



St Peter's Parish Newsletter March edition 2020

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The Vicar's Letter

There is so much in this month's newsletter I am keeping this bit short. There's information about our coming APCM; the third instalment of the retreat talks offered at our parish retreat in October last year; Amnesty Group information and invitation and details of our Lent programme for this year. So much stuff we can't even publish the latest Dave Walker cartoon... maybe next month. We are always happy to receive material from church members. Better than just letting the vicar warble on. Next copy date: Wednesday 11th March.

Annual Parish Church Meeting – Sunday 26th April 2020

As this Newsletter is being written, members of the church are writing reports in readiness for our Annual Parochial Church Meeting which will be held on Sunday 26th April. Those eagle-eyed among you will note we have moved the original date. This is because, due to events beyond our control, the accounts won't be ready in time. We are still keeping to our schedule though so all the reports and accounts should be published by Sunday 5th April.

As part of the APCM we have elections and are looking for PCC members, Deanery Synod representatives and Churchwardens. Please hold this meeting and the need for people to serve in these posts in your prayers and listen to God's call upon your heart, this might be a ministry you are being called to carry out for your community here at St Peter's.

St Peter's needs you!

Most Sunday's we declare in the Mass 'we are the body of Christ' and so we are. But to be an effective body, playing our part in the promotion of the good news of Jesus in our parish it is important we are all committed to this mission and take our part in it.

Most of us do something as part of the Christian community here at St Peter's. We need everyone to step up and take part; and sometimes take part in more than one field. You will know from past Newsletters we are so severely short of support in the life of our church. We need volunteers to serve at the altar, to welcome those who come in to church to worship on Sundays, to read the lessons, to lead the intercessions, to arrange the flowers and to help count the collection after the mass.

We value our tradition and the warmth of our community. For this to be as effective as possible for all of us it is important that what we do, we do well; we can't do it well when we are limping from one Sunday to the next struggling to find people to complete the tasks required of us. Please think and pray about these ministries, we just want to do what we do to the glory of God and the building up of His kingdom.

Rule of Benedict – The Three Legged Stool. Prayer

This is the third address offered at the parish retreat held at the Convent of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage October 2019.

Luke 11;1-13

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial.'

And he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him." And he answers from within, "Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything." I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

One of the reasons I prefer to retreat at a Holy House is the rhythm of prayer. There is the regularity and pattern, the knowledge that this goes on even when I'm not there. The poetry of the liturgies used; the weaving of that prayer life through the work and study of the day.

Rule of Benedict Chapter 16:

The prophet says: "Seven times a day I have praised you" (Ps. 119:164). We will fulfil this sacred number if we satisfy our obligations of service at Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline, for it was of these hours during the day that it was said: "Seven times a day I have praised you" (Ps. 119:164). Concerning Vigils, the same prophet says: "At midnight I rose to give you praise" (Ps. 119:62). Therefore, we should "praise our Creator for just judgements" at these times: Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline; and "Let us arise at night to give you praise". (Ps. 119:164, 62).

Because these services are said daily, continuously and repetitively they offer a rhythm in themselves and it is amazing how, over a relatively short period of time one can fit into that rhythm and it becomes part of you. It makes you change gear, slow down and consciously be in the presence of God. Yet prayer is something many find difficult to do. What do you do? What do you say? As we have seen in our passage from Luke the disciples had the same problem, “Lord, teach us to pray”.

Of the three legs of our stool it is prayer, I suspect, we would all expect to see listed. I am sure we recognise the importance of prayer; we know prayer to be an integral part of worship; it can still daunt us. Prayer links in closest with faith. Like faith it is something we like to keep private. Private prayer is indeed a good thing. Yet it is in corporately sharing that we can grow in prayer.

Prayer is communication and it is food. It is communication with God, and it is food for the soul. The word communication isn't necessarily helpful. The word suggests a two-way information dynamic requiring words and sounds. However, prayer can be just as effective in silence, without words, just being – something we are learning in the contemplative prayer group. Prayer is food; to consciously place ourselves in God's presence is in itself sustaining. We may know we have family and friends scattered all over the country if not the world. It is being in their presence that we truly know and experience that loving relationship we have with one another.

This is where prayer becomes that third leg. In communicating and sustaining prayer gives context for our work and study. It breathes new life into them, gives purpose and direction to them. Through prayer we place our work and study into God's hands. We dedicate them to God and seek God's help and guidance. Study ceases to be for its own sake; blessed and guided by God through prayer it becomes a new way of helping us to grow as people and to grow into God. Our study feeds our prayer, gives us understanding and depth that draws us closer to God. Work couched in prayer becomes witness and discipleship, service and acts of love – rather than simply tasks performed. Work informs prayer, shapes prayer, gives purpose to prayer which draws God into the centre of our lives, God's rightful place in the lives of the faithful.

Work, study, prayer – all draw together to make a foundation upon which our faith can grow, where our relationship with God can be deepened and our fellowship with each other strengthened so that we can truly be the body of Christ.

Lent Programme 2020

As with previous years we are offering a variety of opportunities to use the season of Lent as a chance for spiritual refreshment and renewal.

There are three extra options alongside our regular pattern of worship through the weeks.

On Sundays in Lent, Sunday School for Grown Ups between 11.45am and 12.45pm led by Fr Adam; reflections on the eucharist, helping us to come to the core of our lives with fresh eyes and renewing our relationship with an act of worship begun by Our Lord Jesus.

On Monday afternoons, 2.30-3.30pm the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book for 2020, 'Saying Yes to Life', by Ruth Valerio. Following the first creation story in Genesis, Ruth helps us to reflect deeply on the relationship between salvation and creation, our world, our faith and our part in it.

Wednesday evenings, 5.00pm-5.30pm Contemplation and Mindful Prayer. Space and silence to bring ourselves into the presence of God, to know God as abba, father and to grow closer to God in our journey of faith. These sessions will be times for reflection and guidance as we seek to go deeper into God. this is enhanced by the Wednesday Mass at 19.30.

Thursday evenings: Compline and reflection from 9.00pm. Ending the day with reflective worship, food for thought and silence, drawing us into the presence of God who loves us.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. As in the previous couple of years we offer Mass with Ashing at 7.00am and 8.00pm. There will be 'Ashing to Go' on the Church steps from 7.30am until 8.45am.

Lent Programme 2020

Event	Dates	Venue
Ash Wednesday 7.00am Said Mass with Ashing 7.30am – 8.45am Ashes to Go 8.00pm Sung Mass with Ashing	Wednesday 26 th February	Lady Chapel Church steps Church
Sunday School for Grown Ups. 11.45am -12.45pm	1 st ; 8 th ; 15 th ; 22 nd & 29 th March	Lady Chapel
'Say Yes to Life' Study Group. 2.30-3.30pm	2 nd ; 9 th ; 16 th ; 23 rd ; 30 th March	The Vicarage (group size allowing)
Contemplation and Mindful Prayer. 5.00pm	4 th ; 11 th ; 18 th March (N.B. not 25 th March), 1 st & 8 th April	The Lady Chapel
Lenten Reflection & Compline. 9.00pm	5 th ; 12 th ; 19 th ; 26 th March & 2 nd April	The Lady Chapel



Please remember the foodbank when you do your shopping and add a little extra so others can eat in our borough. We have done brilliantly this year; we can always do more. Keep up the good work, it is so appreciated.

At the moment we only require the following items for our February Shopping List:

Tinned vegetables - carrots, peas, green beans, sweetcorn, mushrooms; Vegetable Curry – tins; Vegetable Chilli – tins; Macaroni Cheese/Cheese Ravioli in Tomato Sauce – tins; Fray Bentos Tinned Pies - cheese & onion, vegetable balti - vegetarian flavours only please; Tomato Ketchup; Mayonnaise; Brown Sauce; Nappies - size 5.

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

Candlemas Quiz Night and Supper in Aid of Christian Aid – Saturday 1st February 2020.

This was a very jolly evening, when 28 members of St Peter's and a few friends gathered to test their knowledge and enjoy some good fellowship over a home cooked supper. Which team won isn't so important, the real winner was all of us, most particularly Christian Aid for whom we raised £335 and the Lady Chapel Appeal which gained £117 from a generously supplied raffle. Thank you to our organisers and cooks and particularly our quiz master Clive Brand for a splendid evening

AI Letter-writing Group:

Needed ASAP: letter-writers to join our St Peter's Amnesty International Group. We urgently need more people to join our monthly letter-writing meetings on Wednesday evenings!

Could this be you?

Perhaps you have a special interest or experience in law, prisons, or human rights?
Perhaps you have lived in or visited countries with repressive regimes where you have been aware of human rights violations, including unjust imprisonment and torture?
Perhaps you are interested in world affairs in general and would like to be involved in a small way in trying to change things?
Perhaps you feel a calling to protest at injustice in the world, but would rather write letters than go on marches or lie in the road? (we are none of us getting any younger....!)

Perhaps you have supported Amnesty International in the past, and would like to do so again?
Or perhaps you want to do something new and different?

What do we actually do?

We write letters! ie we don't talk about it then have to go away and do it in our own time, we write in the meeting.

Beforehand we may have attended the Wednesday evening Mass, where prayers are said for the work of Amnesty International and the people we write for.

In the Vicarage Fr David kindly serves up tea or cold drinks as we start the meeting.

We sit round the Vicarage dining table, making sure we have the Group headed paper, and pens, at the ready, together with the latest Amnesty International Magazine. This gives details of the people for whom letters are needed, with the points to make and suggested wording. We decide individually which person we want to write letters about, silence descends (for a while at least).... and we write.

The meeting lasts for about an hour. At the January meeting we each wrote the two letters requested for one individual, which came to 6 letters altogether; and felt that that was sufficient. There is no pressure to rush and do more, unless you want to.

The letters are usually to either the Head of Government or the Minister of Justice, with a copy to the country's ambassador in London. So for example in our January meeting we wrote letters for: Marinel Ubaldo, a young environmental activist in the Philippines, for Magai Matiop Ngong, a 17-year old on death row in South Sudan, and for Emil Ostrovko, a teenager in Belarus serving an 8 year prison sentence for unknowingly distributing illegal drugs.

In December we joined in with Amnesty's Write for Rights campaign, when cards and letters go to the prisoner or at-risk individual themselves. This year the focus was on young people in prison or under pressure for their human rights work.

But can't we do this just as well at home?

Yes of course..... but will we? Giving time to the meeting means letters will be written! Sitting writing together brings a sense of common cause, and of a job to be done, however harrowing the situations may be that we write about. We do allow ourselves to chat, maybe even complain about unfamiliar names to spell, or long complicated addresses to write on envelopes.

Amnesty does also send supporters Urgent Action requests by email, which are quick and easy to respond to at home if we want to do that as well.

The letter-writing is for cases where Amnesty considers this will be most effective.

Does what we do make a difference?

Sometimes news makes the headlines, as recently when Gabriela, the young daughter of Nazanin Zaghari-Radcliffe returned to the UK to live with her father; (her mother remains in Evin prison in Tehran).

The Amnesty Magazine gives case updates, and a 'Good Moves' column, which we read eagerly for positive news of the people we have written letters for. The current 'Good Moves' has news from 14 different countries (including the UK) of prisoners released, court judgements, new legislation, and other encouraging changes.

In the latest 'Good Moves' we read of progress in the cases of Marielle Franco (Brazil), and Alejandra (US/El Salvador), for whom we had written letters in 2019. But the point is also, as Fr David said at our last meeting, that our letters tell the leaders and ministers that the world knows what is going on, and does not forget. Shining a light, as the Amnesty Candle does in church.

If you might be interested in joining us, either regularly or occasionally, and want to know more, please either: talk to one of our regular letter-writers: Moira Babary, Alison Germany, Richard Morse, or Fr David.

Or just come along to the next meeting:

Wednesday March 11th, 8.10pm (after mid-week Mass) in the Vicarage.

We will be delighted to see you.

March's Calendar

Date	Day	Event	Venue
Sunday 1st	Lent 1	09.15 Pebbles	Lady Chapel
	Feast Day of St David	10.00 Parish Mass	Parish Church
	Patron Saint of Wales	11.45 Sunday School for Grown Ups	The Lady Chapel
		17.30 Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel
Monday 2 nd		14.30 'Say Yes to Life' Study Group	The Vicarage
Wednesday 5 th		15.00 Ivy Café	Church Hall
		17.00 Contemplation and Mindfulness Prayer	Lady Chapel
		19.30 Mass	Lady Chapel
Thursday 5 th		21.00 Compline with Reflection	Lady Chapel
Sunday 8th	Lent 2	10.00 Parish Mass	Parish Church
		11.45 Sunday School for Grown Ups	The Lady Chapel
		17.30 Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel
Monday 9 th		14.30 'Say Yes to Life' Study Group	The Vicarage
Wednesday 11 th		15.00 Ivy Café	Church Hall
		17.00 Contemplation and Mindful Prayer	Lady Chapel
		19.30 Mass	Lady Chapel
Thursday 12 th		19.00 Men's Beer & Curry Meeting	7pm The Wheatsheaf 8.15 Monty's, The Mall
		21.00 Compline with Reflection	Lady Chapel
Saturday 14 th		10.00 Best Feet Forward Putney Bridge to Kew Bridge	Meet 10 a.m. at Ealing Broadway station
Sunday 15th	Lent 3	09.15 Pebbles	Lady Chapel
		10.00 Parish Mass	Parish Church
		11.45 Sunday School for Grown Ups	Lady Chapel
		17.30 Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel
Monday 16 th		14.30 'Say Yes to Life' Study Group	The Vicarage
Wednesday 18 th		15.00 Ivy Café	Church Hall
		17.00 Contemplation and Mindful Prayer	Lady Chapel
		19.30 Mass	Lady Chapel
		20.15 St Peters Nature and Conservation Group	The Vicarage

March's Calendar (cont)			
Date	Day	Event	Venue
Thursday 19 th		21.00 Compline with Reflection	Lady Chapel
Saturday 21 st		10-12noon Hand to Hand food packing	Haven Green Baptist Church
Sunday 22nd	Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	10.00 Parish Mass with distribution of posies	Parish Church
		11.30 PCC Meeting	Lady Chapel
		11.45 Sunday School for Grown Ups	Lady Chapel
		17.30 Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel
Monday 23 rd		14.30 'Say Yes to Life' Study Group	The Vicarage
Tuesday 24 th		18.00 A History of the Bible with John Barton	St Paul's Cathedral
Wednesday 25 th		17.00 Durston house Spring Concert	Church
		19.30 Mass	Lady Chapel
Thursday 26 th		21.00 Compline with Reflection	Lady Chapel
Saturday 28 th		10.00-16.00 SCP Conference: Anglican Catholic Evangelism	Christ the Saviour, Ealing Broadway
Sunday 29 th BST begins	Lent 5 Passion Sunday	10.00 Parish Mass	Parish Church
		11.45 Sunday School for Grown Ups	Lady Chapel
		17.30 Evening Prayer	Lady Chapel
Monday 30 th		14.30 'Say Yes to Life' Study Group	The Vicarage
Tuesday 31 st		19.00 Ealing Citizens open evening	The Hub, Christ the Saviour, Ealing Broadway

Contact Information:

The staff team and parish officers can be contacted through the Parish Office;

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The office is open Monday – Friday; 10am – 12noon

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