

# St Peter's Parish Chest March 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



### Travelling Vicariously?

I do like a good travel book. There is something almost voyeuristic about seeing the world through the eyes of someone else. At the moment I am reading Laurie Lee's book *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*. I must admit I started the book with some reluctance. When I was at school we were told to read his book *Cider with Rosie* and I hated it. Looking back that was probably because it was a school text rather than a book of choice. Anyway, I have to say I am very pleasantly surprised. I am really enjoying it and sadly I have nearly finished. For those of you haven't read it the book is about Laurie Lee's decision one day to go walking; first from Gloucestershire to London and then on into pre civil war Spain (via a ship I hasten to add). It is very atmospherically written and invokes a country long past into the annals of history.

I suppose that's one of the reasons why I enjoy travel writing. As we read the travelogue full of engagements with different cultures and various communities we get to share in parts of the world or periods of time not open to us now. We don't get the time or have the money to travel as we might like and so we visit by proxy. One of my favourites is William Dalrymple's book *From the Holy Mountain: Travels in Byzantium* where Dalrymple follows the route taken by two 6<sup>th</sup> Century Monks, using perhaps one of the first travel books, through the then Byzantine Empire from Mount Athos in Greece to the deserts of North Africa and the ancient Monastery of St Anthony. A fascinating survey of how the Middle Eastern world had and indeed had not changed (though I suspect with the Syrian Civil War and the rise of ISIS this may no longer be the case).

Travelling or journeying has been a Christian theme from the very beginning of our faith history. Jesus travelled throughout Palestine teaching, preaching and healing showing the people of God that the Kingdom of God was here and now, that God loved them and wanted the people of Israel to return to the path of righteousness and truth. We could trace this tradition of traveling and coming home back even further as it has always been a major thread in the Jewish peoples understanding of God's salvation, the people of Israel travelling from captivity in Egypt, through the Red Sea and the deserts of the Sinai to freedom in the Promised Land.

Travelling suggests a moving towards or away from something, it suggests change and growth and new experiences. Sometimes it involves old experiences seen in a new way. Some of which we can get from reading others accounts. But I would suggest there is nothing better than personal experience and engagement. I think this is very true in the life of faith.

As you read this we are a couple of weeks into Lent, a classic time to think about journeying and change and renewal. We will also be coming the end of this years' stewardship programme when hopefully you will have had time to take in the information the Stewardship Team have distributed via the members of the PCC and will be ready to attend the Stewardship Sunday Service on the 8<sup>th</sup> March to dedicate your pledge of time, talents and money to God for the coming year.

Both have a resonance with travelling in the life of faith. What we promise to do for God and his church, his family here on earth will flavour our journey with God. It will tell us much about our personal engagement with our faith, where we see God in our lives and how we want or indeed don't want to engage with God. And this is not about quantity; it is about quality. What is the quality of our relationship with God and how do we express that in our response to the need of his body here on earth, his church of which we are part?

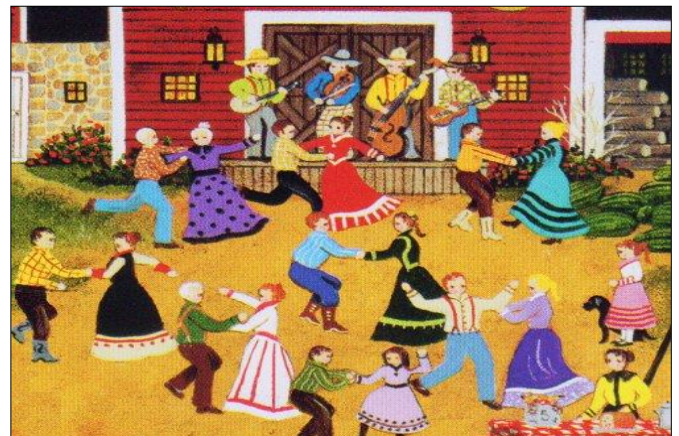
It is possible to change how we travel with God. Through Lent we are encouraged to focus on our relationship with God and how we understand God as being part of our life, of who we are. We are encouraged to use this time to come closer to God as God wants to come closer to us and to ask what that means for the way I live my life and view those things around me I consider important or valuable.

Both Lent and our Stewardship should be held in prayer to ensure a right outcome is made, one that responds to the needs of the church but also one that responds to our needs in coming to know God better, to hear God's words for us and to know that God loves us. Travel well with God and pray with me for a good and holy Lent.

*Fr David*

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### Candlemas Capers



It was a freezing cold night when the people of St Peter's gathered to say good bye to the Christmas season at the Candlemas Barn Dance on **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015**. Walking up the path to the church hall it was lovely to hear the sound of the band warming up to put us through our paces.

Once out of our coats, scarves, hats, cardigans, second cardigans etc. we did indeed warm up very quickly as the caller showed us how to "dozee-doe" our partners, take them in a ballroom hold and not dislocate their shoulders in "the basket."

The youngsters were very fleet of foot and kept going dance after dance. Some of us though were quite relieved to be able to have "a bit of a breather" after every second dance. This was very well managed by the band (accordionist and sound desk) and the excellent caller. Halfway through the evening when we had worked up a good appetite we went into the church for a very welcome supper of fish and chips followed by ice-cream or/and(!) trifle. All delicious.



Fish, chips and chat for six!

We returned to the hall, rather heavier than before, to dance again and to see if we had been lucky in the raffle. All too quickly it was time for the last dance, where we all joined hands in a ring to "one two three, clap clap clap" one final time. For all present it was a very joyful evening, full of St Peter's warmth and good fellowship.

Thanks to all who made this possible - from the furniture movers, the layers of tables, the organizers of fish, chips and pudding, to the sellers (and buyers!) of raffle tickets and the washers up at the end. A very special night indeed.



And the winner is...!

If you were not able to make this event this year, then do make sure it is in your diary in good time for next year. Also, do look out for details of other forthcoming St Peter's events.

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### Down Mexico (via Chicago) Way

If the grey skies, rain and burst water mains of W5 are getting rather monotonous then it might be good to think of sunny places far away. This article kindly sent in by Mike Tiley gives a flavour of his recent trip to Chicago (probably not warmer!) en route to Mexico.

### Mike Tiley writes:

We found a less costly way of flying to Mexico this year by going via Chicago and Lety negotiated a free one day + 2 nights stop over. This enabled us to meet up with our Mexican friends Jorge and Sylvana Osorio who used to live in Hanwell 16 years ago. Jorge is a concert pianist and he will be coming over in November to play with the LSO at the Festival Hall. They met us at O'Hare International Airport and drove us around the main sights during the limited time available to us.

I asked if we could see the Rockefeller University Chapel on the University of Chicago campus which is an impressive late 20s building with a tall tower containing one of the world's largest carillons which had been made by Garrett and Johnson of Croydon in Surrey and it was playing as we approached the chapel entrance. It was Sunday morning and although we had just missed the main service we were offered the chance to join the weekly tour of the tower and its famous carillon being played by their carillonneur. We felt a bit 'puffed' after following the enthusiastic guide and group up 231 stone steps to watch 'the maestro' skilfully playing various tunes and hymns on the two manual keyboards and full set of foot pedals below. Back down on the ground we discovered their fine Steinway B concert grand piano in the chancel and Jorge was invited to play it. We met the ex-Oxford female Dean of the chapel who was impressed by his playing so we may have provided Jorge with the opportunity to provide a future concert in that beautiful 1750 seat venue which they like us were seeing for the first time!

Our hosts then drove us around many of the fine sights of Chicago including the vast round and domed Ba'Hai Temple and the Cloudgate AKA 'The Bean' which is a large bean shaped piece of sculpture made from highly polished stainless steel in 2004 and placed near to the entrance of the Millennium Park on Michigan Avenue. It was designed by the British sculptor Anish Kapoor and it is always being touched 24/7 by onlookers and I think that it would be good to have a similar tangible piece of public art in London where it could be a major attraction. Unfortunately lack of time prevented us from seeing any of Chicago's museums or art galleries or any of Frank Lloyd Wright's famous houses which we want to see during a return visit to this wonderful city.

We flew South on the next day to Monterrey in north Mexico where Lety's mother, brother in law Mauricio and niece Cecilia met and drove us to their homes in Monclova 3 hours away where we had a wonderful Christmas and New Year.



Ba'Hai Temple in Chicago

## Fairtrade – and Offshoots – in Nepal



Children from the other side of tourist Kathmandu.

Harold Stringer has also shared a recent journey with us – one that provides much food for thought.

### Harold Stringer writes

What links: goats, paper-making and people-trafficking? Answer below. Before that, my first impressions of this amazing country: the stunning scenery – not only the high peaks; the teeming chaos but friendly people of Kathmandu; the uncountable world Heritage Sites – temples, stupas, palaces, shrines, durbar squares... But on these Traidcraft trips, tourism is only the (excellent) icing, on the nourishing cake of Fairtrade producers and projects.

Get Paper Industries (GPI) is a co-operative, run on very democratic lines, producing high-quality handmade paper products, mainly from cotton and paper waste. Every stage is hand done, labour intensive, because what is needed is employment, especially for women. The working conditions are excellent (the very opposite of the dark south-Asian sweatshop image), with good fringe benefits – health insurance and facilities on-site, good paid holidays etc. We saw being made from scratch the card and fine-grade paper, the screen printing and stamping out of shapes, ready to make up into thousands of colourful boxes for Body Shop cosmetic sets. The commercial success provides not only well paid employment, but support for the school nearby (where we were royally entertained!) and the imaginative social projects of the related GWP.

The one that most impressed me was a scheme to combat the international people-trafficking gangs – a real scourge in remote rural areas, tempting girls with too-good-to-be-true offers. The burden of the dowry tradition even makes parents willing to sell their daughters, who are deceived into thinking it will lead to a good marriage or education and well-paid work – only to be trapped in the sex trade.

The scheme starts by gathering mutual support groups for the girls from isolated hill farms. There they learn about the dangers of the tempting offers, and gain in self-confidence in the group. The one we met was buzzing with excitement and friendship, and hope for a life better than being tied in their teens to a much older husband (let alone being sold abroad). We heard their ambitions to be a teacher, a singer, a nurse – even a doctor. The second stage is to help them become an asset, not a liability, to their

families. One such scheme starts with being given a pregnant goat (plus instruction on care and breeding). As we saw, the result soon is a lively, multi-coloured little herd, a good source of income as goat meat is quite a luxury, favoured on feast-days. So the project fund can be repaid for the first goat, and the girl becomes a contributor to family income, and a respected person in her own right. For a low-caste female this is radical change indeed.

Another impressive producer was Mahaguthi – ‘Crafts with a Conscience’. Founded by a follower of Gandhi, it works on entirely Fairtrade principles and helps preserve and develop traditional skills for current demand – finding outlets to pay a decent price to the hundreds of scattered small groups and individual craftspeople. This reminded me of the Gujarati embroidery projects Christina and I saw in 2012: like them, selling in smart city shops and going for export. These products were as impressive as they were varied – from jewelry to furniture, pottery to fashion – not just ‘crafty’, but real craftsmanship.

Once again I left feeling that though Fairtrade is not ‘the whole answer’, yet it does make a really significant difference, and shows what is possible once we acknowledge that uncontrolled market forces are not ‘the whole answer’ either.

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### And can it be?



...That Wesley's Chapel is still to be found in all its majestic Georgian glory at the grimy end of the City Road? **Richard Peatfield writes:**

John Wesley (1703-1791) had a reputation as the most prominent Bible-based preacher of his day. He set up his first London Chapel in a disused cannon foundry in Moorfields, to the east of the City of London. As the congregation developed it was able to build its own Chapel nearby on the City Road, just to the south of the junction with Old Street. The Chapel is still there, and is rightly seen as the centre of World Methodism. It is a magnificent late Georgian Preaching House, with the elevated Pulpit placed centrally and scriptural texts covering the east wall. It has hardly been altered since it was dedicated in 1778, except that the Pulpit, which is still higher than a typical Anglican one, has been lowered by 5 feet since Wesley's day! The Chapel complex also houses a fascinating Museum of Methodism and Wesley's own town house; it is well worth a visit.

## St Peter's Walking Group



Putting spring in our steps.

If hearing about these travels inspires you to start some journeys of your own then you would find yourself in fine company with the St Peter's Walking Group. Details of their next excursions are as follows:

**Sunday 8 March** 1.30pm from St Peter's Church car park for a circular walk to **Horsenden Hill** (3 hours). Led by Fr David.

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April** 1.30pm from St Peter's Church car park to **Perivale Woods and Nature Reserve** for their Open Day – a special opportunity to have access to areas open only once a year.(2-3 hours). Led by Linda/Germaine.

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May** 10.00am at Richmond station for circular walk to **Richmond Park** (2-3 hours). Led by Linda.

*Please speak to Linda Foster or Fr David for further details.*

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## Easter Gardens

Everyone who comes in to St Peter's on Easter morning finds their eye drawn to the beautiful Easter Garden lovingly created by members of the Flower Arranging team. When my own children were small "saying hallo to Jesus in the garden" was a very important part of each Sunday in Eastertide – and a cause of dismay when at Pentecost they found it gone for another year.

We do not need to be or have small children for an Easter Garden to be a lovely focus for us as we look forward to the end of Lent.



A little more advanced "growing" garden.

Here is a simple "recipe" for an Easter Garden (the size is up to you, just keep things in reasonable scale):

During Lent:

- A shallow waterproof tray or dish
- Some very fine gravel or sand
- Some larger pebbles
- Some dead twigs
- A jam jar and lid (ideally a plain lid or you could cover it in stone coloured paper)
- Blue tack
- Moss (if available)

For Easter Day:

- Small vases of spring flowers/or small pots of bulbs in flower
- Twigs with blossom or new buds

Optional:

- Three crosses
- A small mirror or shallow dish of water for a pond
- Figures of Jesus, Mary and an angel (I made them from wooden pegs and bits of wool and felt)

Place the fine gravel in the tray and put the jam jar on its side to make the tomb. Cover the jar with larger pebbles and/or moss if using. Rest the jar lid against the jar or you could use a larger stone that covers the mouth of the jar. Put blue tack on the twig ends and place them around tomb, hiding blue tack with gravel. If using, you can put crosses in the same way.

On Easter Day (or Easter Eve in readiness for Easter Day) roll away the stone/lid! Remove the dead twigs and replace with small vases of spring flowers and budding twigs and/or small pots of flowering bulbs. This makes a lovely centrepiece for the Easter table and by replacing the flowers as they fade will last until Pentecost.

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## Finding Time for Lent

Each Thursday in Lent at 9pm in the Lady Chapel there is an opportunity to come and be still for just half an hour or so. During this time some reflections and prayers from the work of David Adam will be read and shared. David Adam is a priest and writer who has a strong affinity for the Celtic spiritual tradition and he draws much inspiration from the works and wonders of creation. Each session ends with the saying of Night Prayer – the ancient office of Compline.

Those planning to go to Iona on pilgrimage this year may find this a useful step along the way, but anyone who would value a simple time of quiet this Lent may find this of help too.

Full details of opportunities to make time for Lenten space and prayer are in the leaflet Triduum 2015 available at the back of church. In summary:

- Stations of the Cross Mondays at 7.30pm
- Holy Communion Wednesdays at 7.30pm
- Night Prayer Thursdays at 9pm

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## Still Lent

I am grateful to Mike Tiley for sending in this very timely and helpful guide to finding stillness, which is used at St Paul's, Knightsbridge.

### "SILENCE"

Contemporary living can make us very unaccustomed to silence and stillness. Often people feel threatened by the thought of silence even for a short time. There can be so much noise all around us- as well as the random static within us.

When I am fortunate enough to visit the country, I often notice the soothing effect that the silence has on me. When I take the trouble to slow down I become more conscious of the presence of God in my life. It is not even necessary to spend a lot of time in this form of spiritual exercise. It can be done in a minute. A train journey may give you time to think and be silent. A visit to a park may dispose you to greater awareness of the presence of God. Turning off the radio or TV may give you an inkling of the possibilities that silence has to offer. Whatever happens, don't be afraid of the silence within and without. The real purpose of silence is to be able to 'hear' God with inner ears.

This story from the Old Testament about the prophet Elijah may help you to understand how God seems to have a preference for stillness and silence as a way to communicate with us:

'At that place Elijah came to a cave, and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ELIJAH? He was told GO OUT AND STAND ON THE MOUNTAIN BEFORE THE LORD, FOR THE LORD IS ABOUT TO PASS BY. Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ELIJAH? (1 Kings 19.9, 11-14)

### FINDING YOUR OWN CAVE

Children sometimes have favourite places where they want to be and where they dream and no one can follow them. Try to discover the secret place of peace within you and notice the times when it is possible to enter it. It may be in a very mundane way- for instance, is the bath or walking the dog, jogging or tinkering with the car. When you have learnt to recognise the possibilities for quiet, capitalise on them. Then in these familiar tasks you become aware of the presence of God.

### A SIMPLE STILLNESS EXERCISE

This exercise may help when you have a few moments to devote to stillness and silence.

\*Listen to all the sounds you can hear outside the room or area where you are. Don't push those sounds further away, but do not draw them any closer either. Just let them be - and in this way they won't be a distraction but will be absorbed into the whole. Then listen, or be aware of the sounds, or, in particular, the people who are there too. Once again, don't push them away mentally, but don't draw them any closer. Just leave each person to be themselves.

\*Now be aware of yourself: your feet firmly on the ground; be aware that you are sitting, standing or lying down. Try to relax your back and your shoulders. Let the muscles in your neck relax as a way of letting tensions fall away. Be conscious of your arms and hands right to the ends of your fingertips. Then bring your concentration to rest at whatever you feel is the centre of yourself.

\*Take one or two good breaths and let your breathing find its own level- don't force it; just breathe naturally. When you have consciously quietened down, then listen to the atmosphere deep within yourself and try to notice what is your prevailing feeling. It is this atmosphere which you will bring to prayer.

### USING SCRIPTURE AS A HELP TO STILLNESS

Gently read through a passage of Scripture being aware of the atmosphere of the text, so that you can almost taste or feel it.

When you are satisfied, let the scripture go as you carry it into your time of silent prayer. Then, in the way you feel most at home with, stay steadily in God's presence.

Simply breathing in a natural way, keeping a small word or phrase to come back to, even when your mind is filled with thoughts, just wanting to stay in God's presence, whatever you feel like. Words such as 'Maranatha' ('Amen! come Lord Jesus.' Revelation 20.21) and 'Peace' and phrases such as 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner' (The Jesus Prayer) can be used here.

After your prayer, read through the passage of Scripture again, this time noticing if the mood or the texture has changed at all. Gradually God may lead you into a deeper understanding of this passage and one which will usually make sense in the context of your daily life. This generally happens gently and almost imperceptibly."

### Mike adds:

There is a weekly Christian meditation group run by Fr Robin Burgess in the Newman Chapel at the back of Ealing Abbey on Mondays at 7pm for just under an hour which anyone can attend. Father Robin was curate at St Peter's in 1980s. I often attend this meeting so do speak to me if you need to know more.

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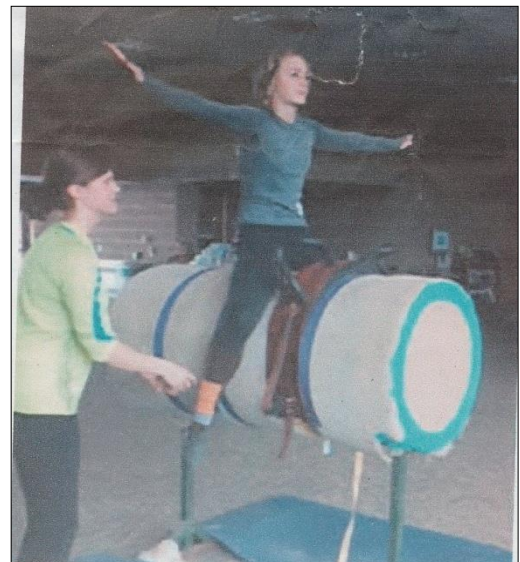
## Matters Arising

Marlene Sladen has kindly written in to send thanks from one of the beneficiaries of the **2014 Christmas Bazaar**.

### Marlene Sladen writes:

Wormwood Scrubs Pony Centre were delighted and most appreciative of the donation from St Peter's Church. This will contribute towards specialist equipment for the Stable Yard Therapy Classroom, which will help children with learning and physical difficulties develop animal care, anatomy, environment, music and sound.

It is hoped that the classroom project will be completed by April 2015 when all sponsors and donors will be invited to the official Grand Opening.



Specialist equipment in use at the Centre.

## Moullin House Update

A reader of the *Parish Chest* has kindly sent in the following update re. Moullin House (see article in last month's *Parish Chest*). Moullin Hostel has been sold to a developer. The plan is to pull it down and build a block of flats. Unclear as yet what the timescale for this will be.

*Many thanks for the update – please keep us posted. If you have information or historical links "Around the Parish" please share your thoughts with readers of The Parish Chest. Deadline for the April issue is **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March**. Please send your contributions to [sipeatfield@aol.com](mailto:sipeatfield@aol.com). Thank you!*

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## Dates for your Diary

Monthly notices of dates and details of events are available at the back of church and on our website – [www.stpeterealing.org.uk](http://www.stpeterealing.org.uk). Here are few further ahead:

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April** Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) following coffee and refreshments after the 10am service.

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June** St Peter's Festival Mass at 10am followed by Bring and Share lunch.

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October** Harvest Fayre and Supper. (Details to follow.)

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## Monthly Martyr (who are not always martyrs)

John Peatfield writes:

### St Patrick

St Patrick, whose feast day falls on the 17<sup>th</sup> of this month, is one of the world's most popular saints and you probably know the content of this article already, but we might as well reiterate his story for those not in the know... He was born in Scotland in 385 AD of roman parentage, and at the age of 14 was captured by slave merchants and taken to the land in which he is now adored (not America -- Ireland). During his time in captivity he developed a strong relationship with God and at the age of around 20 was told to go to the coast in a dream from the Lord. At the coast he managed to return home to his native Scotland and was reunited with his family. Just when he thought he was shot of the place, he had a dream that the people of Ireland were calling out to him: 'We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more'. He studied under St Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and was later ordained a bishop. In March 433, he was sent to Ireland to preach the Gospel, and according to legend as soon as he arrived he was captured (yet again) by a pagan tribe, who naturally wanted to kill him, but their chieftain could not move his arm to strike him until he was friendly to St Patrick. He went on to preach in Ireland for 40 years, converting villagers right up to kings to the message of Jesus and great churches and cathedrals were built across the land. He died at Saul, where he had built the first church in Ireland, after working many miracles and collecting many disciples, but also enduring terrible hardships and poverty. He is associated with the shamrock, because during his teachings, he used it to explain the Holy Trinity.

Now, I hear you asking from your living rooms on a Sunday afternoon, what about the snakes? Legend, or rather Myth has it that while on a 40 day fast, Patrick was bitten by a snake and so thought the most sensible course of action was to banish all snakes from the land. The actual reason why there are no snakes in Ireland is rather more mundane and geographical: simply as it is an island and snakes can't swim, there never were any. A more poetical interpretation is that the 'snake' was a metaphor for the druids who often had snake like tattoos on their arms, and by converting the land to Christianity he had destroyed one of the last pagan cults.

## Year's Mind

1 March	Albert Caterer (1973)
2 March	Denis Craft (1983)
4 March	Margaret Britton (1961)
5 March	Rodney Burke (1985)
6 March	Lucie Beedell (1958)
	Frederick Ruston (1962)
8 March	Hilda Malpas (1965)
12 March	Michael Hewitt (2013)
14 March	Willa Dufty (1964)
15 March	Bertha Dawkins (1984)
18 March	Rowland Clay (1981)
20 March	Rosamund Rowe (2013)
21 March	Ivy Dawkins (1977)
22 March	Margaret Boucher (2006)
23 March	John Bould (2003)
24 March	Lena Watson (1960)
25 March	Madeline Montague (1958)
27 March	Cecelia Williams (2012)
28 March	Paul Joachim (2011)
29 March	Iris Hall (1999)
30 March	Gwen Sheldon (2003)

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## And finally...

A picture of Margaret Joachim helping a bird escape from church was the last item in the February *Parish Chest*. Margaret would like to correct the editor's lamentable ornithology (eyesight?) as it was in fact a starling and not a blackbird she liberated. On an avian theme too, see sent in this little gem from the Gorleston Psalter (c 1310).



## STOP PRESS!

Thinking of ducks, here is a picture showing why we have been in the church hall – the flooded boiler room. Many thanks to all who have kept the "show on the road", but especially to Angus for keeping us all above water in every sense.



A new baptistery?