



St Peter's Parish Newsletter

December edition 2019

www.stpeterealing.org.uk

Letter from the Vicar.

It has been a while since the last newsletter. My apologies. Life does tend to get away with you from time to time. Having said that it seems to get away with me most times. No matter how organised I try to be, and you might not believe it but I do try to be organised, I keep getting caught out. Things just creep up on you unawares and before you know it they bite you in the soft parts. I can't believe we are nearly at another Christmas season; the last one only finished a few weeks ago didn't it?

Yet here it is, knocking on the door of life. Another time to gather and celebrate the birth of the Saviour of the world. It is one of my favourite times of the year I must admit. I love the tinsel and glitter. I've even got over the 'bah humbug' of arguing for a pure Advent. A shop keeper recently drew my attention to the fact that as business people they only had four or five weekend shops before the festival arrives, that shopping and getting ready to give presents is part of the celebration as is the anticipation of the season, so one can see why people get dragged into the Christmas spirit whilst the church struggles in Advent. What is important is the good will the season can draw out of people, allowing people to show their better side and instilling in us a renewal of faith in the human spirit.

We've seen that in bucket loads at St Peter's this year. With the arrival of the Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter comes the annual panic of getting enough volunteers to help put the shelter together, feed, support and care for our guests, and then clear up and set everything to rights before the business of the next day begins. And this year, like most we ended up with a surfeit of helpers even to the point of having to consider sending volunteers home. An amazing situation to be in, who said charity and caring was dying out.

And it's not just evidenced by this one off big project. Our support of Ealing Food Bank shows how people do care. Last month we collected and sent in 125kg of food. At Harvest we gathered and sent in over 250kg. Much of the offerings coming from people in the parish who do not come to church but know what we are trying to do in supporting the poor and hungry in our borough. This is something we are part of month by month and sadly see no end of. Please keep supporting this project, especially as we come to the festive season.

A couple of examples of what people are doing in our community. A couple I suspect amongst many that are going on every day. And so to the real meaning of Christmas. I'm not sure there is one really. It seems to me that Christmas is a time that highlights the wonder of the human spirit. We are constantly told how awful people are and yet, in the background amazing things are being done every day. The Christmas season just draws that into stark relief. Maybe we should find more occasions to celebrate how wonderful people are and how much the spirit of the Christ Child is still alive and well and living in jolly ol' Ealing. Happy Christmas.

Fr David

Retreat Report



We continue to support the work of Ealing Foodbank. Sadly, even with all the political promises being made at the moment the services of the foodbank are still desperately needed. So please remember the foodbank when you do your shopping and add a little extra so others might be able to eat in our borough. We have done brilliantly

this year; we can always do more. Keep up the good work, it is so appreciated.

As it starts getting colder in these Winter months, foodbanks need your support as much as ever to help those who find themselves in need of a foodbank. Some may have the tough decision this season of whether to 'heat' or 'eat'. Please help as much as you can. Here are some December shopping list suggestions of what we need:

Dried Milk; tinned meat - all types; Potatoes - Tinned and Instant; Long Life Sponge Puddings; Savoury biscuits; Deodorant - male and female; Shaving Foam & Razors; Washing-up Liquid; Nappies - size 4 & 6

Foodbank has plenty of pasta, baked beans and pulses thank you.

Reflections

As part of our Parish Retreat this year we were offered three reflections on what has been referred to as Benedict's three legged stool – study, prayer and work, a pattern for Christian living. In case you were interested they are to be reprinted in the newsletter over the next couple of editions. Here is the first.

Luke 4:14-21 – This scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

Study.

I wonder if you have ever thought about Jesus' wisdom; where it came from. The temptation would be to say – he is the Son of the living God; he is God incarnate so of course he must know everything.

That is how he is presented by the scriptures. When we read his parables and wise words the flavour is one of awe and wonder at what he says. There are occasions when the disciples are said to be amazed at his words. Here is my problem; Jesus is fully human and fully divine; his divinity is revealed to us in that everything he does is miraculous and everything he says is wise; where is Jesus humanity in all this? Where is the frailty, the cracks; the stuff that makes him human? Well of course we would never be shown them – well not until the last anyway (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46)). But I think it is there.

What was Jesus doing for the first thirty years of his life? We know very little about that time. We assume he was learning to be the practicing carpenter. How about if he was also studying? Studying the scriptures of the faith he loved so well, and so wanted to reform and knew he was to fulfil. I realise this is boarder line heresy – but I wonder. As a human

Jesus would have learnt. He would have been schooled. In his divinity is the application of that knowledge.

For some the idea of study is exciting and challenging, a great opportunity to improve oneself, to learn new things. For others it sends a shiver up their spine and a cold, clammy sweat in the palm of the hands as they remember those school days when lessons were boring and chalk dust lay thick on the shoulder. Yet it is through knowledge we are armed for the world; through knowledge, gates are opened and new vistas seen.

How do we feel about talking of faith, how often we share or are prepared to share what we believe with others? Do we feel adequately equipped to have such conversations, do we understand what we believe?

A bishop once shared with a bunch of curates how he checked the freshness of his clergies' theological knowledge. When he visited he would check through their bookshelves and note the publication date of the newest tome. Many, he said, stopped at the point of the priest's ordination and if there were newer editions often the spine of the book wasn't broken suggesting they have been bought but not read.

We do need to keep our minds fresh. If we are to deepen our faith and engage others in conversation with some level of comfort then we need to have the necessary tools to do that, one of which would be knowledge of the faith. Occasionally parents will direct their children to the priest having been asked 'a difficult God question'. On the one hand the clergy love that. On the other they are also saddened by it. With a little knowledge, courage and application that so valuable discussion around the family meal table could be had. There is also the concern that a large reason for children not grasping the faith is because adults won't or don't talk to them about faith, about what God means to them and why faith in God is important. This is often the case because the adults feel inadequate to the task.

Christian faith is about talking, sharing fellowship. Jesus was forever talking about faith and God, understanding actions and reactions in the world in light of his relationship with God. Jesus talks a lot about what it means to be faithful using his God given gifts of reason, learning and reflection which gave him power to discuss and share the good news of salvation.

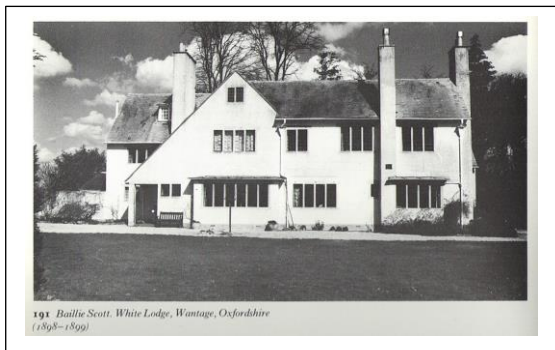
We are not all called to be preachers or teachers. We should all have an adequate understanding of our faith to help us deepen our relationship with God and to encourage others in their walk of faith.

A Parish retreat Report: Retreat with the Community of St Mary the Virgin at Wantage

On September 20th Father David led four St Peter's parishioners on a retreat at the convent near Wantage. During our two day visit, the small community of nuns welcomed us to join their worship in the convent chapel - so we could experience Vespers, Compline, Lauds and Eucharist with them.



We were privileged to stay in the White Lodge - a stunning "Arts and Crafts" example of the work of the architect and designer Mackay Baillie-Scott (1865 to 1945). In the Lodge we were completely self-contained, with meals being delivered from the convent kitchen. The large simple house gave us all a sense of peace and there were many quiet spaces, including a small chapel and library, where we could enjoy the silent periods of our retreat.



191 Baillie Scott, White Lodge, Wantage, Oxfordshire (1898-1899)

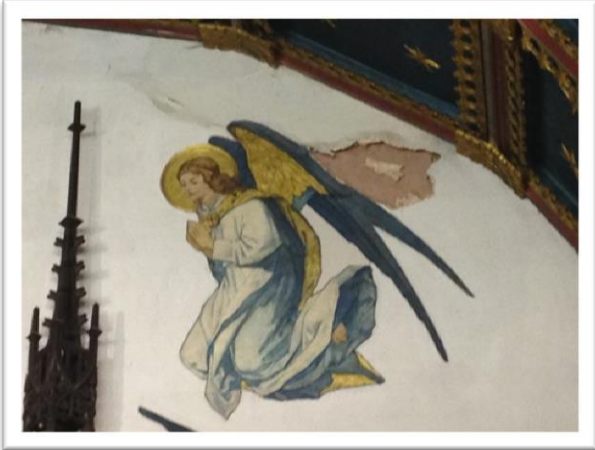
The topic of our retreat was the three legs of the Benedictine spirituality - Prayer, Study and Work. Father David spoke about each one and we shared insightful discussions. Many thanks to him for giving so generously of his time and leading us on a most enjoyable retreat. We all came away with a sense of peace and much food for thought.

The retreat house

Candlemas Quiz Night and Supper in Aid of Christian Aid – Saturday 1st February 2019.

As part of our celebrations of Candlemas and the end of the festive season we will be holding a quiz night and supper on Saturday 1st February 2020. Tickets will be on sale from 5th January, £10 per adult, £5 per child (11+). Profits from ticket sales go towards the work of Christian Aid.

LADY CHAPEL Appeal



You maybe wondering what is happening to the Lady Chapel. A Year or so ago a piece of plaster fell and we all panicked. We discovered the cause, weakened pointing to the outside brick work. £7k later we got that sorted. Now we had to leave the plaster to dry out during which we got advice from a conservator. The plaster work would cost in the region of £4.5k. Whilst doing their investigations they discovered the reredos was in need of oiling. After 100 years that shouldn't be too surprising. The bill creeps up to £7k plus the cost of scaffolding. So the

works plan increases. When Roderick McLennan, our church architect came to inspect the chapel he made an observation, whilst we are paying for scaffolding we should make greater use of it. There were other decorations to sort out, repairs to the stained glass windows, the ceiling needed cleaning, the carpet should be replaced (it has several tears and missing bits) and the altar rails, that had been rediscovered in the boiler room, should be restored and put back in place. The estimated cost of all this; £40k.

So although things may seem to have been quiet a lot has happened. The faculty has now been applied for and tenders are being sought to get a proper price for the work so we can begin the next phase of fundraising. This won't be easy but we hope to show we are serious in that we have spent £7k of our money already and have raised another £7k.

Please keep the project in your prayers and if you would like to donate further to this project Linda Foster, our treasurer would be delighted to hear from you. Every little helps.

New External Noticeboards.

You may also wonder what has happened to the new noticeboard outside the west door. This is in hand and we are just waiting for planning permission. Once that has been given we can complete our faculty application and get the new board up. This could do with prayer too.

Giving Programme 2020: Giving in Grace.

I struggle talking about stewardship when I am on the subject of church finances. Stewardship is much broader than simple giving and really we want you to think about how you give to the life and work of St Peter's. So, this year we are talking about a Giving Programme rather than a Stewardship Programme. Stewardship is still vitally important in our faith life. Good stewardship of our personal resources for the good of others is an important outworking of our love for God. Part of that is giving to the work of the church.

Our Giving Programme for 2020 is entitled 'Giving in Grace'. We are asked to give to the work of the Church in grace, both the grace of our personal generosity and the grace showered upon us by God. For each of us this will be a different response.

We know you will give what you can out of what you have. Some would like an idea of what should be given. We could say for example it costs over £100 per month/ £3.50 per day per member to run St Peter's. We could say Christian giving should be 10% of their disposable income (after mainstream expenditure has been taken out). What would be more helpful would be if you would tell us what it is you need to know to make your giving decision for 2020/21. This would help us inform you properly. For many some guidance

would be useful. What I would love to hear from you is what would help you in making your giving decision. Please talk to either Linda Foster, our treasurer or Fr David so Giving Programme Team can plan a Giving Programme that will help you Give in Grace.

Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter 2019



We are hosting the Night Shelter again this year. This years project is hosting 10-12 guests so far from a wide variety of countries and back grounds. Thank you to all the volunteers we have had step forward this year. It has been quite amazing and a real answer to prayer. If you would like to know more about the work of ECWNS there are copies of their annual report in church. They have been doing amazing work, housing and relocating people, getting people off the streets and back into life and work. Please keep this work we are sharing in in your prayers and if you would like to support this work financially please contact the

charity at (office@ecwns.org.uk) or their website (www.ecwns.org.uk).

Christmas at St Peter's

Sunday 15th December - Third Sunday in Advent

17.30 Carols by Candle Light

Christmas Celebrations:

24th December ~ Christmas Eve

15.30 Christingle Service

23.30 Midnight Mass

25th December ~ Christmas Day

10.00 Mass of the Holy Nativity

29th December ~ First Sunday of Christmas

10.00 Parish Mass



December's Calendar

DATE	DAY	EVENT	VENUE
SUNDAY 1ST	Advent Sunday	09.15 Pebbles 10.00 Parish Mass 17.30 Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel Parish Church Lady Chapel
MONDAY 2 ND		19.30 Central Ealing & Acton hustings	St John's, Mattock Lane
WEDNESDAY 5 TH		15.00 Ivy Café 19.30 Mass	Church Hall Lady Chapel
FRIDAY 6 TH	Feast Day of St Nicholas of Myrna		
SUNDAY 8TH	Advent 2	10.00 Parish Family Mass 18.00 Advent Procession with Bishop of London	Parish Church St Barnabas, Pitshanger
WEDNESDAY 11 TH		17.00 Durston House Carol Service 19.30 Mass 20.10 Amnesty International Letter Writing Group	Parish Church Lady Chapel The Vicarage
THURSDAY 12 TH		12.00 Harvington School Carol Service	Parish Church
SATURDAY 14 TH		10.00 Best Feet Forward Osterley Park Circular 16.00 Christians Together in Central Ealing Carol Singing	Northfields Tube Station Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre
SUNDAY 15TH	Advent 3	09.15 Pebbles 10.00 Parish Mass 17.30 Carols by Candle light	Lady Chapel Parish Church Parish Church
WEDNESDAY 18 TH		15.00 Ivy Café 19.30 Mass	Church Hall Lady Chapel
SUNDAY 22ND	Advent 4	10.00 Parish Mass 17.30 Evening Prayer	Parish Church Lady Chapel
TUESDAY 24 TH	Christmas Eve	15.30 Christingle Service 23.30 Midnight Mass	Parish Church
WEDNESDAY 25TH	Christmas Day	10.00 Mass of the Holy Nativity	Parish Church
SUNDAY 29 TH	Christmas I – Feast of the Holy Family	10.00 Parish Mass	Parish Church

January's Calendar

DATE	DAY	EVENT	VENUE
WEDNESDAY 1 ST	New Year's Day	12 noon Mass & Drinks	Lady Chapel & Vicarage
SUNDAY 5TH	Epiphany Sunday	09.15 Pebbles 10.00 Parish Mass 17.30pm Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel Parish Church Lady Chapel
MONDAY 6 TH		19.00 Standing Committee Meeting	Vicarage
WEDNESDAY 8 TH		15.00 Ivy Café 19.30 Mass 20.10 Amnesty International Letter Writing	Church Hall Lady Chapel Vicarage
THURSDAY 9 TH		19.00 Men's Beer and Curry	Drayton Manor Hotel & Laguna Restaurant
SATURDAY 11 TH		10.00 Best Feet Forward	Richmond Park vbia Gunnersbury
SUNDAY 12TH	Baptism of the Lord	10.00 Parish Mass 17.30 Evening Prayer	Parish Church Lady Chapel
TUESDAY 14 TH		20.00 Christian's Together in Central Ealing AGM	Pitshanger Methodist Church
WEDNESDAY 15 TH		15.00 Ivy Café 19.30 Mass	Church Hall Lady Chapel
SUNDAY 19TH	Epiphany 2	09.15 Pebbles 10.00 Parish Mass 17.30pm Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel Parish Church Lady Chapel
TUESDAY 21 ST		19.30 PCC Meeting	Vicarage
WEDNESDAY 22 ND		15.00 Ivy Café 19.30 Mass	Church Hall Lady Chapel
SUNDAY 26TH	Epiphany 3	10.00 Parish Mass 17.30 Evening Prayer	Parish Church Lady Chapel
WEDNESDAY 29 TH		15.00 Ivy Café 19.30 Mass	Church Hall Lady Chapel