation’.**

The 1st Baron Trent, as Jesse became in 1929, sold his controlling interest to American investors in 1920, but Boots continues to be a familiar name to all Britons. Ironically John Boot had offered his close friend and business associate John Harston the opportunity of going into business with him, but Harston had felt it was not a good investment.

Jesse Boot was a great benefactor to the City of Nottingham. He gave land for what is now the University of Nottingham and was presented with the Freedom of the City of Nottingham in 1920.

He met his wife, Florence Rowe, in a Wesleyan Chapel in Jersey while he was recuperating from illness. She was also an astute businesswoman, who helped to develop the Boots business, and her home island of Jersey benefited from **the couple’s generosity. After her husband’s death she commissioned the glass artist René Lalique to refit the** Anglican church of St Matthew there as a memorial to him.

What do you think will happen after Covid?

You can take your choice: a recent survey has found that a third of us think that society may *never* go back to the old ways, a third of us think we will go back to *exactly* as we were before, and a third of us think that we will be *keener than ever* to stay together.

The Together Coalition, chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, has been working for the past year on a piece of research to track just what has happened to communities during lockdown.

The new research has found that “people feel a stronger sense of connection to their neighbours and community. ... We found a clear public appetite for a society in which we are more connected to each other, and the community spirit of 2020 is kept alive.”

It also found that around 12.4million people have volunteered during the pandemic, 4.6million of them for the first time. And 75 per cent of those volunteers would be happy to do so again.

“It is like driving on the moon”

Some of our British roads are beginning to resemble “the surface of the moon”, according to the RAC. It has recently reported that an average of 52 drivers a day are breaking their cars on potholes and needing to be rescued.

More than 4,000 drivers have needed assistance since January, despite the fact that lockdown has meant many fewer cars on the road.

After years of underfunding and patch-up repair jobs, and despite the fact that councils are currently filling a pothole **every 19 seconds, the RAC says that the Government and local councils face an ‘enormous task’ to get our roads “anything like reasonable” again.**

Potholes are nasty to cars. They can break your suspension springs, distort your wheels, and damage your shock absorbers, among other woes.

High Days & Holy Days

1st June Justin Martyr, first ever Christian philosopher

Justin Martyr (c. 100 – 165AD), is regarded as the first ever Christian philosopher. He was born at Nablus, Samaria, to parents of Greek origin, and was well educated in rhetoric, poetry and history before he turned to philosophy. He studied at Ephesus and Alexandria and tried the schools of the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, and the Platonists. Then in about 130AD Justin became a Christian, and never looked back. His long search for truth was satisfied by the Bible, and above all by Christ, the Word of God.

This apologist and martyr is known as the most important **early 'apologist'**. He went on to offer a reasoned defence for Christianity, explaining that it was the fulfilment of the **Old Testament prophecies**. Justin's aim was evangelism: he thought that pagans would turn to Christianity if they were **made aware of Christian doctrine and practice**. Justin's martyrdom took place in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, along with six other believers. At his trial, whose authentic record survives, he clearly confessed his Christian beliefs, refused to sacrifice to the gods, and accepted suffering and death. As he had previously said to the emperor: "You can kill us, but not hurt us."

2nd June Erasmus, a good saint **when you're all at sea**

Do you like messing about in boats? If so, then you'll have heard of St Elmo's Fire. It is the light that is sometimes seen on mastheads of boats after storms at sea.

St Elmo is another name for St Erasmus, a fourth century Syrian bishop who was not afraid of violent storms. Legend has it that one day when Erasmus was preaching outside, a thunderbolt hit the ground right beside him. That might have distracted many modern bishops, but not Erasmus – he just kept on preaching. His courage won him the respect of sailors, who also had to brave the elements of nature in their daily work. He died about 300AD.

But when Erasmus was made the patron saint of sailors, it led to a curious confusion. His emblem became the windlass, a kind of hoist used by many sailors at sea. So far so good, but many medieval Christians, seeing the windlass emblem, assumed it was some sort of torture instrument. They knew that Erasmus had died in the persecution of Diocletian, and so concluded that a windlass had been used **to hoist out his intestines (which it hadn't)**.

But no matter - Erasmus was still adopted by another set of suffering people. Not only did sailors remember the thunderbolt, and look to him, but soon, anyone with gut ache as well!

9th June - Columba of Iona, missionary to the UK

In 563 AD St Columba sailed from Ireland to Iona – a tiny island off Mull, in the Western Highlands. He brought Christianity with him.

Columba (c. 521 -97) was born in Donegal of the royal Ui Neill clan, and he trained as a monk. He founded the monasteries of Derry (546), Durrow (c.556) and probably Kells. But in 565 Columba left Ireland with twelve companions for Iona, an island off southwest Scotland. Iona had been given to him for a monastery by the ruler of the Irish Dalriada.

Why would a monk in his mid-40s go into such voluntary exile? Various explanations include: voluntary exile for Christ, an attempt to help overseas compatriots in their struggle for survival, or even as some sort of punishment for his part in a row over a psalter in Ireland. Whatever the reason, Columba went to Iona and spent the rest of his life in Scotland, returning to Ireland only for occasional visits.

Columba's biographer, Adomnan, portrays him as a tall, striking figure of powerful build and impressive presence, who combined the skills of scholar, poet and ruler with a fearless commitment to God's cause. Able, ardent, and sometimes harsh, Columba seems to have mellowed with age.

As well as building his monastery on Iona, Columba also converted Brude, king of the Picts. Columba had great skill as a scribe, and an example of this can be seen in the Cathach of Columba, a late 6th century psalter in the Irish Academy, which is the oldest surviving example of Irish majuscule writing. In his later years Columba spent much time transcribing books.

Columba's death was apparently foreseen by his community, and even, it seems, sensed by his favourite horse. He died in the church just before Matins, and it is a tribute to this man that his traditions were upheld by his followers for about a century, not least in the Synod of Whitby and in Irish monasteries on the continent of Europe.

Here is a prayer of St Columba:

Christ With Us
My dearest Lord,
Be Thou a bright flame before me,
Be Thou a guiding star above me,
Be Thou a smooth path beneath me,
Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today and evermore.

High Days & Holy Days

Continued.....

20th June - **Fathers' Day, a time to celebrate male role models**

In the UK, USA and Canada, the third Sunday in **June is Father's Day. It's usually a good time for sons and daughters to take their father to his favourite restaurant, or to watch a favoured sport, or whatever else he enjoys doing.**

How will you celebrate it this year? If your own father cannot be with you, how about a Zoom meeting?

How do these special days ever get started, anyway? **Well, Father's Day began because way back in 1909 there was a woman in Spokane, Washington, named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd.** That year she heard a church sermon about the merits of setting aside a day to honour one's mother. Mother's Day was just beginning to gather widespread attention in the United States at this time. But Sonora Louise Smart Dodd knew that it was her father who had selflessly raised herself and her five siblings by himself after their mother had died in childbirth. So the sermon on mothers gave Sonora Louise the idea to petition for a day to honour fathers, and in particular, her own father, William Jackson Smart.

Sonora Louise soon set about planning the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane in 1910. With support from the Spokane Ministerial Association **and the YMCA, her efforts paid off, and a 'Father's Day' was appointed. Sonora Louise had wanted Father's Day to be on the first Sunday in June (since that was her father's birthday),** but the city council didn't have time to approve it until later in the month. And so on June 19th, 1910, the first Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane.

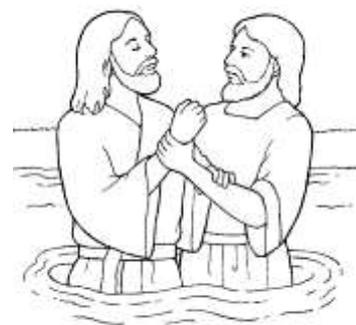
Gradually, other people in other cities caught on and started celebrating their fathers, too. The rose was selected as the official Father's Day flower. Some people began to wear a white rose to honour a father who was dead, and a red one to honour a father who was living. Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day - a permanent, national holiday.

24th June - John the Baptist, preparing the way for the Messiah

John the Baptist is famous for baptising Jesus, and for losing his head to a woman. He was born to Zechariah, a Temple priest, and Elizabeth, who was a cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus. John was born when his mother was advanced in years, and after the foretelling of his birth and the choice of his name by an angel, we hear nothing more of him until he began his mission of preaching and baptising in the river Jordan c27.

John was a lot like an Old Testament prophet: he lived simply on locusts and honey in the wilderness, and his message was one of repentance and preparation for the coming of the Messiah and His Kingdom. **He went on to baptise Jesus, at Jesus' firm request. When John went on to denounce the incestuous union of Herod Antipas with his niece and brother's wife, Herodias, he was imprisoned and eventually beheaded at the demand of Salome, Herodias' daughter.**

John is the only saint to be remembered three times in the Christian calendar, in commemoration of his conception, his birth (June 24), and his martyrdom. When John saw Jesus he said that Jesus was **the "Lamb of God", and he is the only person to use this expression of Jesus.** In art John is often depicted carrying a lamb, or with a lamb near him.





Neighbourhood Watch

In one small rural village the local vet also led the local Neighbourhood Watch group. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"He is, but tell me, do you need him as the vet or the Neighbourhood Watch?" the wife asked.

"Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it!"

Jump

A minister invited to preach at a local prison regretfully chose the text: **'With the help of my God, I will leap over the wall.'**

Talking

Bishop Douglas Feaver, the notoriously outspoken former Bishop of Peterborough, was presiding at his first Diocesan Synod and a man at the back had been droning on and on for some length of time. Finally, a lady called out to protest that she could not hear what he was saying. Bishop Douglas replied: **"You should thank God and sit down."**

For sale

An estate agent's board outside a redundant church:
FOR SALE.
Suitable for conversion.

On a church notice board:

Visitors welcome.
Members expected.

Friend?

Arriving at church to attend a wedding, a formidable looking lady in a large hat was greeted by the usher. **"Are you a friend of the groom?"** he ventured.

"Certainly not," she said indignantly. **"I'm the bride's mother."**

Curate

As the enthusiastic curate was preparing to move on to his first church as a vicar, a parishioner asked him what he thought had been his main contribution **to the life of the church. He replied: "People here didn't know what sin was until I came."**

Belief

Our elderly vicar was very devout, but sometimes lost his place during the service. One Sunday as we reached the Creed there was a long silence, so the curate went across to him and gently touched his arm. **"I believe in God,"** she whispered.

The vicar smiled back happily. "Oh so do I, so do I!"

The Lord's work

On leaving the local Churches Together lunch, the Catholic priest was heard to say to the Methodist minister: **"Well, at the end of the day, we're all doing the Lord's work: you in your way, and I in His."**

Out to graze

A group of elderly British tourists were touring Holland by bus. They stopped at a cheese farm where a young guide led them through the process of making cheese from goat's milk. She showed the group a lovely hillside where many goats were grazing.

"These," she explained, "are the older goats put out to pasture when they no longer produce." She then asked, "What do you do in Britain with your old goats?"

A spry old gentleman answered: "They send us on bus tours!"



Egyptian this and that

A group of tourists was watching the re-enactment of an ancient Egyptian religious ritual. One pointed to the statue that was being praised, and asked a nearby local for the name of the god. "Why do you ask?" the local man replied.

The tourist shrugged. "Oh, just idol curiosity!"

Ground

Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today, it's called golf.

Great religious truths

During these serious and troubled times, people of all faiths should remember these four great religious truths:

1. Muslims do not recognise Jews as God's Chosen People.
2. Jews do not recognise Jesus as the Messiah.
3. Protestants do not recognise the Pope as the leader of the Christian world.
4. Methodists do not recognise each other in the pub.

Good Samaritan

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?" A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd throw up."

The Lord is my Shepherd

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible - Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to memorise the short Psalm. Little Richard was excited about the task - but he just couldn't memorise things very well.

On the day that the children were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Richard was very nervous. When it was finally his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I need to know."

Thankful

A minister said to a precocious six-year-old boy, "So your mother says a prayer over you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?"

The little boy replied, "Thank God he's in bed!"

Don't forget the other half

When my daughter said her bedtime prayers, she would bless every family member, every friend, and every animal (current and past). Then one night, after we had finished the nightly prayer, she added: "And all girls." This soon became part of her nightly routine.

Finally, my curiosity got the best of me and I asked her why she had begun adding the part about all girls. Her response? "Because at church the minister only ever says 'all men!'"

All in the month of June

It was:

175 years ago, on 28th June 1846 that Belgian musical instrument maker Adolphe Sax patented the saxophone.

125 years ago, on 4th June 1896 that Henry Ford completed his first automobile, the Ford Quadricycle, and gave it a test run around Detroit Michigan. It was a simple frame with an engine, two gears, a tiller for steering and four bicycle wheels. It had a top speed of 20mph. Its success led him to establish the Ford Motor Company.

100 years ago on 10th June 1921 that Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was born on a dining room table in Corfu. He was the husband of Queen Elizabeth II.

90 years ago, on 13th June 1931 that Jesse Boot, 1st Baron Trent, British pharmacist and philanthropist, died. **He had turned his father's Boots Company into a national chain of chemists.**

80 years ago, from 22nd June to 5th December 1941 that Operation Barbarossa took place. It was the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the largest military operation in history. In the end, it was a Soviet victory, for the German invaders were repelled when they reached Moscow, and then driven out of Russia by a Soviet counter-attack.

75 years ago, on 26th June 1946 that Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery became Chief of the Imperial General Staff (head of the British army).

65 years ago, on 13th June 1956 that the first European Cup final (soccer) was held, in Paris. Real Madrid (Spain) beat Stade de Reims (France) 4-3. The European Cup is now known as the UEFA Champions League.

60 years ago, on 6th June 1961 that Carl Jung, Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, died. He was the founder of analytical psychology.

50 years ago, on 16th June 1971 that John Reith (Lord Reith), 1st Baron Reith, Scottish business executive and politician, died. He was Manager and Director General of the BBC in its formative years. He also formed BOAC (now British Airways).

40 years ago, on 5th June 1981 that the first report of AIDS took place. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the USA reported that five homosexual men in Los Angeles were suffering from a rare form of pneumonia found in patients with weakened immune systems. These were later recognised as the first official AIDS cases.

Also 40 years ago, on 22nd June 1981 that American tennis player John McEnroe earned the press nickname **'Superbrat' when he threw a tantrum during his first-round match against Tom Gullikson at Wimbledon. He hurled abuse at the umpire, swore at the referee, and popularised the phrase 'you cannot be serious' when he disputed a line call. Nevertheless, he went on to win the men's singles championship that year.**

25 years ago, on 4th June 1996 that the Second Severn Crossing was officially opened. The bridge spans the River Severn and links England and Wales via the M4 motorway.

20 years ago, on 22nd June 2001 that two British schoolboys who murdered two-year-old James Bulger in Liverpool in 1993 were released from secret custody after 8 years. They were given new identities and moved to secret locations.

June Easy Sudoku

			7	8	6	3		
3	4				9			8
			2				7	1
	7				3	1		
9	5	2	4		8	6	3	7
		6	9				4	
4	6				1			
2			8				1	3
		3	5	4	2			

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June Intermediate Sudoku

		5	9		1		8	
2		9	7					
	6			2	5			
		4						
	5		6	3	4		1	
							5	
			5	1			4	
					2	6		7
	2		4		3	9		

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May Easy Sudoku Solution

2	7	1	9	5	4	6	3	8
8	5	9	6	3	7	1	2	4
6	3	4	1	8	2	7	5	9
9	8	5	2	4	6	3	7	1
7	6	3	8	1	9	2	4	5
1	4	2	5	7	3	8	9	6
3	1	8	4	2	5	9	6	7
4	9	7	3	6	8	5	1	2
5	2	6	7	9	1	4	8	3

May Intermediate Sudoku Solution

8	1	9	2	6	5	3	4	7
6	4	7	8	1	3	2	5	9
2	5	3	4	9	7	8	6	1
7	3	4	5	2	9	6	1	8
9	8	6	1	3	4	7	2	5
1	2	5	7	8	6	4	9	3
3	9	8	6	5	2	1	7	4
5	7	2	3	4	1	9	8	6
4	6	1	9	7	8	5	3	2



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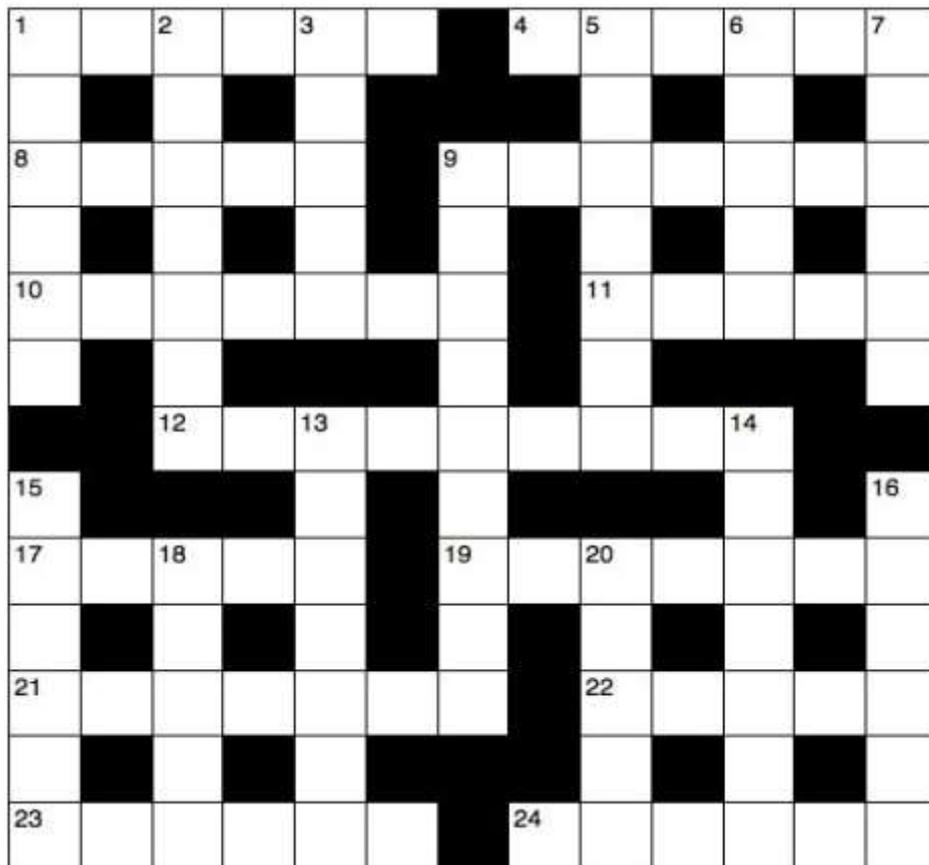
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CROSSWORD



CLUES

Across

- 1 Military tactic used by Joshua to attack and destroy the city of Ai (Joshua 8:2) (6)
- 4 Place of learning (6)
- 8 'When Moses' hands grew — , they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it' (Exodus 17:12) (5)
- 9 Unpleasant auguries of the end of the age, as forecast by Jesus (Matthew 24:7) (7)
- 10 Stronghold to which girls in King Xerxes' harem (including Esther) were taken (Esther 2:8) (7)
- 11 Where Saul went to consult a medium before fighting the Philistines (1 Samuel 28:7) (5)
- 12 Propitiation (Hebrews 2:17) (9)
- 17 Turn away (Jeremiah 11:15) (5)
- 19 So clear (anag.) (7)
- 21 'I have just got — , so I can't come': one excuse to be absent from the great banquet (Luke 14:20) (7)
- 22 Long weapon with a pointed head used by horse-men (Job 39:23) (5)
- 23 Musical beat (6)
- 24 What the Israelites were told to use to daub blood on their door-frames at the first Passover (Exodus 12:22) (6)

Down

- 1 Fasten (Exodus 28:37) (6)
- 2 Art bite (anag.) (7)
- 3 'The people of the city were divided; some — with the Jews, others with the apostles' (Acts 14:4) (5)
- 5 Contend (Jeremiah 12:5) (7)
- 6 Possessed (Job 1:3) (5)
- 7 Sheen (Lamentations 4:1) (6)
- 9 'You love evil rather than good, — rather than speaking the truth' (Psalm 52:3) (9)
- 13 Large flightless bird (Job 39:13) (7)
- 14 They were worth several hundred pounds each (Matthew 25:15) (7)
- 15 'A — went out to sow his seed' (Matthew 13:3) (6)
- 16 How Jesus described Jairus's daughter when he went into the room where she lay (Mark 5:39) (6)
- 18 The part of the day when the women went to the tomb on the first Easter morning (John 20:1) (5)
- 20 Narrow passageway between buildings (Luke 14:21) (5)

Solution to the May Crossword



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Miscellaneous observations on life

I want to be 14 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas.

Scratch a dog - and you'll find a permanent job.

Every seven minutes of every day, someone in an aerobics class pulls a muscle.

Few things are more satisfying than seeing your children have teenagers of their own.

Learn from others' mistakes. You won't live long enough to make them all yourself.

Money isn't everything, but it does keep you in touch with your children.

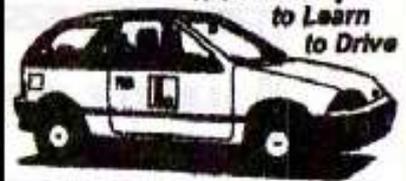
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