

# Lenten Discipline - a Holy Joy

March is named after Mars, the ancient Roman god of war and in a certain sense we Christians are at war this month, coinciding as it does with Lent when we try to echo our Lord's own successful war with the world, the flesh and the Devil during the temptations in the wilderness. As we discipline ourselves through prayer, abstinence and the examination of conscience, we become fitter disciples for sharing in His passion and in the benefits of His glorious resurrection.

But in the middle of Lent are three days which represent special encouragement and comfort for our spiritual testing: the commemoration of Joseph of Nazareth (March 19), the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) and Mothering Sunday (March 26). As the last is also known as Refreshment Sunday, when discipline may be relaxed, perhaps that's really four days.

In Joseph we seek the righteous man who stuck by his fiancée in what must have been hard and embarrassing circumstances. Mary responded to the awesome news that she was to bear a Son of God with courageous obedience: "Let it be with me according to your

word" (Luke 1.38). They exemplify a great responsibility of parents, truly a Christian vocation in itself. Then on Mothering Sunday, as well as appreciating our own mothers, we honour the motherhood of the Church, that family Jesus called into being from the cross as he gave Mary into the care of the beloved disciple (John 19. 27).



So we are reminded that we are never alone. We are part of a community of saints linking us to the fountain of Life Himself. The Church, like Mary herself, is the bearer of the Word to the world and the source of nurture and nourishment to all who accept the invitation to become part of His body. As we take up His cross in service, we are provided with the strength and fellowship to make loving discipline a holy joy.

"Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ Lord." Amen

# Chronicle

# Ministry of Healing

*A monthly service in either St James or St Francis Church*

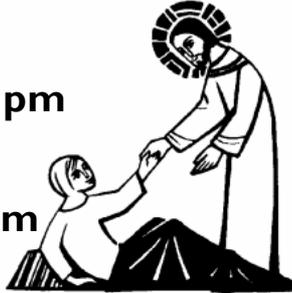
## Healing Services:

**Thursday 9th March 7.00 pm**

**St Francis Church**

**Thursday 6th April 7.30 pm**

**St James Church**



The ministry of healing is available at St James' Church every Sunday during the 10 o'clock service. Please go to St Luke's Chapel after you have received Communion where members of the Healing Team will be available to listen and to pray in complete confidence.

# BUS PASSES

There are mixed messages coming from the Town Hall about 'bus passes and free travel. It seems that the cardboard pass that the older among us still have is no longer valid and should not be accepted by drivers. In April free travel for pensioners comes into force and all of us MUST have the new blue credit card type pass with an expiry date printed on it - the pass lasts for three years.

To get a new pass go to the office opposite the Town Hall, no appointment necessary but there may be a short queue, and the pass will be issued then and there. Take along proof of age, the old pass is not acceptable as details of the holders of these passes have been removed from the computer, take a passport, driving licence or pension book. Also take proof of address, a driving licence or a utility bill will be accepted.

A person who is disabled and needs assistance in travelling is eligible for a companion's pass which means a companion of any age can travel free. To obtain one of these take along a doctor's letter or some other written proof of the disability. The companion's ticket will have the pensioner's photograph on it.

I do not know about the credit card style passes with no expiry date but I suspect they will have to be renewed by April. The messages from the Town Hall vary from day to day, be on the safe side and get a new pass before April or free travel may be denied.

*Una*



# Thoughts

'Tis God's will I would do,  
My own will I would rein;  
Would give to God his due,  
From my own due refrain;  
God's path I would pursue,  
My own path would disdain;  
For Christ's death would I care,  
My own death duly weighed;  
Christ's pain my silent prayer,  
My God-love warmer made;  
'Tis Christ's cross I would bear,  
My own cross off me laid;  
Repentance I would make,  
Repentance early choose;  
Rein for my tongue would take,  
Rein for my thoughts would use;  
God's judgment would I mind,  
My own judgment  
close-scanned;  
Christ's freedom seizing bind,  
My own freedom in hand;  
Christ's love close-scanned  
would find,  
My own love understand.

*From Poems of the  
Western Highlanders*

# More than conquerors: the story of the yellow ribbons

Loved with everlasting love! (Jeremiah. 31:3). One of the greatest and most comforting doctrines taught in the Bible is the love of God for his people. It is found in almost every book in the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament. In the Law and in the Prophets; in the poetical and historical books; in Gospels and Letters – all agree to tell us what God said to his people through Jeremiah. “I have loved you with an everlasting love” (31:3).

It was that love that moved the Father to send his Son into the world (John 3:16). Paul writes glowingly of “that great love with which he loved us” (Ephesians 2:4). John emphasises the same great truth in a magnificent creed of just three words: ‘God is love’ (1 John 4:8). Quite simply there is nothing in all creation more reassuring, more comforting, more encouraging, more uplifting than to know that God loves us. And we can go further and put it in personal terms as Paul did. ‘He loved me and gave himself for me’ (Galatians 2:21).

How can we illustrate the illimitable love of God? Of course the greatest depiction of that love is Christ dying for us on the cross. Can we find an everyday illustration, an event or a true story, that will light up this great doctrine for us?

One such illustration comes from the life and ministry of John Wilbur Chapman. Chapman was born in Richmond, Indiana, in June 1859, ordained into the Presbyterian ministry and pastored a number of churches. In 1893 he went into full-time evangelistic ministry. He was joined by the famous song leader Charles Alexander and in a ministry that foreshadowed Billy Graham and Beverly Shea, Chapman and Alexander evangelised around the world until Chapman’s death in 1918.

Chapman used many memorable personal illustrations in his preaching. In one of them he told of how one evening he was travelling by train in a rural part of the state of Kansas. The only other passenger in the carriage was a young

man and Chapman noticed that he was becoming very agitated. He kept glancing out of the window and then covering his face with his hands. Chapman asked if he could help.

The young man was a bit reluctant but finally opened up. Many years before he had run away from home and ‘sown his wild oats.’ He had not contacted his parents for many years and now he was afraid they wouldn’t want him back. He had written home some weeks before and told them he would be travelling on this train. At a certain point it passed very close to his home. In the letter he had begged his parents’ forgiveness and asked if they wanted him to come home. If so, they were to tie a yellow ribbon on the old apple tree that grew right beside the railway lines.



‘Sir,’ he said to Chapman, ‘the train will soon pass my home but I’m afraid to look. If there’s a yellow ribbon on the tree, I’ll get off at the next station and go home. If there’s no ribbon, I’ll just travel on. But I’m too afraid to look out for the tree.’ Chapman offered to look for him. The young man hid his eyes and Chapman kept watch.

‘You can open your eyes now,’ he said a few minutes later. The returning prodigal looked at Chapman with tears and quivering lips. ‘All is well,’ said the evangelist. ‘There is a yellow ribbon on the apple tree. In fact, there’s far more than one. Every branch is hanging with yellow ribbons, scores and scores of them. Your parents love you so much and want you to come home.’

If parents can love their wayward children like that, how much greater is the love of God! Truly, we are loved with everlasting love.

*Dr Herbert McGonigle, Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology & Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester.*



# Rosanne interviews Norma Jenkins

It was on one of those bitterly cold February afternoons, when the east wind seems to creep through the buttonholes of your coat, that I went to talk to Norma. A day to hurry inside and close the door. And there I was invited into the cosiest bed-sitting rooms you ever saw. Norma shares her home in Fernhill Road with her youngest daughter and her family and has turned the front room into her 'den'. It is packed with her favourite books and magazines, her knitting, her sewing projects, jigsaws, all the paraphernalia of life. In the middle of it all she sits in her cosy armchair "as snug as a bug in a rug", as my mum used to say. As the interview progressed I found that she is not only surrounded by the warmth of her home, but also by a lot of love and care.

As soon as you hear her talk you can detect a London accent, but she was quick to point out she's not a Cockney nor does she want to be thus labelled. Her mother considered cockney people to be 'common' and Norma rejected any hint of common!! She was born in the King's Cross area of London (I suspect just out of reach of Bow Bells), but went on to tell of an amazing childhood, due to the unusual job her father did. He was a member of the Metropolitan police's anti-forgery squad and was

therefore required to travel to many areas of Britain to investigate serious cases. In those days her mother would pack up the home taking her and her baby sister to any area of the U.K. where their father might be sent. This meant that Norma's schooling was erratic to say the least – 15 different schools before the age of fifteen – though she did learn how to make friends easily. Even before World War Two the family had moved to Palmers Green in London and from there had one-year residencies in Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, back to London and on to Bedford and more. By this time London was caught up in the blitz and she has vivid recollections of sheltering at night under the table in her grandma's house. She also tells of the biggest unexploded bomb in the city, which was dropped on their street. For part of the war they evacuated to Edinburgh and she remembers how as a young girl she watched a Messerschmitt brought down by a Spitfire over the city. By V.E. night the family were back in their London home and went to the amazing celebrations in Trafalgar Square, where Norma was perched on one of the lions at the foot of Nelson's column. By that time her father realised that her education had been sadly disrupted, so he paid for her to study business skills, especially book-keeping,

at the world renowned Pitman's College. Once she had passed the necessary exams she found a post in Threadneedle Street at the Bank of England. In those days equal opportunities had not even been considered and much to Norma's disgust she watched the young men on the staff gaining promotion whilst the young women were overlooked. So she took her next job at the headquarters of the British Haulage Association where she felt more valued.

Throughout her childhood and teenage years she found her friendships and social life centred on her local church. Her dad was a non-conformist and her mum worshipped at the Anglo-Catholic church. The policy at home was that as long as Norma and her sister went to church it didn't matter which one. They enjoyed a wonderful fellowship where the young people produced plays, held dances and took part in a variety of activities under the church's wing. The highlight of these was a six-week festival of dance at Southwark Cathedral, to mark the Festival of Britain in 1951. Queen Mary attended one of the performances. In 1952 her father retired intending to become a village postmaster. This ambition was short-lived and the family moved to Oxford. Norma found a job managing the

accounts at Hartwells in the Abingdon Road. On her very first morning she met a young mechanic, Tony, and it was love at first sight for both of them. Within less than a year the couple were married at Headington Quarry Church. To Norma's disappointment Mr Head, the vicar refused to allow them to have the Crimond version of the hymn "The Lord is my Shepherd", because he didn't like the tune! However it was included in the funeral services of each of her parents and in her beloved Tony's 34 years later.

After renting flats in their early-married life, they moved to their first house in Berinsfield, where they settled for twenty-one years. There they brought up their four children, Simon and Fiona, and (after a gap) Christopher and Lisa. In order to afford a mortgage for a house in Fernhill Road Tony got a job at "The Works". Sadly in 1987 he died and it was at this point in her life Norma "found" St Francis Church or rather it found her through Fr. Keith for whom Norma has great respect. She felt welcome there immediately and soon was taking part in parish activities.

Whilst she was telling me about her interesting life, three lovely, lively youngsters swept home from school. Each one peeped round Nanny's door, along with an active puppy waiting for his afternoon walk. Grandchildren, George, nearly 9, Charlie, 8, and Bethany, 6, are not surprisingly Norma's pride and joy whilst Diffa (D for dog, get it?!) spends time in her company. Lisa her daughter made us tea and son

Simon dropped in on his way home from work. The telephone rang- it was Christopher, her younger son, to check on a little "fix-it" task he would be coming to do the next day. With so much love and care surrounding her and with the fellowship she experiences at St Francis, is it any wonder that she describes herself as a happy person! Fernhill Road seemed to have acquired a warm glow as I walked home.

**How would you describe yourself as a small child?**

Outgoing, if I wasn't I wouldn't have got anywhere. I mixed easily, never minded being moved on.

**Have you any special childhood memories?**

When I was three and a half I was taken to Arthur's seat in Edinburgh. Over the Easter weekend I rolled painted hard-boiled eggs down the hill.

**Has God been part of your life since you were a child?**

Definitely. He's been an important part of my life since I was quite small.

**In modern society is there anything which upsets or disappoints you?**

The intolerance of people with different faiths. People who move into our society should learn to tolerate all our beliefs.

**Is there anything about life today that you find positive or encouraging?**

Yes, the way that people go out of their way to be kind and neighbourly to those of us who are getting a bit ancient!

**Do you have a treasured possession?**

I have a piece of ivory which is a carved model of the three graces. It came from the private residence of the Archbishop of York, given by him to my great-great-great-great grandmother who was his housekeeper.

**Do you have a hero or heroine?**

Yes, the lady who wrote the "Little Women" books, Louisa M Alcott. I've read them over and over again.

**How do you like to spend your leisure time?**

Reading novels, I like Betty Neel's books. I enjoy knitting and sewing and spending time with my grandchildren.

**What makes you laugh?**

I don't like cruel humour. Some sarcasm can be witty, but it has to be gentle.

**Do you have ambitions for the future?**

Trying to plan to go to America with my youngest son, Christopher (he took me to Canada last year) and I hope to get past ninety so that I will have lived longer than my grandparents



# Fairtrade Fortnight 6th - 19th March

Little things matter. As Christians, we strive with the help of God's grace to build up, little by little, the habits of love in our lives. Finding prayer time each day, making the effort to say a kind word ... taken individually, such actions may seem relatively small, but the habits they create are part of our inward transformation.

This Fairtrade Fortnight, why not add the regular purchase of Fairtrade goods to your habits?

It may seem a small thing whether you choose one type of banana or another, one kind of clothing or another, but like the other elements of a Christian life, it can prove transformative - for others, and for us.

Purchasing Fairtrade goods is a way of living out the command to love our neighbours: Fairtrade ensures that those who produce what we eat, drink and wear - neighbours even though we may not see them - receive a fair return for their labour. It guarantees farmers a fair price that covers the cost of living, and agricultural and factory workers a fair wage and labour rights. It gives producers' communities a "fairtrade premium" to invest in community needs: things like wells, school supplies, maternity clinics, and mobile medical units. Fairtrade requires adherence to environmental standards and encourages continual improvement in environmental care. It offers producers in developing countries information that can help them

negotiate world markets and plan better for the future.

One striking example of the transformation Fairtrade can bring comes from the Dominican Republic. A few years ago the Juliana-Jaramillo cooperative there started selling their bananas on the UK Fairtrade market. Within two years, this small cooperative of about 70 farmers had raised enough money to

- improve their housing,
- buy an electric generator,
- restore the community's long defunct water system,
- start a community canteen, and distribute sanitation systems to local residents.

Nor is this a lone example; as the Fairtrade market has grown, its benefiting many villages and even countries. Thanks to UK customer demand, Fairtrade production in Dominica has grown sixfold, bringing vital income to this highly commodity-dependent nation. Hard to believe it's small habitual purchases like yours having such an effect? Think about this: the average UK consumer eats about 13kg of bananas a year. Multiply that times the number of households in your church ... a church with 30 households could easily go through a metric tonne of bananas in a year!

But Fairtrade doesn't just benefit producers. We gain too - and not just on the tasty treats front! Thinking through our choices when we shop reminds

us that all our lives - even the mundane activities - can be used to give glory to God. It helps us to remember our interconnectedness with brothers and sisters around the world. And it provides a witness to the world that Christians love with their deeds, not just their words. Little things really do matter.

*(Circulated by Christian Concern for One World)*



## Mothering Sunday 26th March



### ST JAMES

10.00 am      Family  
Eucharist

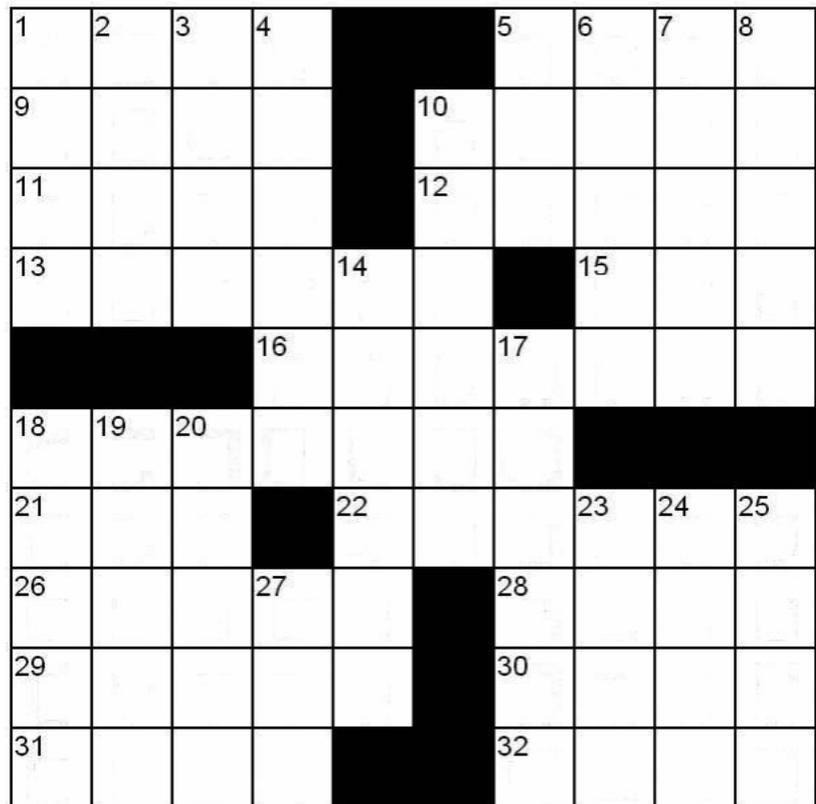
### ST FRANCIS

10.30 am      Family  
Eucharist

Have mercy  
 Upon us.  
 Have mercy  
 Upon our efforts,  
 That we  
 Before thee,  
 In love and in faith,  
 Righteousness and humility,  
 May follow thee,  
 With self-denial, steadfastness  
 and courage,  
 And meet thee  
 In the silence.  
 Give us  
 A pure heart  
 That we may see thee,  
 A humble heart  
 That we may hear thee,  
 A heart of love  
 That we may serve thee,  
 A heart of faith  
 That we may love thee,  
 Thou  
 Whom I do not know  
 But whose I am.  
 Thou  
 Whom I do not comprehend  
 But who hast dedicated me  
 To my fate.  
 Thou -

*Dag Hammarskjöld*  
 (1905 – 1961)

# March's Crossword



## ACROSS

- 1 Opposed
- 5 After-bath wear
- 9 Big cat
- 10 Outstanding
- 11 Adding term
- 12 Fish tank dweller
- 13 Reconcile
- 15 Possessive pronoun
- 16 Ear pain
- 18 Author King
- 21 White-tailed sea eagle
- 22 Lots
- 26 What "Star Trek"'s Jordy LaForge wears
- 28 Fury
- 29 Musical composition
- 30 Give off
- 31 Require
- 32 Lave

## DOWN

- 1 Swiss mountains
- 2 Large African river
- 3 Brag
- 4 Part in front of the ankle
- 5 Regret
- 6 Visual
- 7 Bunk
- 8 Wipe out
- 10 Music player
- 14 City in Pakistan
- 17 Simon's (who is called Peter) brother
- 18 Septet
- 19 Corny
- 20 Prove
- 23 Dalai
- 24 -----
- 25 Adam and Eve's third son?
- 27 Unusual

## February's Solution



# Sunday Services

## ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist ( <i>exc 2nd Sunday</i> ) All Age Eucharist ( <i>2nd Sunday</i> )
1.00 pm	Cowley Asian Christian Fellowship

## ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am	Parish Eucharist <i>[Family Eucharist - 2nd Sunday of the month]</i>
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## Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Group – <i>St Francis</i>
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union - <i>St James (3rd Mon)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Seashells Baby & Toddler Club - <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Service – <i>St Francis</i>
	12.00 pm	Eucharist - <i>St James</i>
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club- <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Friends of St Francis - <i>St Francis (2nd &amp; 4th)</i>
5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>	
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Tea Break - <i>St Francis (1st Wed)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	11.00 am	St Francis Prayer Group
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist - <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Friday Club – <i>alt Fridays at St Francis</i>
Saturday	9.15 am	Morning Prayer & Breakfast - <i>St Francis</i>

### Day Off

Stephen has Friday off; Except in emergency, please try and respect this day of rest. Lorne can be contacted in the evenings and at weekends.

## PARISH DIRECTORY

### TEAM RECTOR:

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### LICENSED LAY

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Norah Shallow  
Tel: 765199

### DEPUTY WARDENS:

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