

MAINDEE

PARISH

MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2021

50p



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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).



From Fr. William Ingle-Gillis Priest in Charge

September 2021

Dear Friends:

A recent Sunday reading: “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood will abide in me,” says Christ, “and I in them.” “This is a hard teaching,” his audience mutters back. “Who can abide it?” It’s not often that scripture serves up a story of Christ’s approach failing him spectacularly, but here is a pristine example. We Christians inherit 2000 years’ worth of this language; it doesn’t phase us. The core concept is integral to our faith. This was not true, however, for those to whom he preached this day. (Put yourself in their shoes, hearing it for the first time: “eat my flesh; drink my blood.” Indeed, in the Church’s earliest days, a hard-to-kill rumour quickly spread round the Roman empire that Christians were cannibals!)

If this strength of rejection was their reaction, it’s no wonder Christ learned to keep his boldest teachings close to his chest: “he sternly warned them not to tell others.” But this day he spoke boldly (as indeed we all must at times) and got precious little back for his troubles. He leaves the scene, frankly, depressed and disheartened in a way that we rarely see him. Then turning to his disciples, he says: “I s’pose y’all are going to leave me too.” In this moment, unique in the Gospels, a lonely Christ is visibly worried that this time he has truly messed up.

Peter’s response must have been like a tall, cold glass of water on the hottest of days: “We don’t have anyone else to go to. You’re it.” At that moment, Peter had no idea just how far this story had yet to go; but he was prepared to nail his colours to the wall. Although we know he wavered more than once, in the end, we also know that he grew to be as good as his word. In fact, barring one, they all did.

The other unique thing here is that — common as it is for Christ to carry the disciples through a challenge — here we have the opposite: the disciples actually carry Christ through this one. We’re accustomed to thinking how often the disciples needed Christ; but here Christ, in a deeply human moment, needed them — their response, trust, love. There is God-given mutuality in this relationship; we do well to mark that. God does not come to impose a plan of salvation like so many hoops for us to jump. Rather, he comes open-hearted, vulnerable, inviting us to share the words of life, to partake, and ultimately even to do the words of life ourselves.

It’s also instructive that the scene occurs early in Christ’s ministry because, as we’ve said, neither Peter nor the others can be fully aware of how far their journey will take them. They see clearly enough that they’ve cottoned onto something big, but that’s the sum total of it. They have hope for something huge, a final fulfilment of God’s promises; but with that hope lies the spectre of uneasy, difficult, troubled moments ahead, and neither the good nor the difficult is likely to pan out exactly as they imagine.

I want to suggest that we, Beechwood MA as a whole, stand at the cusp of such a moment. You know and I know that the Church in Britain has been dying a slow, painful death for some years. Now, attempting to turn that around, the Bishop has given what some of us undoubtedly feel is “a hard teaching”; it is not what we all have expected. She is asking a new thing, and none of us (truly, none of us) were entirely ready for it. Yet, she asks in the hope that, though we may not always be sure what’s around the corner, we may ultimately find the Church thriving in equally unexpected ways.

+Cherry has also made herself vulnerable in making such a big ask; it is important for us to recognise that. Her natural mode is, in my observation, fundamentally generous and pastoral. This means that she is not unaware of the magnitude of what’s happening, nor indifferent to our feelings about it. In this respect, there is a need for us to respond, as did Peter for Christ, with a generosity, a kind spirit, and a willingness to walk with her, our own chief pastor, during a time of difficulty and hopefully recovery for us all. The call of Christ remains all that it ever was: an invitation: to hear the words of comfort and of challenge; to be met in our struggles and accompanied towards our successes; to meet and care for the all-too-human Christ in one another, that we may also meet the all-too-divine Christ in the same faces and in our common worship; and, finally, to do the word of God amongst ourselves, and amongst our neighbours so that, with Christ, we can deliver the words of Good News and the actions and life of the Kingdom. I look forward to joining you in this New Thing.

God bless,



From Revd. Linda Batt Associate Priest

By Whose Authority Do You Speak?

As we move through the liturgical year in our readings, we move into a time where those who encounter Jesus often do so with a question on their lips. Now, I know that many **of those who come to hear and be healed have questions, but the people who've been on my mind are those who believe, rightly or wrongly, that they too have authority.** In the last month, we have been given the image of Jesus teaching in the synagogue. And, as He **teaches, it's clear that there's something special about Him. He's one who teaches with a new authority.** Those who listen are amazed at how he speaks and interacts.

Our Gospel illustrations also display stark contrasts between Jesus' authority and that of the scribes and pharisees who apparently teach without His unshakeable authority.

But here's the thing, Jesus exercised His authority in His teaching not so much because He wanted to, but because He had to. This is who He is. He is God and when He speaks, He speaks with the authority of God. He speaks in such a way, unhesitatingly, authoritatively, that the people know His words have transforming meaning. His words effect change in people's lives, in their very beings.

Now, in theory, as believers, this should invite each one of us to reflect upon the authority of Jesus in our lives. Do you notice His authority spoken to you? Do you see His words, spoken in scripture, having an effect upon your life?

We are living in the most intense time in human history. It's no time to cower in fear or hesitate, it's a time to use the authority God has given us!

In Luke 10:19 Jesus told us, **"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."**

Now, I've known about my authority in Christ for a while – I just don't always remember to use it! Has that happened to you? Sometimes I just allow things to go on that I shouldn't, instead of using the authority that Jesus gave me.

I believe there are three things we must be aware of in order to use this authority Jesus has given us:

We have to know what it is

We have to know that it belongs to us

We have to know how to use it



From Revd. Linda Batt Associate Priest

The authority that Jesus is talking about in Luke 10:19 is not brute force power. It's delegated power, much like a policeman possesses. When a policeman steps out in front of traffic and holds up his hand to stop it, he's not stopping cars and trucks with his own brute strength – he's stopping them with the delegated authority that comes from wearing the uniform. He's backed by the law.

That's the authority we have in Christ. We're not stopping the forces of darkness (sickness, fear, evil) with your own strength – we're stopping them with the delegated authority given to us by God in Christ.

It's like using the name of the president of a company – that name can get things done. Jesus made it very clear that His Name is the key to all authority: “Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (John 13:13-14).

In Acts 3 when Peter & John encountered a lame man at the Gate Beautiful, they said, “**In the Name of Jesus, rise up and walk**” and he did! It wasn't their own anointing or power that raised the man – it was the authority in the Name of Jesus. That same authority belongs to us – we just need to have faith and courage to use it!

Reflect, today, upon the image of Jesus teaching in the synagogue. Reflect that the “**synagogue**” represents your own soul and that Jesus desires to be there speaking to you with authority. Let His words sink in and change your life.

Pray: Lord, I open myself to You and Your voice of authority. Help me to allow You to speak with clarity and truth. As You do, help me to be open to allowing You to change my life. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen

As I've said on numerous occasions, sometimes you just have to take that first step; the Indiana Jones step. I pray that you speak out in confidence and authority, knowing that our Lord is right beside you as you speak in His name.

May I write these words in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Rev Linda



*The Parish of Maindee
St John's Choir*

I have written several times about three of the young choristers enrolled on the RSCM Bath Abbey residential course in the summer. Well, as you know, the course was cancelled twice, in 2020 and 2021. **What is even more sad, is the news that the RSCM four day course at St Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny, planned for 23rd to 26th August, was also cancelled at short notice because of the low numbers applying!** The girls were really disappointed and these cancellations do absolutely nothing to boost the enthusiasm and commitment of the girls in the choir. A lot of money has been generously donated by several members of the congregation and for this we are all very grateful. Thank you! I have **held all of the donated money back to fund next year's Bath course and I'm keeping my fingers crossed** that the girls will still want to go and that the course will actually run in 2022!

We did manage to meet at Beechwood Park for our picnic and, although the weather was not wonderfully sunny and warm, it was very pleasant and over twenty of us enjoyed chatting and laughing as **we shared each other's company.**

I was pleased that we had a lovely choir for the funeral of our good friend and former chorister, John Beal, who passed away peacefully at the age of 95. The service was lovely and, at times, very emotional. The singing was really good and John would have been pleased with the singing of Cwm Rhondda in particular. As is our tradition, the choir lined the pathway as John was carried to the hearse and we said **the Choristers' Prayer as John's coffin passed between us. I have to confess that there were not many dry eyes amongst us all, but this was a fitting tribute as we said our farewells to this much loved gentleman.**

Many of you attended the Christmas Concert in December 2019 when the choir joined forces with Cantorion Sanctaidd for an afternoon of choral music, a little bit of fun and fellowship over a cuppa. Well, we are planning on repeating this event on Saturday December 11th at 2.00pm; an early start so that everyone can get home in the light!! Look out for adverts and information regarding tickets etc closer to the date, Please put a note in you diary!!

A few other dates for your diary:

Harvest Festival	Sunday 3 rd October at 10.45am
Advent Carol	Service Sunday 28 th November at 6.00pm
Annual Carol	Service Sunday 19 th December at 6.00pm

We are also planning to hold Choral Evensong, maybe on a monthly basis, as we join forces with the other choirs in the Beechwood Ministry Area. This idea is in the early stages of planning, but we hope to be able to hold the services with combined choirs on a rota around the churches in the Ministry Area. **Listen out for information, as the first Choral Evensong might take place in September at St Cadoc's Church, Caerleon!!**

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 1.

This month's offering is from the film Happy Feet, about a colony of Emperor Penguins. An Emperor Penguin sings a unique song called a Heartsong to attract a mate, if the male and female songs match they mate for life, so that is what I have been doing wrong, Anyway there is one penguin who is born called Mumbles because he can't sing, but he can tap dance, but the other elder penguins make fun of him, then he escapes from a leopard seal attack to find his new friends, the Amigo's, now I especially resonate with Raul, no hair and a bit of an oddball. He says " What you hugging for? ". Well in these strange days we have not been able to hug family or friends. I think a hug is a sign of caring, of thoughtfulness, of showing a person how much we think of them, God knows in his infinite wisdom that we need a hug to show how much we care and are cared for.

The film goes on to show how when the lack of fish hits the colony Mumbles goes and finds the problem and resolves it with the help of humans, which goes to show that we can help animals whenever they need it.

In the end Mumbles wins his soulmate Gloria, not by singing but by tap dancing to her song, and that shows as I have said before it is good to dance, you never know what might happen.

Keep God First Place

Do the Dance Now

Mel

Mel's Meanderings 2.

This month's is take from the film "The Book of Life" no not that one but an animation about a Bull-fighter called Manolo who trained to become one but when faced with the Bull he couldn't kill it as he would rather play his guitar and follow his Heart to the girl he loves. Now I could write about two quotes in the Film, one "You don't know Women" and the other one " You want me to cook, clean and be at your beck and call, You must be kidding ". I know my place, that would be a minefield, some ladies would be wanting to have words .

No I will chose the other one, " Play with your Heart " which is written on Manolo's guitar. As he is told he should play the guitar putting his whole heart into it. And so in life, God gives us things to do, some easy and some hard. Both we should put everything into it, as they say putting your Heart and Soul into things. We cannot tell what difference we will make but God Knows that we have done our best. That is all God Asks, Play with your Heart. Sometimes our energy will sap, Sometimes we get despondent that nothing happens . But keep playing, it will come through God's good grace.

Keep God First Place

Do the Dance Now

Mel

Heavenly Messengers.

I subscribe to the Barnabas Fund which brings Aid to the persecuted church abroad, Christians who live in countries who are persecuted for their Faith. I admire them so much for having the courage to convert to Christianity in the first place. I received their monthly magazine this morning. Anyway, glancing through it I came upon an item about Heavenly Messengers. Heavenly messengers are angels who are there to do **God's** bidding, to carry messages from God.

Nothing that happens to us, or our persecuted brothers and sisters is beyond the control of God, and He sends His angels to help His suffering people.

Of course, much of the suffering in our fallen world is the injustice and cruelty of which human beings often treat each other.

I pray that He will send His holy messengers to help our brothers and sisters who are suffering for the sake of Christ in other countries. Amen.

Interestingly when we look through our bibles it is full of stories about angels carrying messages, doing God's will. In Kings 1 chpt.19 v 3-8 there is an interesting little story about Elijah and an angel sent by God.

In Hebrews chpt.1 v 14 angels are mentioned there. Of course, we all know about the Christmas story and angels, it was an angel that told Mary that she would bring forth a son, and John the Baptist's birth was foretold by an angel. Although sent out they remain in constant contact with our Father in heaven. As Jesus said, "**That in heaven** their angels always behold the face of my Father who **is in Heaven**". **Matthew** chpt.18c v 10.

Our world is full of these heavenly messengers although sometimes we may not recognise them. Scripture tells us: Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

A good reason for always showing kindness to people! Even those we find hard to like!

Gwyn.

All in the month of SEPTEMBER

It was:

700 years ago, on 13th Sept 1321 that Dante Alighieri, Italian poet, died. Regarded as the most important poet of the Middle Ages. Best known for his *Divine Comedy*.

125 years ago, on 24th Sept 1896 that F Scott Fitzgerald, American novelist and short story writer, was born. Regarded as one of the greatest American writers of the 20th century. Best known for his novel *The Great Gatsby*.

100 years ago, on 8th Sept 1921 that Sir Harry Secombe was born. This Welsh comedian, actor, writer, singer and TV presenter was one of the stars of the 1950s radio series *The Goon Show*.

80 years ago, on 1st Sept 1941 that Nazi Germany ordered all Jews in Germany and its occupied territories to wear a yellow Star of David badge.

75 years ago, from 20th Sept – 5th Oct 1946 that the first Cannes Film Festival was held.

65 years ago, on 16th Sept 1956 that Play-Doh went on sale in the USA. It was originally sold as a wallpaper cleaning compound, but was then relaunched as a **modelling compound when the inventor's nephew discovered that nursery school children were using it to make Christmas ornaments.**

60 years ago, on 11th Sept 1961 that the World Wildlife Fund (now the World Wide Fund for Nature) was founded in Switzerland.

50 years ago, on 15th Sept 1971 that Greenpeace, the international environmental group, was founded in Vancouver.

30 years ago, on 6th Sept 1991 that the Russian city of Leningrad was renamed St Petersburg, restoring its original name.

25 years ago, on 27th Sept 1996, that the Taliban seized control of Kabul, Afghanistan, ousting President Burhanuddin Rabbani, and executing former President Mohammad Najibullah.

20 years ago, on 11th Sept 2001, that the 9/11 terrorist attack on the USA took place. 2,973 people were killed.

NEWS

Be careful with Covid, urges Bishop of London

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, has encouraged churches and individuals to continue to take precautions to protect the vulnerable from Covid-19.

“Many will welcome the possibilities now before us. However, this is a difficult point in the course of the pandemic. Despite vaccination rates, cases are up, hospital admissions are up and long covid remains an ongoing concern. Therefore, our approach needs to be cautious and careful.

“Taking personal responsibility means taking precautions to protect those more vulnerable than we consider ourselves to be. Local church leaders know their communities and their own circumstances, and we will support them making local decisions to keep themselves and their community safe.”

LOOKING AT GOD

Reflected Faith Series: the Bread we eat

The majority of Sunday morning service in churches throughout the world are based on the Last Supper of Jesus.

At the Passover meal, on the night before His death, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to His disciples saying, *“This is My body given for you,”* (Luke 22:19a). He also took wine and passed it to each of them and said, *“This is My blood, given for you.”*

These two elements, the bread and the wine, continue to be the central focus for Christians: doing what Jesus **asked us to do**, *‘Do this in remembrance of me’*. (Luke 22:19b)

What we call this service varies between denominations and even between churches within the same denomination.

It is a way of giving ‘thanks’ as Jesus did (the word ‘Eucharist’ comes from the Greek by way of Latin, and it means ‘thanksgiving’), reminding us not only of the tremendous sacrifice that Christ had made on our behalf, but also recalling the love and joy that Jesus brings to the community.

The word ‘Communion’ comes from something done with others – the community. It’s done with Christ. It’s done with other worshippers. In sharing the meal, ‘I’ becomes ‘us’.

The word ‘Mass’ comes from the conclusion to the traditional service – which was in Latin: ‘Ite, missa est.’ ‘Go. You are being sent.’ Today we use similar words, ‘Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.’

At the moment many churches, especially the Church of England, are only giving bread to the congregation with the priest alone consuming the wine. So the meaning underlying the taking / the giving of bread is more crucial **than ever. In some denominations the bread is literally the ‘daily bread’, whilst in others it is a ‘wafer’ or yeast free bread – as was used at the original Passover.**

This month: **Have a look at the bread that is placed into your hands the next time you ‘receive’.** How does it reflect receiving Christ into your life?

LOOKING AT YOU

Anxious neighbour?

If you have elderly neighbours who are on their own, it is worth bearing in mind that many of them will have been hit by pandemic anxiety. They may feel frightened to leave their homes.

Such is the finding of a recent study by the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London into the effects of the pandemic on the elderly.

So, any act of neighbourly kindness on your part may be most welcome. Helpful jobs such as tidying the garden, doing some shopping, running errands, and simply sitting outside with them over a cup of tea might be greatly appreciated.

Children and tea-drinking

Put the kettle on. Children should begin to drink tea from the age of four, in order to combat later stress, obesity and heart disease.

So says the results of a recent study which appeared in the *Nutrition and Food Technology* journal. It says that green tea and the more traditional black tea contain compounds which can aid concentration and cognitive function.

As one doctor said, “Including three cups of black tea daily as a part of a healthy lifestyle could help to preserve physical and mental health in childhood... and into old age.”

Parents could offer tea as a substitute for sweet and sugary drinks for children.

If you can't sleep well, then walk

A recent study by the Universities of London and Sydney has found that brisk walking for 150 minutes a week may reduce the risk of an early death caused by poor sleep.

Lack of sleep has links to an increased risk of stroke, heart disease and cancer. But according to the study, published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, exercise in line with the World Health **Organisation (WHO) guidelines ‘eliminated most of the deleterious associations’ of poor sleep** with early death.

The WHO recommends 150 minutes brisk walking, or 75 minutes of running a week.

LOOKING AT YOUR CHURCH

Female clergy

In 1992 the Church of England voted to allow the ordination of women. Since 2014 they have also been able to become Bishops. The percentage of female clergy across all denominations in the UK in 1992, the first year it was counted, was 7% (of which 5% was Church of England).

By the year 2000 it was 10% for all denominations, by 2008 19%, by 2016 21% and in 2019, the latest year available, it is 24% (but 29% for Church of England and 23% for their senior clergy).

The Salvation Army has the largest proportion of female officers - an estimated 49% in 2020. The United Reformed Church has also had a high percentage – 36% in 2020.

Likewise in 2020, the Methodist Church of Great Britain had 36%, and the Church of Scotland had 28%. In 2020 the Baptists had 15%, New Churches (especially Vineyard, Newfrontiers and Pioneer) 16%, and Pentecostals 15%. The Roman Catholics and the Orthodox have no women priests at all.

How do these percentages compare with female leadership generally? Globally there are 21 women serving as the head of state or government in 193 countries, which is 11%. In the UK, of the top FTSE 100 companies only 5% of the CEOs are women. Of the MPs returned in the 2019 general election, 34% were women. In the UK regular Armed Forces, 11% are women.

One can always make other comparisons, but by these few examples, the percentage of female ministers is at least comparable to, if not better than, other sections of British society.

Two thirds of churches in UK plan to keep streaming online, says survey

Almost two thirds of UK churches plan to carry on streaming online, even after restrictions lift.

According to a recent survey by the insurance group Ecclesiastical and The Bible Society, 93 per cent of churches have used new ways to keep in touch with their congregation and over two in five churches (43 per cent) saw an increase in attendance as a result.

Live streaming has undoubtedly helped churches keep their services going during the pandemic, but this research suggests most, 62 per cent, would like the new habit to stay.

In the survey, 93 per cent said that they had used the video platform Zoom since March 2020, while others used Facebook (60 per cent), YouTube (5 per cent) and Microsoft Teams (1 per cent) to stream to their congregation.

Over two in five of the churches who had used these new channels said that they had seen an increase in attendance against their usual numbers, leading most to say they will carry on streaming after lockdown ends.

As one vicar in Norfolk said, "At the height of the pandemic we were getting over a hundred visits to our Facebook page a day, ten times as many as beforehand.

"By using social media we've been able to reach many more people than ever came through the actual church door each week, so it's definitely something we're looking to continue offering. There is certainly more hope now than there was this time last year and we look forward to the Lord leading us from this difficult time into freedom and new beginnings."

LOOKING AT YOUR COMMUNITY

Dead Sea Scrolls – brought to light 30 years ago

Thirty years ago, on 22nd September 1991, photographs and transcripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls were made available to scholars generally for the first time.

The Scrolls – ancient, mostly Hebrew or Aramaic manuscripts of leather, papyrus, and copper – were first found in 1947 near the shore of the Dead Sea. They come from various sites and date from the third century BC to the second century AD.

The decision by the Huntington Library, which is in San Marino, California, to make the Scrolls **public was hailed by its director, Dr William A Moffett, as a bold move “equivalent to breaking down the Berlin Wall”**. Up to that time access to the scrolls had been restricted to a fairly small group of ‘authorised’ scholars.

The Huntington photograph collection was created by philanthropist Elizabeth Hay Bechtel in 1980, with Robert Schlosser taking the actual pictures. After her death in 1987 they became the property of the library, with no agreed restrictions on their use – unlike the official collections, **which certain experts reserved for their own use “to ensure scholarly accuracy”**.

Last year the Museum of the Bible, in Washington DC, confirmed that all 16 of the fragments it owns are modern forgeries.

Harry Secombe – genius for buffoonery

One hundred years ago, on 8th September 1921, Sir Harry Secombe was born in Swansea. The comedian, actor, writer, singer and TV presenter was one of the stars of the anarchic 1950s radio series, *The Goon Show*.

His family belonged to St Thomas Church, and his elder brother, Fred, became a Church of Wales priest. Later in life Sir Harry was a presenter of religious programmes, such as the BBC's *Songs of Praise* and ITV's *Highway*.

He met Spike Milligan during the war in North Africa and later bumped into him again at the Windmill Theatre, where he was doing comedy routines. There they also met Peter Sellers and Michael Bentine – forming the team that eventually produced *The Goon Show*. A natural clown **with a “genius for buffoonery”, Harry was the focus, and he moved on to star in a series of films, including *Oliver!***

He was also a talented and popular tenor. He was knighted in 1981, referring to himself as Sir Cumference in reference to his size – he was later forced to diet for medical reasons, and died at **the age of 79 of prostate cancer. His tombstone bears the inscription “To know him is to love him”**.

High Days & Holy Days

8th September: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In both eastern and western Churches, Mary has always been held as pre-eminent among all the saints. The unique, extraordinary privilege of being the mother of the One who was both God and Man, makes her worthy of special honour. Thomas Aquinas believed she was due *hyperdulia*, or a veneration that exceeds that of other saints, but is at the same time infinitely below the adoration, or *latria*, due to God alone.

The gospels of Matthew and Luke give Mary most mention. **Luke even tells the story of Jesus' infancy from Mary's point of view. Her Song, or Magnificat appears in Luke 1:46-55.**

The virginal conception of Christ is clearly stated in **the gospels. But after Jesus' birth, Mary fades quietly into the background. During Jesus' public life, she is mentioned only occasionally, as at the wedding at nCana. She reappears at the foot of the Cross (John's Gospel), and is given into John's care. In the early chapters of Acts, Mary is with the Apostles, and received the Holy Spirit along with them on Whitsunday. But her role was not the active one of teaching and preaching.**

Mary's significance grew with the centuries. By the fifth century she was called *Theotokos*, The Mother of God, and from the seventh century onwards, she was given four festivals: the Presentation in the Temple (2nd February), the Annunciation (25th March), the Assumption (15th August) and her Nativity (8th September).

Marian devotion has played an enormous role in the church down the years. Mary has been the object of countless prayers, accredited with performing many miracles, and the subject of thousands of artistic endeavours. She has had hundreds of chapels or parish churches named after her. During the Reformation many images of Mary were destroyed. The Second Vatican Council 1962 made an extended statement on her, stressing her complete dependence on her Son, and regarding her as a model of the Church.

Principal Marian shrines of today include Lourdes (France), Fatima (Portugal), Walsingham (England), Loreto (Italy), Czesochowa (Poland) and Guadalupe (Mexico).

11th September: St Deiniol of Bangor - bringing disagreeing bishops together

St Deiniol was a 6th century monk of Wales who came **to be the 'first bishop of Bangor'. And a mighty bishop he was, too: Deiniol founded the two monasteries of Bangor Fawr (on the Menai Straits) and Bangor Iscoed (Clwyd), which, according to Bede, became the most famous monastery of British Christianity and came to number over 2,000 monks. Sadly, they were defeated at the battle of Chester by the pagan Aethelfrith, king of Northumbria. Deiniol is also remembered for his skill in getting disagreeing **bishops to come and talk things over at a Synod...** surely a skill which his 21st century successors have had to put to great use! He died about 584 AD.**

16th September: Cornelius – the saint who had mercy on sinning Christians

Have you ever sinned since you became a Christian? *Really* sinned – or in other words done something that **was SO wrong and totally 'out of line' with being a Christian that you are still ashamed when you think of it now. If so, and if you went on to ask God's forgiveness for it, and have resolved never to do it again, then Cornelius is a good saint for you. He fought for Christians who had failed miserably to be given a second chance.**

The time was 251, and Cornelius had just become Bishop of Rome. The Church at this time was struggling with what to do about Christians who had lapsed, and who now wanted to come back. Novation, a powerful Roman priest, argued that the Church had no power to pardon and welcome back any Christian who had caved in under persecution, or who had committed adultery or murder or similar serious offences.

Cornelius disagreed, and said that if a Christian truly repented and did the appropriate penance to prove it, then they should eventually be admitted back into the Church. The argument might sound over-earnest to modern ears, but it reflects how seriously the early Christians took their commitment to follow Jesus in leading a holy life, and in being willing to die for Him. In the end, that is exactly what Cornelius did – accepted death as the next persecution began, rather than deny Him.

High Days & Holy Days

Continued.....

21st September: St Matthew

Matthew was one of 12 apostles. But he began as a publican i.e. a tax-collector of Jewish race who worked for the Romans, before he left all at the call of Christ. From earliest times, he was regarded as the author of the first of the four Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew is in correct, concise style, very suitable for public reading.

His usual emblem as an evangelist is a man, because his genealogy emphasised the family ties of Christ. In art, he has been represented as either an evangelist or as an apostle. As an evangelist, he has been depicted sitting at a desk, writing his gospel with an angel holding the inkwell. In the Middle Ages he was even given a pair of spectacles.

Matthew was martyred by a sword or a spear, some think in Ethiopia.

27th September: Vincent de Paul – patron of all charitable societies

Very few people stand out as being incredibly good, but Vincent de Paul was one of them. His life touched thousands of people, who were helped and inspired by his love and kindness.

Vincent de Paul was born in 1581 to a Gascon peasant family at Ranquine. Educated by the Franciscans and then at Toulouse University, he was ordained a priest very young, at only 19. He became a court chaplain, and then tutor to the children of the Gondi family. In 1617 he was made parish priest of Chatillon-les-Dombes.

From here, Vincent de Paul ministered both to the rich and fashionable, and also to the poor and oppressed. He helped prisoners in the galleys, and even convicts at Bordeaux.

In 1625 Vincent de Paul founded a congregation of priests who renounced all church preferment and instead devoted themselves to the faithful in smaller towns and villages. In 1633 they were given the Paris priory church of Saint-Lazare, and that same year Vincent founded the Sisters of Charity, the first congregation of **'unenclosed' women, whose lives were entirely devoted to the poor and sick, and even providing some hospital care.** Rich women helped by raising

funds for various projects, which were an immense success.

Even in his lifetime, Vincent became a legend. Clergy and laity, rich and poor, outcasts and convicts all were warmed and enriched by his charisma and selfless devotion. Vincent was simply consumed by the love of God and of his neighbour. His good works seemed innumerable – ranging from helping war-victims in Lorraine, and sending missionaries to Poland, Ireland and Scotland, to advising Anne of Austria at Court during the regency.

No wonder that after his death at nearly 80, the Pope named him as patron of all charitable societies. Even today, the Vincent de Paul Society is working with the poor and oppressed.

29th September: Michael and All Angels

St Michael is an archangel, whose name means 'who is like unto God?' He makes various appearances throughout the Bible, from the book of Daniel to the Book of Revelation. In Daniel, he is 'one of the princes' of the heavenly host, and the special guardian of Israel. In Revelation, he is the principal fighter of the heavenly battle against the devil.

From early times, St Michael's cult was strong in the British Isles. Churches at Malmesbury (Wiltshire), Clive (Gloucestershire) and Stanmer (East Sussex) were dedicated to him. Bede mentions him. St Michael's Mount in Cornwall was believed to commemorate a vision there in the 8th century. By the end of the Middle Ages, St Michael had 686 English churches dedicated to him.

In art St Michael is often depicted as slaying the dragon, as in the 14th century East Anglican Psalters, **or in Epstein's famous sculpture at Coventry cathedral.** Or he is found (in medieval art) as weighing souls, as at Chaldon (Surrey), Swalcliffe (Oxon.), Eaton Bishop (Hereford and Worcester), and Martham in Suffolk. **St Michael's most famous shrine in western Europe is Mont-Saint-Michel, where a Benedictine abbey was founded in the 10th century.**

The 'All Angels' bit of this feast-day was added in 1969 when Gabriel and Raphael were included in with St Michael.



Bifocals

A preacher went into the pulpit one Sunday morning wearing a pair of new bifocals. The reading portion of the glasses improved his vision considerably, but the top portion of the glasses didn't work so well. In fact, he was experiencing dizziness every time he looked through them. Finally, he apologised to the congregation. "I hope you will excuse my continually removing my glasses," he said. "You see, when I look down, I can see fine, but when I look at you, it makes me feel sick."

How different churches cope with adversity
When a Methodist minister falls down the stairs, he **picks himself up and says, "That was an experience, how do I learn from it?"**

When a Catholic priest falls down the stairs, he **picks himself up and says, "I must have done something really bad to deserve that."**

When a Presbyterian minister falls down the stairs, he **picks himself up and says, "That was inevitable, I'm glad it's over."**

When a Baptist minister falls down the stairs, he **picks himself up and says, "Which one of my deacons pushed me?"**

When a vicar falls down the stairs, he **picks himself up and says, "Will I need a faculty to get the staircase repaired?"**

Daughter-in-law

A young man rang his mother to announce, with **great excitement, that he'd at last fallen in love and was contemplating marriage. He went on: "Just for fun, I'm going to bring over my girlfriend and two of her friends. I would like you to try and guess which one I'm going to marry."**

The mother agreed. So, the next day her son **arrived at his mother's house with three beautiful young women. They sat on the sofa and chatted for a while with the family.**

When his mother went out to the kitchen to put **the kettle on for tea, her son followed her. "Okay, mum," he said. "Guess which one I would like to marry."**

She replied at once: **"The one in the green dress."** Her son was astonished and asked how on earth she had guessed. The mother shrugged. **"That's easy. I don't like her."**

Diagnosis

A man went into a drop-in medical centre where the diagnosis was done by a computer. The patient keyed in his symptoms. The machine whirred and buzzed for a few seconds and then presented its **findings on the screen. It said simply: "There's a lot of it about."**

Croutons

Why do croutons come in airtight packages? Aren't they just stale bread to begin with?

Others

If it's true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for?

Flying bishop

The new Bishop wanted a bird's eye view of his new diocese, so he had an idea. He rang his local airfield to charter a flight, and was told that a twin-engine plane would be waiting for him. Arriving at the airfield, the bishop spotted a plane warming up outside a hangar. He jumped in, slammed the door shut, and shouted, "Let's go!"

At once the pilot taxied out, swung the plane into the wind and took off. Once in the air, the bishop spent several minutes enjoying the views, and looking for local landmarks. Finally, he instructed the pilot, **"Fly down the valley now and make low passes so I can take pictures of some of the best of the old parish churches."**

"Why?" asked the pilot.

"Because I'm the new bishop," he replied happily, adjusting his camera, "and I want some good aerial views of my diocese."

The pilot was silent for a moment. Finally he stammered, **"So, what you're telling me, is, you're NOT my flight instructor?"**

more....
**SMILE
LINES**

A little girl had been to Sunday School for the first time and was asked by her mother how it compared with her new primary school. "Oh, I like it much better," she said. "There are no exams there, you go only once a week for an hour, and at the end you go to heaven instead of high school."

The sentence, 'Are you as bored as I am?', can be read backwards and still make sense.

It was our Harvest Festival Sunday. My husband had cut his ear while shaving. We arrived at the church just in time to sing: 'First the blade and then the ear'.

From a church report on renovations at a Youth Centre in Northants: 'The lift and the new windows are installed and the non-alcoholic bar is already plastered.'

From a church notice sheet: **PLEASE NOTE:** 'From this Sunday the evening service will begin at 8pm. This will continue until October.'

Gym?

Before setting off on a business trip to Birmingham, I called the hotel where I'd be staying to see if they had a gym. The hotel receptionist's sigh had a tinge of exasperation in it when she answered.

"We have over 100 guests at this facility," she said. "Does this 'Jim' have a last name?"

Listen

My three-year-old was saying his nightly prayers in a very low voice. "I can't hear you," I finally whispered.

He said firmly, "Wasn't talking to you."

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...er Vicar, it's about that flower Mrs Brindle's brought back from her foreign holiday...

September Easy Sudoku

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

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September Intermediate Sudoku

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

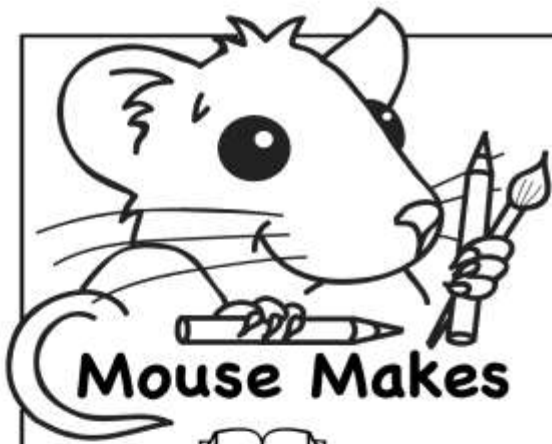
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August Easy Sudoku Solution

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

August Intermediate Sudoku Solution

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



Mouse Makes




Read this story in
1 Kings 17:7-16

The bowl of flour and the jar of oil

It had not rained for months and months, there was a drought in the land.

God sent His prophet **Elijah** to the town of Zarephath. At the town gate he saw a widow gathering firewood.

"Please bring me a drink of water and some bread." he asked her. 

She answered *"All I have is a handful of flour and a drop of oil in a jar, it is our last meal."*

"Do not worry." Elijah said, *"Make the meal and make a small loaf for me."*

The woman did what Elijah had asked and God blessed her ...

... The bowl never ran out of flour and the jar never ran out of oil until it rained again!



E	M	P	T	Y	Z	B	A	K	E	D		
M	I	W	C	H	A	N	D	F	U	L		
F	L	A	I	L	R	B	R	E	A	D		
L	I	T	T	L	E	L	I	J	A	H		
K	O	V	E	Y	O	P	I	N	Z	T	D	N
J	U	E	R	Y	R	H	J	K	M	E	A	E
U	R	F	E	E	D	A	W	M	A	N	Y	V
G	W	U	A	J	S	T	I	C	K	S	S	E
U	E	L	T	A	E	H	D	I	E	G	O	R
N	L	Z	R	N	D	O	I	L	O	N		
T	U	G	A	T	E	W	O	R	D	R		

Find these words from the story in the word search:

WORD • LORD • GOD • ELIJAH • SENT • ZAREPHATH • GATE • CITY • WIDOW
STICKS • WATER • DRINK • BREAD • FEED • HANDFUL • FLOUR • LITTLE
OIL • SON • EAT • DIE • FULL • WENT • MAKE • BAKED • ATE • JAR • JUG • MANY
DAYS • LIVE • NEVER • EMPTY



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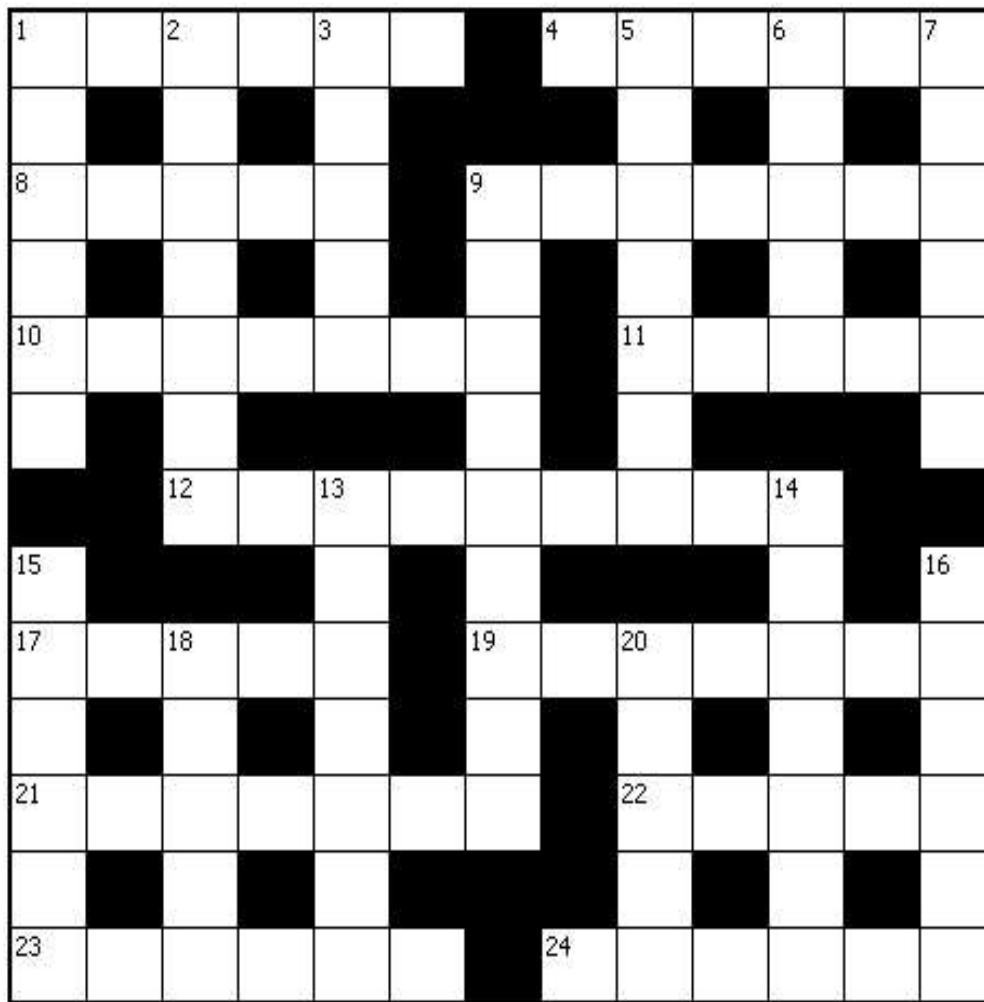
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CROSSWORD



CLUES

Across

- 1 **'Through [Christ] we have gained by faith into this grace' (Romans 5:2) (6)**
- 4 Deprives of sight (Deuteronomy 16:19) (6)
- 8 The words of a hymn do this (mostly) (5)
- 9 Faithful allegiance (1 Chronicles 12:33) (7)
- 10 **Belgium's chief port (7)**
- 11 **Where John was baptizing 'because there was plenty of water' (John 3:23) (5)**
- 12 Imposing height (Psalm 48:2) (9)
- 17 **Jesus' tempter in the wilderness (Mark 1:13) (5)**
- 19 Comes between Amos and Jonah (7)
- 21 **'Your will be done' ... as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10) (2,5)**
- 22 Gale (Matthew 8:24) (5)
- 23 Axle, eh? (anag.) (6)
- 24 **'Out of the... I cry to you, O Lord' (Psalm 130:1) (6)**

Down

- 1 Popular Christian author and humorist, Plass (6)
- 2 Transparent ice-like mineral (Revelation 4:6) (7)
- 3 Method of compelling surrender by surrounding target of attack (2 Chronicles 32:1) (5)
- 5 Expose (Isaiah 52:10) (3,4)
- 6 Lonny (anag.) (5)
- 7 Utterance (1 Timothy 1:15) (6)
- 9 Husband of Deborah, the prophetess (Judges 4:4) (9)
- 13 Burial service (Jeremiah 34:5) (7)
- 14 What Christ threatened to do to the lukewarm church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:16) (4,3)
- 15 Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net (John 21:11) (6)
- 16 **His response to Jesus' decision to return to Judea was 'Let us also go, that we may die with him' (John 11:16) (6)**
- 18 **There will be weeping and gnashing of ... (Matthew 8:12) (5)**
- 20 Walkway between rows of pews in a church (5)

Solution to the August Crossword



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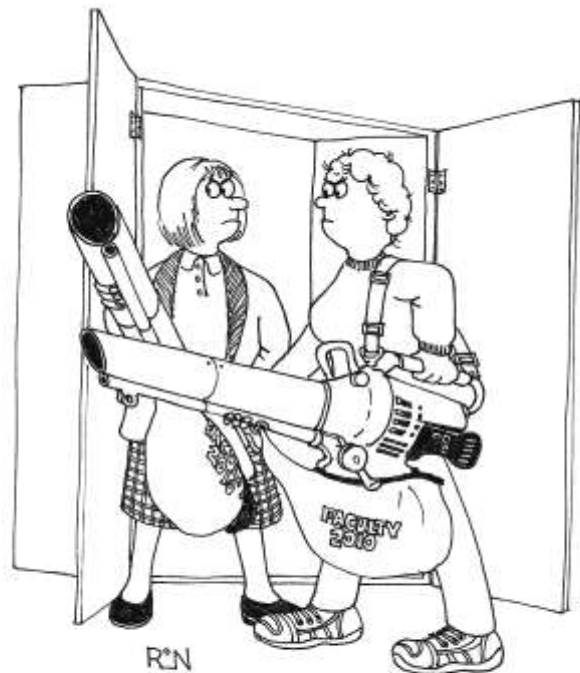


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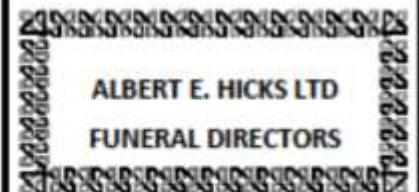
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