

At the Turn of the Year

The month of January is named after the Roman God Janus who had two heads which looked both backwards and forwards. January offers us the chance to do likewise. Each of us will be struck in different ways. We may have had a particularly trying year and we are hoping for better times ahead. Or it may be the exact opposite, as we look ahead we know that there are difficult times on the horizon.

The goodwill and general feeling of happiness which surrounded the Queen's Golden Jubilee has quickly ebbed away as the threat of war with Iraq grows ever more likely. I don't think I have ever felt more insecure or threatened than at the present time.

The factors militating towards an armed conflict are complex but much seems to arise out of the inability to find a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli situation. From the so-called "Holy Land", suspicion and hatred spills out into the wider world. Fear and hostility between major religious groupings escalate and those who are drawn to an extreme fundamentalist find no shortage of radicals to support their cause.

Early in the New Year we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany when Christians recall the visit of the three Wise Men. They have come to

symbolise those who are seeking for meaning and purpose in their lives.

There are millions of people who yearn for spiritual truth and yet who are dismayed by the atrocious acts of violence perpetrated "in the name of God".

In such precarious times there is an urgent need for dialogue and understanding between adherents of the world's faiths. Extremism cannot be allowed to flourish whilst the

majority sit on the sidelines. The evil of Nazism should remind us of this. If there is one thing that binds Jews, Christians and Muslims together is the worship of a God who is love and peace. It was this God, born

in Jesus, whom the Magi journeyed such a distance to find. It is the same God who is seen as the Father of Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

More than at any time in recent years we need to speak up for tolerance and understanding. We need to stand up for peace. We need to pledge our allegiance to our God revealed as the Prince of Peace – Jesus, Saviour of the World. In faith and trust we can edge into a New Year with greater confidence and firmer resolve.



Chronicle

Churches Together in Cowley & District

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

18TH - 25TH JANUARY 2003

Churches Together in Cowley have agreed to pray together every day during the Week of Prayer for 20 minutes at **7 o'clock**.

Please join us if you can!

Saturday	18th	St Mary the Virgin, Iffley
Monday	20th	Temple Cowley U.R.C.
Tuesday	21st	St James, Cowley
Wednesday	22nd	Rose Hill Methodist Church
Thursday	23rd	SS Mary the Virgin & Nicholas, Littlemore
Friday	24th	John Bunyan Baptist Church
Saturday	25th	Holy Family, Blackbird Leys

UNITED SERVICE:

Sunday 20th Blessed Dominic Barberi, Littlemore at 6.30 pm

Sundays @ Six at St James

The first Sunday of the month at 6 o'clock

January 5th Celebrating Epiphany

February 2nd Reflecting on the Word

March 2nd Evening Praise

April 6th Looking to the Cross



As we survey the world scene, with war threatening...

The passion for inflicting harm, the cruel thirst for vengeance, an unpacific and relentless spirit, the fever of revolt, the lust of power, and such like things, all these are rightly condemned in war.... True religion looks upon as peaceful those wars that are waged not for motives of aggrandisement or cruelty, but with the object of securing peace, of punishing evil doers, and of uplifting the good. - St Augustine.



Morning Prayer & Breakfast

St Francis Church

Saturday Mornings 9.15 am
all welcome

SO WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT JESUS?



Long before people were astounded by Jesus' peerless character, they were staggered by his utterances. Even enemies, intent on trapping him, admitted: "No one ever spoke the way this man does." (John 7:46) Furthermore, "the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law." (Matthew 7:28-9) But we must also note in Jesus something without precedent in the span of human literature. While urging humility on others and while giving the impression of the ultimately humble person, Jesus' teaching and claims are basically egocentric and completely focussed on himself. In ordinary life, that would get a person labelled as crazy or as a megalomaniac!

Just think of the few astounding claims Jesus made about himself. "I am the resurrection and the life." (Jn 11:25) "I am the bread of life." (Jn 6:35) "I am the light of the world." (Jn 8:12) "I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10:7,9) "...whoever lives and believes in me will never die." (Jn 11:26) and "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." (Jn 14:9)

CS Lewis comments on the

inescapableness of Jesus' uniqueness: "There is no half-way house, and there is no parallel in other religions." That He cannot be ranked among a pantheon of religious leaders or prophets becomes further obvious when one reflects further on his claim of being at both the beginning and at the end of creation and of history. He said: "I am the First and the Last." (Rev 1:17), as well as: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." (Mt 28:18). Clearly the disciples accepted this, as John begins his gospel with these words: "In the beginning was the Word (Jesus) and the Word was with God and the Word was God... Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us... and in him all things hold together." (Col 1:16,17)

When we look at what Jesus goes on to say about the end of history, we are even more startled, as when He said of any person who follows him: "I will raise him up at the last day." (Jn 6:40) This was the local carpenter, remember! And when we note that throughout the Bible final judgement is a function reserved to God alone, it is astounding to register that Jesus says of himself: "For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son authority to judge because he is the Son of Man." (Jn 5:26-27) Yes, between creation and the end of history stands Jesus. That also means, of course, and we note it with comfort, that everything in between is his also. No claim like it anywhere. It stands alone, unique.

DO YOU CARE WHAT OUR CLERGY WEAR?

Priests in the Greek Orthodox Church have voted to keep to their traditional appearance: beard, cassock and hat. However, they may wear ordinary clothes when "shopping, driving or spending time with their families."

This decision came in a recent Holy Synod of the church, after some priests had complained that their cassocks and kamilavki (headgear) were too hot, and irrelevant to modern life. But it was felt that faithful worshippers "like to see their priests looking different from other citizens."

Likewise, at the last groups of sessions of the General Synod, it was decided that Anglican clergy should continue to wear robes or vestments when taking services. It was felt by many that "seemly vestments" were part of the Anglican tradition, and "underlay the objectivity of those leading public worship". Vesting for communion and occasional offices, with flexibility on other occasions, was the simple way forward.





Rosanne interviews Frank Butler

When I tell you that this months subject, as a small boy, would not collect his Sunday School prize at S.S. Mary and John Church because his name was read out wrongly, or that he later deliberately 'muffed' his 11+ exam because he was not prepared to wear a school cap, like the grammar school boys, you will realise that he can be a bit stropky. And I should know because I married him over 43 years a go.

Frank was born in a tiny cottage in Minster Lovell and spent several idyllic years wandering the lanes and fields nearby. Warned by his Mum not to go near the river he was found one day with his jersey snagged on a barbed-wire fence only feet from the Windrush. At five he spent a few months at the local village school but war began, his father went to join the Royal Tank Regiment and he and his Mum came to live in East Oxford. She nursed at a military hospital off the Cowley Road (the old workhouse). Her parents lived in Southfield Road so it was from there that Frank and his older sister, Ann, went to S.S. Mary and John School in Hertford Street. One of their aunts, Miss Restall, was a teacher there.

Towards the end of World War II, an offer of a tied cottage in the country in exchange for billeting and caring for land girls persuaded Frank's mother to make a move. The lack of space for her and her children – by

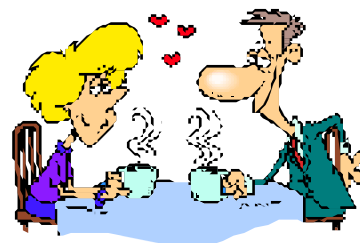
this time a new baby, Ruth, had arrived – made life quite difficult. The moves to Standlake and then to Northmoor, when Mr Butler was demobbed, were happy ones for Frank and momentous for me. I also lived in Northmoor and at the age of nine met my future husband for the first time. Having failed 11+ he travelled to his Witney secondary school on the local bus and two years later, I, having gained a place at grammar school, did the same, and we didn't like each other one bit.

Those years growing up in a cottage amongst the meadows of the Thames valley were very happy ones. At 15 Frank left school and went to Army Apprentice College in South Wales. Leaving home was quite a wrench but his parents were determined he should make a break from the agricultural way of life and learn a trade. He qualified as a sheet metal worker and welder. He realised whilst at college that many of the other lads had girlfriends and began writing to me – that was how it all began for us. As well as his studies he was expected to take up a sport so he became a pretty successful boxer.

After college, at 18, Frank joined the regular army and soon after basic training was sent to Kenya with the Royal Engineers. This was during the Mau Mau uprising. Whilst out there he became a demolition

expert in the use of high explosives. The 'one year tour' went on and on and at the end of the third year the Suez crisis meant a further six months service for his unit in the Gulf. During these years we had continued to correspond and the school girl Frank had left behind was a fully qualified working teacher when he returned.

It soon became obvious that it was not a case of 'will you marry me?' but 'when'. After a couple more years of army service he bought his release so that we could be married and found a new job in the offices of Austin-Morris (later to become Unipart). The wedding day was fixed for 25th July 1959. Our anniversary pops up each year on St James' day, a fact which has given us enormous pleasure. Less than two years later our daughter, Helen, was born much to her dad's amazement and delight. Fourteen years after that, to everyone's amazement Robert arrived bringing Frank even more delight. With a full-time working wife, life was hectic, and yet he found time to fully renovate our small East Oxford house, our first family home. By 1977 we had



outgrown 36 Hurst Street and so moved to St. Omer Road where we intend to remain.

Frank has many interests and projects to keep him busy. He was halls manager and booking officer in our parish for seven years, for long periods of time also cleaning them, and setting up St. Francis church for services. He was parish treasurer for four years and now helps Una with the banking of parish funds. For the last three years he has been a guinea pig for Optima Research into the ageing process at the Radcliffe Infirmary. Since his retirement ten years ago, he has been the spokesman for fellow pensioners on the Unipart pensions panel. A staunch trade-unionist in his working days, he remains a great champion for those who need a spokesman. And yet when we first met he was the shyest person I knew. It's probably my fault that he is so cheeky at St. James' weekly bingo sessions where he acts as one of the callers. Still, once people get used to him they seem to enjoy his odd sense of humour and when Helen and Rob ask 'What are you going to about Dad?' I answer 'Nothing, lets leave him the way he is!'

Was there one particular person who had a strong influence on your early life?

Oh yes, my grandfather. He taught me so much about wildlife, nature and how to really look at things. For instance how to look beneath the surface of the river. He also had a wicked sense of humour.

Can you remember an incident in your early life which holds special significance for you?

When I left home to go to Army Apprentice College on my own it was a cold, bleak February day and I missed all my train connections between Oxford and Chesham. By the time I arrived it was late and dark and I had never been so scared and lonely.

What sort of child were you?

A loner, quiet, never indoors when I could be out with my dog. Didn't care much for school.

Has your faith been with you since childhood or did you find it later in life?

Yes, on and off really. As a soldier I kept it very much to myself. Now I spend time with God on a one-to-one basis rather than in communal worship.

Which period of your adult life has given you most satisfaction?

Now, without a doubt.

Are there any aspects of modern life you dislike?

Litter. Rubbish dropped carelessly. Vandalism worries me because I don't see any point to it and yobbish behaviour of any kind.

What's best about life today?

Modern technology which makes life more comfortable.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

I love having people round for lunch or dinner, reading (especially poetry), listening to music (classical or jazz and swing but not much in

Healing Eucharist



Tuesday

21st January

7.30 p.m.

St James Church

Receive Jesus'
promise of healing

between), a good film, play or musical show and my garden.

What makes you laugh?

My wife because she's so damned silly! Situation comedy, play on words and a good many people in the parish!!!

If you had a magic wand what would you change?

I would love to be taller.

If you were not doing what you do now what would be the alternative?

No change, thank you.

What do you hope to be doing in ten years' time?

I'd like life to go on much the same, I'm a happy man.

THE GODSPELL ABOUT JESUS

Mark is the shortest of the Gospels, and most likely the first to be written (about 65 - 70AD). It is certainly the most action-packed!

The gospel of Mark was written by John Mark, whose name occurs often in Acts. His mother lived in a house in Jerusalem, where Jesus' followers met in the early days of the church there. (Acts 12:12). John Mark was cousin to Barnabas, Paul's travelling companion.

John Mark had set off with Paul on the first great missionary tour, but then disgraced himself by going home - not making himself popular with Paul! However Barnabas gave John Mark a second chance, and in later years John Mark won the friendship of Paul. When Paul was in prison John Mark stood by him (Colossians 4).

Mark's gospel was written not when John Mark was in Jerusalem, but later, when he had spent some time with Peter in Rome. Peter had come to love John Mark as his own son. (1 Peter 5:13), and there is a strong early tradition that John Mark set down Jesus' story as he had heard it directly from the apostle Peter.

For example, Papias, writing about AD140, said: "Mark, who was the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately

all that he remembered, whether of sayings or doings of Christ, but not in order. For he was neither a hearer nor companion of the Lord."

Some years later Irenaeus wrote that Mark's gospel was written "when Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel in Rome and founding the church there." After their deaths, "Mark, Peter's disciple, has himself delivered to us in writing the substance of Peter's preaching."

John Mark wrote his gospel with extraordinary vividness. And he obviously knew he would have non-Jewish readers, because he often explains Jewish customs.

The Gospel begins with a bang: "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God..." No beating about the bush - here is the purpose and the message right from the opening verse. The word 'gospel' in Greek is evangelion - good news (hence the term evangelist).

So where does the actual word 'gospel' come from? The Anglo-Saxons first thought it up, using the term 'Godspell', a word that may mean 'good news' or 'news about God'. It was an apt way to refer to the new faith when it reached them. (Hence 'Godspell' as the name of famous West End musical about the life of Jesus.)

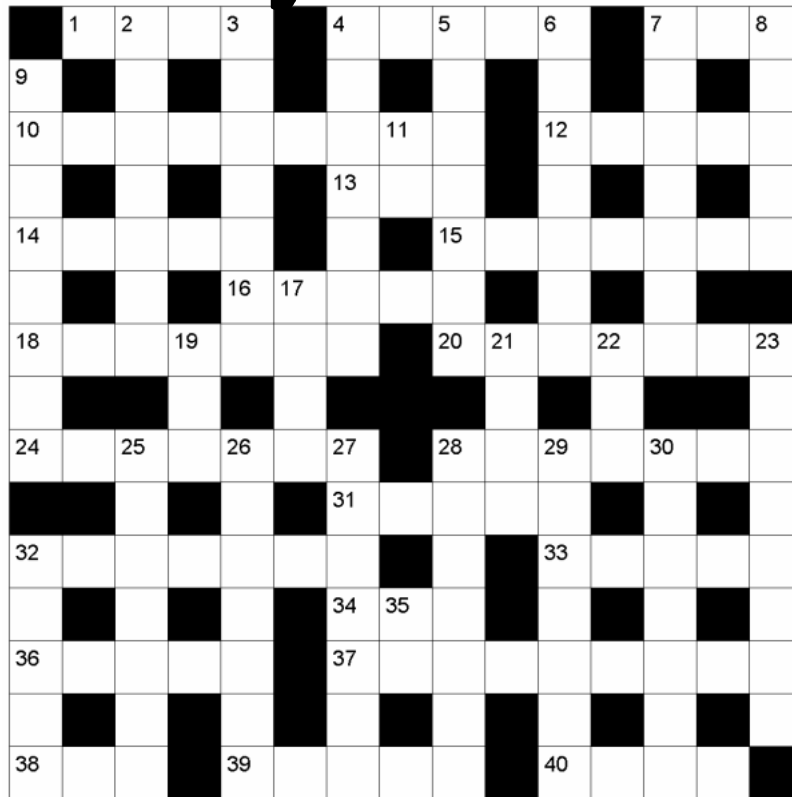
Mark opens the action not with the birth of Jesus, but rather with his baptism by

John. Then the action moves swiftly towards the crisis of the cross and resurrection. Within this framework, the material tends to be not in chronological order, but rather grouped by subject. The book bustles with action and details. It gives far more detail than Matthew's in the accounts of what Jesus did, but deals more briefly with Jesus' teaching.

Mark does not have much that is all his own - in fact - only four paragraphs in all! This is because both Matthew and Luke borrowed heavily from him when they came to write their gospels. And yet we still have something unique in Mark: moving pictures of Jesus in action, convincing us by what he does that his claim to be the Son of God was true. There are fewer stories in Mark than in the other gospels, but these stories are longer, and the detail in them hints of Peter's remembered eye-witness accounts.



January's Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Still (4)
- 4 Deep, lustrous black (5)
- 7 Large container (3)
- 10 Copper carbonate (5)
- 12 Capital of Ghana (5)
- 13 Male child (3)
- 14 Nerd (US slang) (5)
- 15 Primitive form of wheat (7)
- 16 Staggers (5)
- 18 Short-tempered person (7)
- 20 Makes sorrowful (7)
- 24 Potbellied (7)
- 28 Not sociable (7)
- 31 Brother of Moses (5)
- 32 Victory (7)
- 33 Antelope (5)
- 34 Roll of bank notes (slang) (3)
- 36 New Zealand aboriginal (5)
- 37 Intoxicant (9)
- 38 Monetary unit of Japan (3)
- 39 Characteristic rhythm (5)
- 40 City in NW France (4)

DOWN

- 2 Cleansing agent (7)
- 3 Ghastly (7)
- 4 Lived (7)
- 5 Singleness (7)
- 6 Longed for (7)
- 7 Minute cavity in organic tissue (7)
- 8 Two (5)
- 9 Central part of a ship (8)
- 11 In the direction of (2)
- 17 Apiece (4)
- 19 A dynasty in China (3)
- 21 Too (4)
- 22 one of 7 dwarves, medical (3)
- 23 Firmness (8)
- 25 Mythical creature (7)
- 26 Expert in foreign exchange (7)
- 27 Worship of Yahweh (7)
- 28 1920s decorative art (7)
- 29 Pertaining to dreams (7)
- 30 Office of an imam (7)
- 32 Domesticates (5)
- 35 Prefix meaning without (2)

Archbishop Rowan Williams takes over as Archbishop of Canterbury

The confirmation of the election of the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, took place at St Paul's Cathedral late last year when, in a formal ceremony, nine bishops of the Church of England (including the Archbishop of York) confirmed that Rowan Douglas Williams had been properly chosen and elected as Archbishop of Canterbury by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral.

Dr Williams said: "It's a very humbling thing to be included in this long succession of Archbishops and a very humbling thing to be aware of the trust that has been placed in my hands.

"I pray for God's guidance as I seek to meet this new challenge - a challenge I face with a sense of inadequacy but also with hope, with joy and with enthusiasm. I am deeply grateful for all the support that has been given to me and the prayers that are being offered."

Later in December, Dr Williams and his family moved to Lambeth Palace. After a period of rest, retreat and preparation, he will be formally enthroned in Canterbury Cathedral on 27 February and begin a full public ministry as Archbishop of Canterbury.

December's Solution



Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>exc 2nd Sunday</i>) Family Service (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)
11.15 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)
6.00 pm	Evening Service <i>[1st Sunday of the month]</i>

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

8.00 am	Holy Eucharist
10.30 am	Parish Eucharist <i>[Family Eucharist - 2nd Sunday of the month]</i>

Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	8.00 pm	St Francis Discussion Group – <i>4 Long Close</i>
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	9.30 am	Eucharist – <i>St Francis</i>
	10.10 am	Mothers and Toddlers – <i>St Francis</i>
	12.00 pm	St James Prayer Group – <i>13 Clive Road</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	9.30 am	Eucharist - followed by coffee – <i>St James</i>
	11.00 am	St Francis Prayer Group
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St Francis</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist – <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St Francis</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>

Arrangements for Baptisms, Banns of Marriage, Weddings, Confessions and Home Communion can be made with any of the clergy.

Days Off

Stephen has Friday off, Fr John and Mark have Monday. Except in emergency, please try and respect these days of rest. Sr Margaret Anne works within the parish on Tuesdays, Thursdays and two out of three Sundays

Parish Directory

TEAM RECTOR:

The Revd Stephen Hartley,
Cowley Rectory,
Beauchamp Lane
Tel: 747680
Email: stephen.hartley
@btinternet.com

TEAM VICAR:

Fr John Tomlinson,
St Francis' Vicarage,
2 Meyseys Close
Tel: 748915
Email: fj@care4free.net

TEAM CURATES:

The Revd Dr Mark Harris
24 Beauchamp Lane
Tel: 775098
Email: mark.harris@rl.ac.uk
The Revd Sr Margaret Anne
All Saints Convent
St Mary's Road
Tel: 249127

LICENSED LAY MINISTER:

Eric Uren
Tel: 770696

CHURCHWARDENS:

Gwen Ranklin
Tel: 451417
Norah Shallow
Tel: 765199

DEPUTY WARDENS:

Rosanne Butler
Tel: 453257
Pat Chung
Tel: 767124

HALL BOOKINGS

OFFICER:
773620

weekdays only