

St Peter's Parish Chest April 2015

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A monthly bulletin of all that is accomplished by and within our church's community

Suggested Contribution 30p

Letter from the Vicar



He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

Are you the King the Jews? (Matthew 27:11)

I wonder what Pilate was making of the situation when he asked Jesus this question. I wonder if he had even heard of Jesus before this fateful day. Of course we will never know. There are stories in the gospels of local dignitaries and non-Jewish people engaging with Jesus. There is the story of the centurion who asked if Jesus might heal his servant; when Jesus said he would make a house call the centurion recognised Jesus' authority and said all Jesus need do is will the healing and it would be done (Matt 51-13). But we have no way of knowing if this localised knowledge had reached Pilate's ears.

Maybe Pilate was trying to trip Jesus up. If Jesus said he was the King of the Jews would Pilate have had cause to execute him or just treat him as delusional? Or would he have had pretext to send Jesus back to the Temple authorities for punishment and release? The same story is told in Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is slightly different in John where Jesus enters into a discussion with Pilate about authority and kingship but in the end Jesus neither confirms nor denies the question, "Are you King of the Jews?"

There is something here about misconception. When Jesus is encountered throughout the gospel story he is not really understood. When he goes home to his parents synagogue and teaches, although his words are wise it is his status that is not understood "Isn't this the carpenter's son?" (Mk 6.3) When he met the woman at the well (John 4), when he healed the man born blind (John 9) at least at first they had no idea who Jesus was. It was through Jesus' words and actions that the Samaritan woman and the man born blind understood.

To understand who Jesus is we do have to take on the whole story. The writer of Mark realised this as he wrote his gospel. At the very outset he tells us "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk 1.1). The first thing he tells us is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and this is

his story. Then throughout the gospel the writer keeps revealing to us who Jesus is and the shadow of the cross falls gently across his telling. In miracles, in teaching and wisdom and in sharing with the disciples what was to happen to him, Jesus is constantly held up as the Christ, the Son of God. This doesn't really sink home though until the end. Pilate's ignorance of Jesus and his story only heightens the tension. There is no stopping the journey to the top of that awful hill and the planting of the cross, the tree of shame, upon which this misunderstood man must hang, nailed hand and foot.

If the story stopped there the gospel would be pointless. It would be about a good and wise teacher, misunderstood by his peers and wrongfully tried and found guilty of nothing. Then the story doesn't stop there. We all know, two days later, in the stillness of the early morning an empty tomb proclaims Jesus' true nature. The risen Christ is God's love for us.

The temptation is to think this is where the story finds its meaning and end. It is not. It is but a new beginning. The story is still unfolding today. Still people misunderstand who Jesus is. Detractors do not understand that he is more than an historical figure; he is more than an example of good humanity; Jesus is more than a myth. Jesus, the risen Lord, the Son of God who changes lives even today. Our prayer is that others will be able to utter the words of another centurion, "Truly this man was God's Son!" (Matt 27.54)

Fr David

Easter Joy!

This year Easter Day falls on the first Sunday of April, the publication date of the *Parish Chest*. All has been "put to bed" before the events of Holy Week and Easter have taken place. They will be covered in our May issue. Until then enough to say that whether we walked the way of the cross through Ealing on Good Friday or got up at dawn for the Vigil this morning, great is our rejoicing on this glorious Easter Day!



Out and About

Feeling spring in the air and in our step might make us more determined to be out and about this year. Here are some suggestions – some more challenging than others.

30th Annual Multi-Faith Pilgrimage for Peace Saturday 6th June 2015

Mike Tiley writes:

I have attended a number of The Inter-Faith Pilgrimages organised by Westminster-Inter Faith around London and now one is going to be very near to us in Hounslow this June! It will provide an ideal opportunity to meet a variety of people from other faiths as you can see in this provisional schedule:

- 10.00am Gather at Laxmi Naryan Mandir, 60 Neville Close, Hounslow TW3 4JG
- 11.15am Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow Middx. TW3 4DN
- 11.30am Hounslow Methodist Church, Bell Road Hounslow TW3 3PB
- 12.15pm Stop at Hounslow Synagogue, 100 Staines Road, TW3 3LF
- 12.45pm St Michael and St Martin RC Church, 94 Bath Road TW3 3EH
- 1.30pm Lunch: Sachkhand Nanak Dham International, Hall at St Michael and St Martin's
- 3.00pm Hounslow Jamia Masjid & Islamic Centre, 367 Wellington Road South, TW4 5JH
- 4.30pm Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Saba, Alice Way, Hounslow, Middx TW3 3UA

Do put the date in your diary now and look out for further details in the St Peter's weekly service sheet from Christians Together in Central Ealing (CTICE) who will be organising an Ealing group to attend the Pilgrimage after Easter. Have a word with me after the Sunday Eucharist if you need more information in the meantime.



Mike enjoying the company of a fellow pilgrim.

Walking Wesley's Way

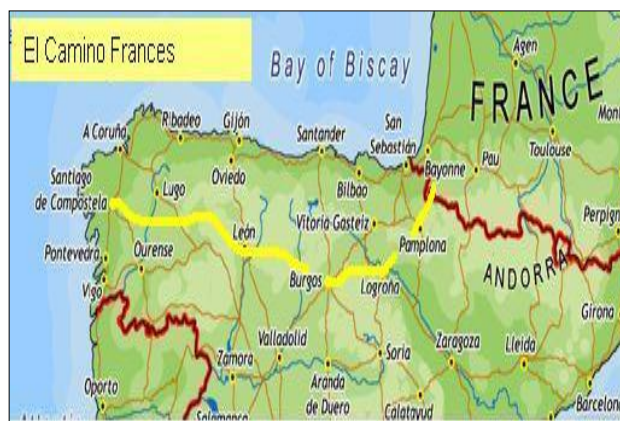
Angus McAvoy reminds us that:

The next **Christians Together Ecumenical visit** will be to Wesley's Chapel and House and to the Museum of Methodism on **Saturday 25th April at 2pm**. This is off City Road, near Old Street tube station. If you would like to join the visit please let the organiser know at noreen29@googlemail.com. We will send details about where to meet and, hopefully, we'll find a place where we can share afternoon tea afterwards.

These visits provide the opportunity of finding out about the work of other London churches, and of promoting inter-faith understanding, amongst a Christian group from many different churches.

Also look at Richard Peatfield's account of his recent visit in the March Parish Chest.

Walking the Camino de Santiago



Rather more demanding is following the ancient pilgrimage path to Santiago de Compostela – The Way of St James.

David Rowe writes:

A few months ago you may have heard the vicar, in one of his sermons speaking of The Way of St James or in Spanish The Camino de Santiago. The Camino is an ancient pilgrim's route ending in Santiago de Compostela in N.W. Spain. (According to legend the resting place of St. James bones.) There are many pilgrim routes to Santiago commencing in London, Portugal, Russia and several more points but the most used and well known is the French route, commencing in St Jean Pied de Port in S.W. France. The origins of this particular route are vague but it was certainly an old Roman trade route and in the 9th century it became popular as a pilgrimage destination and became more so with the invasion of the Moors and the eventual driving back of the invaders.

In late August into September 2016 it is my intention, God willing, to walk this route; Rosamund and myself wanted to do this walk but unfortunately circumstances prevented it.

The route is 800 kilometers (500 miles) from start to finish which if completed in one go, I estimate will

take thirty days. Whilst I still wanted to do this walk I did not relish doing it alone especially as most of the accommodation is in dormitories. Talking this over with my son Geoffrey one day he foolishly said that he would be willing to accompany me. Geoffrey lives in Spain on one of the routes, but not the one I am planning to use, the great advantage is that he can speak Spanish and is extremely fit so he can carry me to the end, hence my loss in weight to make thing easier for him.

My reason for going public about the pilgrimage is so that backing out will be difficult for me, I wish to do it but a trifle worried that not too many attempt it in their 70's. The spirit is willing but!!!

Not anticipating a great response we wish to invite any others with a similar suicidal bent to accompany us. The pilgrimage is not for the faint hearted it will require an ability to walk at least 20 miles in one day and the first day ascending and descending the Pyrenees, living in dormitories most of the time and hygiene for some of the time taking a back seat. The hygiene is because it is recommended that you only carry maximum of 10% of your own body weight that includes the weight of the rucsac, I think all the accommodation provides showering facilities but not all laundering facilities, in dire need there are hotels available in some of the locations, personal comfort could be found lacking in the dormitories, ear plugs are essential snoring in a dormitory can be a disturbance.

If anyone foolishly wishes to join us for all or part of the pilgrimage and has a good sense of humour then please let yourselves be known to me. To qualify for the pilgrims' certificate you have to cover at least 100 miles ending up in Santiago and having had your pilgrims' passport stamped at each overnight stopping place. Joining places on route could be arranged if you have not 30 days to spend on the whole trip. Geoffrey lives (Gijon) about half way on the total route so joining us should not be a problem. The symbol of those on the pilgrimage is a scallop shell normally adorning the rucsac and used to waymark the route.

I am planning some longer walking trips prior to the event in order to get fit, not recommended to attempt the journey without. Some of the journey is rugged and hilly, not mountain climbing but not all flat.

Please let me know if you are interested or would like to know more about it then I will arrange a meeting to discuss greater details. Do not be deterred by my information above, but it is stressed it is not for the fainthearted, however, I think those doing the pilgrimage will achieve much from the camaraderie from the many met on the way both nationality and personality wise.

It will be fun I have done many long distance walks in the U K both as a group and as individuals and there is always a sense of achievement on completing the journey.

If this invitation is one you would like to respond to or you would simply like to find out more about what is involved please email David on darowe@virginmedia.com.

Parish Matters

One date that should be firmly in all our diaries is **Sunday 19th April** when we meet for our **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)**.

We shall meet after the 10am service. Drinks and light refreshments will be available before the meeting, so do please try to make sure you are able to be there.

Fr David writes:

"Whatever you do in word or deed..."

April is Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) month where members the members of every church get to hear what has been going on in the parish, seeing how much we have spent and what state the accounts are in. this is an important part of church governance, for some is raises a question; where does the institutional church fit into the good news of Jesus.

It is difficult sometimes to see how much of what we have as structures in the church has anything to do with the gospel. These structures are after all human constructs. Take meetings for example. Created by people to share information. They have a structure of their own with agendas, minutes, apologies and reports. A therapist friend of mine once said meetings are a necessary evil; we may not like them but they are an invaluable communication tool. How else do we have an informed conversation with a group of people on a given topic or subject that is formative, structured and constructive? I suppose part of the problem is the link between work and meetings.

In our context the difficulty is making a link between meetings and God; keeping the link between governance and the gospel real and alive. It is not easy or obvious. Jesus often took his disciples off for meetings. I'm pretty sure they didn't involve minutes and agendas, but they would have involved a level of governance (as we would now call it) - sending out to buy food; sending out to preach and teach; gathering the disciples in to pray and learn; agreeing on where to eat and who to help.

Christian governance is an important part of our life together. To make it so, we should realise how governance is part of our Christian mission and ministry. It is how we can play a part in promoting the good news of Jesus in our community - either by being part of the governance structure, by being willing recipients of the outcomes of the work or by being active contributors, willing to share in and be part of the sharing of God's love in our community.

So I encourage you to hold the governance of St Peters in your prayers; come to the APCM as part of your sharing in the Christian mission here and where possible - by standing for the PCC, by being willing to share in work of the working parties or sub committees -participate in the mission of God here by sharing in the governance process. Help share God's love in our parish.

*All items for the May issue of the Parish Chest, including perhaps accounts of Holy Week and Easter and the APCM to sjpeatfield@aol.com by **Wednesday 22nd April**. Many thanks in anticipation!*

Monthly Martyrs – who are not always martyrs: St George



John Peatfield writes:

St George, whose saint's day falls on the 23rd of April, is widely celebrated as the dragon slaying Patron Saint of England and especially soldiers, however he is also the Patron Saint of Catalonia, and almost certainly never set foot in his green and pleasant land. The exact date of his birth is unknown, but it is said to be around 270 AD. He was a Roman soldier whose father was a high ranking official favoured by the then Emperor Diocletian. George grew to be very able and was also favoured by the Emperor, who was pagan with a capital P. In 303 AD Diocletian issued an edict that every Christian in the army should be arrested and that every pagan soldier should offer a sacrifice to the Roman gods. George publically renounced this edict and declared himself a Christian and a follower of Jesus Christ. The Emperor did not want to execute his best and favourite soldier, and so offered him wealth and land to convert back, but George was having none of it and so was brutally executed at Nicomedia. His faith throughout an unpleasant run up to his death, involving painful torture, convinced Empress Alexandra and Athanasius to convert to Christianity and Christians around the world to honour him as a martyr at his burial site in Lydda. But what, I hear you once again shout – but this time about a different breed of serpent – has he got to do with dragons? In the Russian Orthodox Church he is often depicted killing a dragon (with a spear called Ascalon) with a fair maiden in the distance. This can either be interpreted as the dragon representing Diocletian and the maiden as Empress Alexandra, or as Satan and the Glory of God. He was heavily used in the crusades and was attributed with a few of the conquering knights' victories. The explanation of the dragon episode is inescapably similar to that of the Krachon, Perseus and Andromeda, for it is said that a village, to receive drinking water, first had to dislodge a dragon – or a crocodile to you and I – and had to draw lots as to which maiden would be quite literally stuck in deep water. One day a princess, again quite literally, draws the short straw and lo and behold George turns up, slays the croc and marries the princess. Thus the civilians abandoned their pagan ways and followed Christ. St George has always been depicted as a brave and military saint, and is loved throughout England.

Year's Mind

2 April	Vera Boyce (2003)
4 April	Elizabeth Hughes (1957)
6 April	Mabel Gibbard (1986)
8 April	Stella Gordon (1958)
	Fanny Grove (1963)
	Cornelius Harding (2014)
11 April	Arthur Gibbard (1978)
18 April	Kenneth Corden (2004)
20 April	John Ord (1975)
21 April	Roberta Staden (1964)
22 April	John Gray (1961)
27 April	Frank Gordon (1973)
	Sally Husbands (2002)
28 April	Kathleen Beaty (1981)
	Graham Allen (2000)
30 April	Muriel Brooke (1965)



Captain Templar Henry Scott of the 87th Punjabis Regiment (attached to the 47th Sikhs) died at Ypres on 26th April 1915 aged 31.

Keeping Warm and Carrying on...

I am grateful to Sarah Hare for sending in this photograph of our stalwart serving team carrying out their duties in the very different and rather less spacious surroundings of the church hall during our recent "boiler issues". Hopefully by the time you are reading this all has been set to rights in the heating department and we are back in our rightful home. Many thanks to all involved for keeping us warm and keeping us going during this period.



Business as usual...