

# The Rainbow in the Rain

The end of the war in Iraq came to an end to allow us to celebrate Holy Week and Easter without the agony of armed conflict preoccupying our hearts and minds. Now we are told that winning the peace will be much harder than winning the war.

Each year Christians follow Jesus along the Via Dolorosa, the way of sorrow. This is always a week of conflicting emotions. The tumultuous reception given to Jesus gives way to the agony of betrayal and death. Out of the depths of defeat and death, Jesus emerges victorious giving the promise of eternal life.

Iraqis fêted the coalition forces as they 'liberated' a suppressed people. Pink roses and a celebratory drink are offered to bemused soldiers. Yet jubilation gives way to impatience and frustration as a shattered country seeks a dignity and a fresh beginning.

The apostles and followers of Jesus were themselves jubilant as they realised the truth of resurrection. "They were glad when they saw the Lord.....It is true, the Lord is risen." Yet within months they were caught up in power battles as established

religious leaders sought to discredit and crush followers of The Way.

Christians have always struggled to maintain integrity in their lives of faith. Forces within and beyond the individual give rise to tension, compromise and disillusionment in the believer at times. Despite what some might say, the Christian life is not all joy. The new life which springs

from Easter is also the Way of the Cross. Suffering and pain cannot be separated from the Easter faith.

For Easter is not just eternal life. It is the belief that God works his redemptive

love to bring hope, peace and even joy, into the most desperate of circumstances. Christians still see logic in the illogical. "God reveals his power in our weakness" just as he brought resurrection out of the death of a Saviour.

*O joy that seekest me through pain,  
I cannot close my heart to thee:  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
and feel the promise is not vain  
that morn shall tearless be.*



# Healing Services

## St James Church

Wednesday 21st May

7.30 pm

## St Francis Church

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May & 3<sup>rd</sup> June

7.00 pm

Anyone who would like prayers for themselves, or for others, or who would like to join us in praying for God's healing work is welcome.



## Ascension Day - Forty Days with the Risen Christ

May continues the season of Eastertide, the period of 40 days between Easter and Ascension Day, which falls this year on Thursday, 29 May.

It may seem odd to call it Eastertide when Easter is clearly over! - but if you look in your diary, you will find the Sundays are numbered Easter 2, Easter 3, and so forth.



These are the forty days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to his disciples, following his death and resurrection.

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those forty days. Jesus was seen by numerous disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged his disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent him, he was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as his witnesses.

## Sundays @ Six at St James

*The first Sunday of the month at 6 o'clock*

April 6th *Looking to the Cross*

May 4th *Taizé Worship*

**June 8th** *United Service*

July 6th *Waiting on the Word*

August *no service*



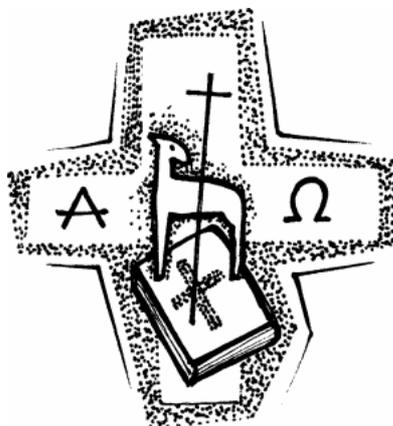
## Morning Prayer

## & Breakfast

St Francis Church  
Saturday Mornings

9.15 am

*all welcome*



## When you approach the Holy Spirit...

The Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity, is God the surprier, God the unpredictable, God the de-systematiser of systematic theologians.

Much of the past confusion on the person and work of the Holy Spirit lies in just this - we have tried to confine in neat theological categories One who, like the wind, blows where He wishes, unfettered by the theological formulations in which we seek to contain Him.

Yet there are dozens of books by authors not only orthodox, neo-orthodox, and unorthodox, but also Pentecostal, neo-Pentecostal, anti-Pentecostal, all presenting, equally dogmatically, the definitive word on the Spirit's person and work! Everyone has some of the truth.

No one has it all.

The teaching in these books highlights three dangers. We can talk a lot of theory about the Spirit without letting him disturb our lives in any significant or creative way. Or we simply give up on the subject and say it's all too confusing and therefore push him to the edge of our lives. Or we hungrily pursue an emotional experience of the Spirit on which we then build a theology regardless of the Bible's teaching, without struggling with the New Testament data.

Dangers one and two (academic theologising on the one hand and intellectual despairing on the other) leave our lives impoverished. Danger three (theologising on experience) leaves our theology unbalanced.

In other words, neither the danger of dogmatising nor the impossibility of finalising our view of the Spirit's work must make us retreat from an honest attempt to understand the biblical data and apply it to our lives. After all, we don't tolerate such retreats when it comes to the Bible's teaching on the atonement or on conversion or on prayer. Nor can we tolerate such a retreat from the Bible's view of the Holy Spirit.

Rather, in formulating our view, we are to do so with humility and flexibility, trying to distinguish between those areas where real clarity is possible and those areas where differences of viewpoint will remain and where a measure of agnosticism is necessary.

Different sectors of the Church, of course, have different approaches to the text of the Bible as they seek to determine their views. Some build their theology of the Spirit just from the distinctly theological sections of the NT (eg, the Gospels and Epistles).

Charismatics and Pentecostals build theirs more on the historical sections of the NT (eg, the book of Acts). That is a slight oversimplification but perhaps a serviceable one in highlighting the approaches.

Evangelicals, for example, believe it to be an important principle of interpretation that theology is built on theological rather than historical sections of the text.

They argue that history illustrates doctrine rather than constituting it, at least in any primary sense. (Though of course there is obvious interplay.) In other words, we start with theology and end with practice, not vice versa.

Put differently, we could say we are to move from the general to the specific, from the systematic to the historical, from doctrine, as found in the Gospels but especially in the Epistles, to the historical outworking of it, as found in the book of Acts.

Pentecostals and charismatics, on the other hand, are less persuaded of this as a rigid principle of interpretation and are therefore less squeamish about drawing their theology from the book of Acts.

Perhaps a little give and take from each side would be useful. We must ask evangelicals who press this so-called hermeneutical principle to avoid doing so too rigidly. After all, Paul asserted in 2 Timothy 3.16 that "All scripture is profitable for teaching" (ie all scripture - not just doctrinal sections.) In the OT, historical sections and prophetic sections are intertwined. In the NT history and teaching are certainly profoundly interrelated in the Gospels. So we must be careful not to push this principle too artificially.

On the other hand, Charismatics and Pentecostals need to exercise caution in their use of Acts, particularly if their handling of Acts lands them in doctrinal formulations that are hard to square with the systematic doctrinal statements of the Epistles. Nowhere is this more classically seen than in the controversy surrounding the phenomenon of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit". The Epistles do not speak of any two-tier or double-staged process of initiation into the Christian life, but the book of Acts in places seems to suggest this.



# Rosanne interviews Harriet Harris

Most *Chronicle* readers know by now how much I enjoy interviewing people in their parish on their behalf but this month's subject was not only a pleasure in her own right but she came with a bonus. Or perhaps I should say two bonuses in the shape of her two delightful sons, toddler Ben and month-old baby Isaac. Our conversation began while Isaac enjoyed his lunchtime feed and was interspersed later with Mr Men books and nursery rhymes. Harriet and I at one point discussed the historical origins of some of our better known nursery rhymes for good measure! But what of Harriet herself?

Married to Mark, our curate, she has a full time career of her own and finds life quite busy. How she fits it all in alongside motherhood is something of a miracle.

She grew up in Kenilworth one of a family of five. She has three older brothers and a younger sister. She told me that as a child she was referred to as "one of the boys". She declares that she was not a tomboy. She had to "keep up" at football and cricket though, and I would imagine that those skills are going to come in very handy in a few years time. At school she loved all the "bookish" subjects especially History

and English and with her long legs became an able athlete especially at long jump. Coincidentally she attended the same secondary school in Coventry as Stephen. Although she was well focused on her studies she admits she was a "terrible teenager" who enjoyed pubs and clubs and constantly contrived ways of bypassing authority. University followed school and she read philosophy and theology at Oriel College here in Oxford. Following her degree and a doctorate she went on to become a Research Fellow at New College – "my first job" as she calls it.

Coming from a family with no inclinations towards the Church it seems pretty remarkable that as a three year old she told her mother that when she grew up she wanted to be a Christian. As a small child she went to a Church school where she learnt her prayers, Bible stories and was taken to the local church. It took about another 20 years before a friend asked her "are you going to be ordained?" and several years after that for her vocation to become a firm commitment. She told me her mother was delighted when she entered the Church, not so her father.

In the middle of this important period of her life she met Mark. They both attended the same church. Cycle rides home after services progressed to a cup of coffee at her digs and their romance flourished. He chose the most impressive place to propose – Canterbury Cathedral – she accepted and they were married in 1994.

Harriet was ordained in the year 2000 and now holds two posts. She is chaplain of Wadham College and assistant priest (curate) at St Mary the Virgin church in The High (the University Church). She also writes theological works primarily, though not exclusively, for the academic world. Her main subject is "fundamentalism" and she has recently had her Book, *Faith Without Hostages\**, published. She has several contracts with her publishers and agreed that meeting deadlines is going to be something of a challenge. In the meantime she says that maternity leave is affording her time to get to know the Cowley area, more opportunities to meet friends for a chat over coffee and the luxury of reading for pleasure. It seems to me that not a moment of her day is wasted.

**Was there one particular**

**person who had a strong influence on your early life?**

Two, I think my mum and my oldest brother. My brother because it was through him that I became a Christian and my mum because she worked hard and played hard and I was made to think that you could do it all.

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

I can remember when my aunt died and it was the first time I experienced grief. I was seven and I came up against the idea that emotions can come to you unexpectedly.

**What sort of child were you?**

Shy, very quiet. When we were on car journeys my mum used to think I had fallen out! But I was very giggly with my friends.

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

Now because of the boys and I feel as though various strands of my life have come together. Now that Mark and I are both ordained and working along together.

**Are there any aspects of modern life you dislike?**

The fact that people work harder and harder and get more and more stressed and less and less satisfied.

**What's best about life today?**

People mix more so I think there's respect for the differences amongst us.

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

Mark and I enjoy cycling and the cinema. I read, Tolkien at the moment, and I do like cooking. My speciality is real Italian pizza.

**What makes you laugh?**

Modern girly humour.

**If you had a Holy Wand what would you change?**

The thing in human nature that makes us admire big rich and powerful people and treat vulnerable people badly.

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

I guess I'd be an academic.

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

More of the same!

*\*published by SPCK £7.99*



**THE FIVE FINGERS**

**PRAYER**

1. Your thumb is nearest to you, and without it you are helpless. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you, without whom you, too, would be lost. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."

2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, the prime minister, leaders in the war, in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

5. And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your 'pinkie' (as the Americans call it) should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

## THE NEW CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2003/4

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting last month the following were elected to the Parochial Church Council:



- \* *Churchwardens:* Gwen Ranklin and Norah Shallow
- \* *Deanery Synod:* Gwen Ranklin, Leslie Williams, Pat Chung, Crystal Hewlett
  
- PCC Members:* Una Dean, Rosanne Butler, Pat Giles, Margaret Martin, Marlene Shreeve, John Shreeve, June Smith, and Clare Tomlinson.
  
- \* *also PCC members.*



## Ascension Day

Thursday 29th May

**ST FRANCIS**

7.00 pm Holy Eucharist

**ST JAMES**

9.30 am Holy Communion

7.00 pm Sung Eucharist

## Churches Together in Cowley and District



## United Service for Pentecost

Sunday 8th June 6.00 pm  
St James' Church

## ROGATION SUNDAY

### 25TH MAY

Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving away Winter with sticks. They wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.

About 465 the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic. So Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan

custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century, and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God. On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route - at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation as said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At one point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for 'beating the bounds' - still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them. (Do you know yours today?)

## WHAT IS A SENIOR CITIZEN ?

A senior citizen is one who was here before the pill, television, frozen foods, contact lenses, credit cards, and before man walked on the moon.

For us, "Time Sharing" meant togetherness, not holiday homes, and "chip" meant a piece of wood.

"Hardware" meant nuts and bolts, and 'software' wasn't even a word

We got married first, then lived together, and thought cleavage was something that butchers did.

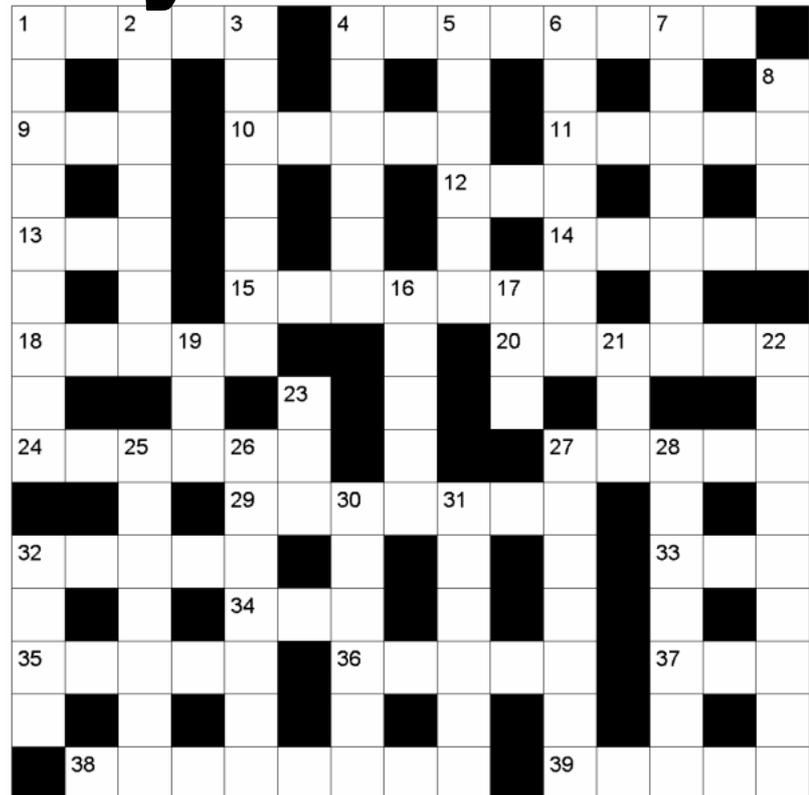
A "stud" was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and "going all the way" meant staying on a double decker to the bus depot.

We thought that 'fast food' was what you ate in Lent, a "Big Mac" was an oversized raincoat and "crumplet" we had for tea.

In our day; "grass" was mown, "pot" was something you cooked in, "coke" was kept in the coal house and a "joint" was cooked on Sundays !

We are today's Senior Citizens; a hardy bunch when you think how the world has changed.

# May's Crossword



### ACROSS

- 1 Type of branch the dove returned to Noah (5)
- 4 To which city was Saul travelling when he underwent his conversion (8)
- 9 Exclamation of contempt (3)
- 10 The tower built by the descendants of Noah (5)
- 11 One of the wicked cities destroyed by God near the Dead Sea (5)
- 12 Wood sorrel (3)
- 13 Highest mountain in Crete (3)
- 14 Nymph presiding over rivers (5)
- 15 The first Christian martyr (7)
- 18 Awry (5)
- 20 What was used as a cradle at the birth of Christ (6)
- 24 Goal (6)
- 27 Strangely (5)
- 29 Cross-country runner (7)
- 32 Type of gnawing worm (5)
- 33 Shelter (3)
- 34 Influenza (3)
- 35 Headland (5)
- 36 Monetary unit of Oman (5)
- 37 Who's wife was turned into a pillar of salt (3)
- 38 Closed four-wheeled carriage (8)
- 39 Red earth pigment (5)

### DOWN

- 1 Not to be omitted (9)
- 2 The son of Abraham and Hagar (7)
- 3 Mission (7)
- 4 Splash (6)
- 5 An evil god associated with Baal (6)
- 6 Daniel saved this woman after she was falsely accused of adultery (7)
- 7 Annuling (7)
- 8 Among (4)
- 16 The Apostle who denied Christ (5)
- 17 Printer's measures (3)
- 19 The first woman and wife of Adam (3)
- 21 In which land did Cain live after he murdered Abel (3)
- 22 Versifier (9)
- 23 7th letter of the Greek alphabet (3)
- 25 Narcissus (7)
- 26 Haggle (7)
- 27 Aromatic herb (7)
- 28 The mistress of Samson (7)
- 30 The firstborn son of Jacob and Leah (6)
- 31 Set on fire (6)
- 32 Labels (4)

## April's Solution



## Sunday Services

### ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

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

### ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 8.00 am  | Holy Eucharist  |
| 10.30 am | Parish Eucharist<br><i>[Family Eucharist -<br/>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, Mark has Monday and Fr John Tuesday. Except in emergency, please try and respect these days of rest. Sr Margaret Anne works within the parish on Tuesdays, Thursdays and alternate Sundays.

## Parish Directory

### TEAM RECTOR:

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### TEAM CURATES:

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The Revd Sr Margaret Anne  
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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*