

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

APRIL 2010

Easter Joy - becoming messengers of God's comfort!

One of the liveliest conversations of our Lent course occurred when we tackled the Chapter of our Lent book entitled 'Becoming Messengers'. The prophet Isaiah in Chapter 40 was called to announce – 'cry out' - God's message of comfort to his desolate people in exile in Babylon and living among the ruins in Jerusalem, and Paula Gooder asked us to reflect on how we are called to be messengers of God's comfort.

I think at the heart of the conversation were very important questions such as, how do we talk about our faith today in a way that is true to who we are, both to ourselves as individual Christians, and in a way that reflects the life and worship of the Church here at St Mary's? Another concern was that in order to talk about our faith, first we have to listen to the person, or people, we are in conversation with, and that any conversation needs to be sensitive and appropriate to the relationship we have with them.

Easter brings out the imperative of sharing the good news of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. John's gospel records how Mary Magdalene's encounter with the risen Jesus sent her straight to the disciples to announce 'I have seen the Lord.' We sing with great joy 'The Day of Resurrection! Earth tell it out abroad!' – but do we?

The big question for us is, how do we do tell it out abroad? How do we communicate the gospel today, in this part of London? It is a good question to explore.

First: the imperative to listen. The community audit, which began last year is an important part of that process. Last year we listened to one another and reflected on the life of St Mary's. This February and March we moved into the

next phase of listening to our local community and received help from volunteers from Metro Bank. They took our community audit questionnaire to the streets, speaking and listening to local people, especially our local shopkeepers (it was cold!). Also Year 5 children from Bousfield School gave us their reflections, as they had recently been thinking about the local area as part of a project they were doing. I would like to carry out more of these conversations with people who are out and about as the weather is getting warmer. I am also particularly keen to reach people who are not so 'out and about', particularly the elderly and housebound. If you could help, either by taking questionnaires and talking to neighbours or friends who live or work in the parish, or with conversations with the public outside St Mary's, the library, or local shops, I would be very grateful. Do contact me and I will let you have the necessary questionnaire. For conversations with the public I will give you a letter to show to people, which sets out the authority we have for conducting such conversations, and try to pair you up with another person. I simply need the complete questionnaires returned to me.

The questionnaire asks people to explore what is good about the area, what are the changes and challenges we face and what are the needs that they feel are being ignored. We also ask questions about how people see St Mary's; we need to listen to how we are perceived in order to know when and how to speak! I am also beginning a series of in-depth conversations with people who have a deeper perspective on the local area from the perspective of a professional insight, or involvement with charity or agency work. Again, if you would like to help with this, or can recommend someone it would be good for me to talk with, do let me know.

Second: the imperative to speak. The former Bishop of Truro, The Right Reverend Bill Inge, gave some wise advice to ordinands, drawing on the insight of the poet Emily Dickinson
Tell all the Truth but tell it slant:

Tell all the Truth but tell it slant--
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As Lightning to the Children eased
With explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind.

Many of the things that we do at St Mary's outside our Sunday worship do tell the truth slant, and our summer will be full of events that do this. From 17 to 21 June there will be an Art Show in St Mary's. There is of course our Summer Fair (19 June) and a new event is being planned: The Great Garden Adventure (current working title) for 5 to 11-year olds and their parents on 10 July in Bramham Gardens, as part of the Earls Court Festival; more about these events will follow. This opening up of our life to the wider community speaks strongly of the vibrant life of the Church – and within that, if people are open to delve deeper – to the life of Christ at its heart.

I suspect that through the process of our community audit, by talking about these events and inviting our friends and neighbours to our events, simply by being good friends and neighbours, we have good opportunities to tell it slant and so to be messengers of God – whispering, if not proclaiming, Easter joy!

Ruth Lampard

Art Exhibition

An Art Exhibition is to be held at St. Mary The Boltons from 17 to 21 June inclusive and further details regarding the opening times of the exhibition will be published in due course. You will note that the exhibition has been timed to coincide with the Summer Fair. We invite you all to put these dates in your diary.

The object of the exhibition is two-fold. Firstly, we hope that it will encourage people, both members and non-members of the congregation, to visit the Church. Secondly, it will give our in-house and local artists an opportunity to display and sell their work. Our only reservation, with regard to selection, is that as a result of limited space, we cannot accept any large works.

To any artists in our congregation, amateur or professional: if you would like to exhibit, please let us know. You can do this by leaving your details in an envelope, marked Art Exhibition, at the Church, and you will be forwarded details regarding the dates for submission, sale and collection.

There will be an Open to All Preview of the exhibition on the evening of 16 June. Please do join us.

Ann Mulcare

St Mary The Boltons Summer Fair Saturday, 19 June, 14.00 – 17.00

With the summer quickly approaching, there is much to look forward to at St Mary's, one of the highlights of course being our annual Summer Fair. Joanna Hackett and Katrina Quinton, who are planning and organising the day, would very much appreciate definite offers for help on the day (including setting up and tidying up afterwards) from 'old hands' as well as anyone new who would like to be involved. Thank you to those who have already offered to help, but as always, we need more! Donations are essential to the success of the Fair and all contributions, whether financial or specific items, will be very gratefully received.

The Fair is always a happy afternoon and we are aiming to have something for people of all ages to enjoy. Tea and cakes, food and drink, treasure maps, the coconut shy, books, bric-à-brac, flowers and plants, tombola, raffles, auctions and old-fashioned children's races will be on offer, but we will need hands-on help to keep it under control! Live music is already on the cards and if the weather behaves, all will be well with everyone's help.

The Charities we support As in past years, the Fair is in aid of charity and this year the charities are those chosen by the PCC. Like last year, the two main charities supported by the proceeds from the Fair are the Earls Court Community Project (our local charity) and the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza (our international charity). These charities remain our focus for a further year as we have committed to supporting them for three years. term.

Donations of Goods In particular, we are looking for donations for the following stalls:

- Bric-à-brac (good quality items, but no clothes of electrical items)
- Second-hand books (no magazines, periodicals or textbooks)
- Bottles for the Tombola
- Raffle prizes
- Homemade Cakes and jams
- Children's toys
- Silent Auction lots

We will not be able to accept any items in the church *until the week before the Fair*, but if you could start thinking about how you could help, and if you have any items to donate, that would be greatly appreciated. If you know you have items you wish to donate but cannot bring to church yourself, please let us know and we can arrange for them to be collected nearer the time.

Silent Auction. We are hoping to run a Silent Auction again this year after great success in previous years. We need donations to form the lots. These should be unusual items that people cannot ordinarily do, or, and more importantly, something people will want to bid for!

Examples include a tour around the BBC, a day's fishing or shooting, a weekend (or more) in a holiday rental property, concert or opera tickets, tickets to a sporting event, a signed football strip or anything else that is 'special'. If you could offer something like this, please let the committee know as soon as possible!

Help on the day. On the day, we really do value your help – there can never be too many pairs of hands. We need people to help with the preparations and clearing up, as well as managing the stalls themselves.

If you are able to help in any way with the Fair, Katrina and Joanna would be delighted to hear from you. More information will be in next month's Clarion. Thank you.

Katrina Quinton: 020 7373 6094

katrina.quinton@virgin.net

Joanna Hackett: 07720 850 482

joanna@awberymorris.com

Save the Date and Spread the word!

Sunday School: Mothering Sunday poems

These are some of the poems written for Mothering Sunday by Sunday School children in a poetry workshop with Marcus Smith.

You are like a butterfly, you fly around me, it's colourful and nice.

I am a monkey, a very good climber and love bananas.

We live happily together in the jungle.

George

You're very kind.

Your face shines.

Your heart shines too.

Red roses are your lips.

You're there when I'm hurt.

You're beautiful.

You're very kind.

Hope

Mother you are my compass,

You are the one who helps me through life.

Mother you are always there,

Like the whistle of the wind.

You are the light at the end of the tunnel.

Your clothes flow in a rainbow trail.

Your heart is made of gold,

And worth one million kisses.

You are the one star in the velvet sky

And nothing can compare to you.

Amelia Dass

Poems used by Marcus Smith to get the children thinking:

Your Mother is Always with you
Your mother is always with you...

She's the whisper of the leaves
as you walk down the street.

She's the smell of bleach in
your fresh laundered socks.

She's the cool hand on your brow
when you're not well,

Your mother lives inside
your laughter. She's crystallized
in every tear drop ...

She's the place you came from,
Your first home. She's the map you
follow with every step that you take.

She's your first love and your first heart
break .. and nothing on earth can separate you.

Not time, Not space...

Sherry Martin

Those Winter Sundays

Sundays too my father got up early
And put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked first blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?
Robert Hayden

Our Annual Parochial Church meeting will be on Sunday 25 April at 12 noon , in the church. Please come and join us if you can.

Fairtrade Fortnight

Thank you very much to all who both made and purchased cakes after church on 28 February. The sum of £72 was raised and has been submitted to The Fairtrade Foundation. For more information please see www.fairtrade.org.uk.
Joanna Hackett

Christian Aid Week at St Marys

This year Christian Aid Week is 10 - 16 May and as ever at St Mary's, we will be raising money for this important charity. Joanna Hackett, St Mary's Christian Aid rep, has recently become organiser of the Chelsea Christian Aid Group, which encompasses many local churches, including St Luke's Sydney Street, St Columba's Church of Scotland and the Chelsea Methodist Church.

Every year Christian Aid Week centres on a country in specific need, where the charity aims to raise awareness of the plight of local people, and raise in the order of £5 million for this project. This year Christian Aid is concentrating a lot of its efforts on the slums of Nairobi, Kenya, where five million people live within two square miles, the majority without running water and sanitation. An excellent DVD is available, should anybody wish to learn more about this project. Christian Aid also wishes to confirm that of course they have risen to the challenge of providing aid in Haiti and have pledged £2 million so far to that needy country.

At St Mary's we will be aiming to beat our previous year's records of money raised and Joanna would be delighted to hear from you should you wish to make a donation (gift aid envelopes can be provided), have any ideas for fund raising activities during Christian Aid Week, or can give any time to help raise funds. We would love volunteers to help with the rattling of tins at Gloucester Road and St Jame's Park Underground Stations or (for those with good eyesight). During that week the Chelsea

Committee is also looking for people to help with the counting of the incoming money.

Please do not hesitate to speak to Joanna if you have any questions about Christian Aid Week or indeed if you are interested in helping out.

Joanna Hackett, 07720 850 482 and joanna@awberymorris.com. Thank you.

Preacher during Christian Aid Week

The preacher on 9 May, during Christian Aid week will be Miss Katie Seal. She graduated from Durham University in 2008 in English and History of Art. Since then she has worked for the Church Urban Fund, and is now a full-time student and youth volunteer at Christian Aid. In October 2009 Katie travelled with Christian Aid to see their work in the slums of Nairobi and in more rural areas. She now works with youth groups, students on their gap year, and Churches across London and the South East, spreading the word about Christian Aid's vital work with some of the world's poorest people.

Earthquake in Chile

It was around 03.30 when the earthquake hit. The evening had passed peaceably enough but I confess to feeling a sense of unease before going to bed, the night was oppressively still and although I could not have put it into words, 'something' was wrong.

It was my eldest cousin who first gave the alarm, 'Terremoto!!!!, 'Earthquake'! The seconds that followed are difficult to describe as by this point the house was moving so hard that it was impossible to stand up without losing one's balance. I did not consciously think, there was just a bewildering impression of noise, falling objects and darkness. I remember holding onto my cousin Montserrat as the ground undulated like a wave while we ran down the stairs. Somehow we made it to the front door and waited, trembling under the archway. Three long minutes passed until the wave-like motion subsided. It was at this moment, rather than during the adrenaline-

fuelled rush to the outdoors that I prayed, my prayers were, I think, filled more with feelings than words.

The after-effects were, if possible, even more chaotic. My family owns one of the largest zoos in Chile, which also just happens to be across the garden wall. There was therefore a rush after the quake to check on the animals. During this stampede I somehow found myself in charge of a large water bottle containing all the inhabitants of my cousin's aquarium. It shows impressive dedication to his pets that during an 8.8 scale earthquake he still managed to rescue his beloved fish. The rest of us were left to wait anxiously in the dark. In an effort to calm the children and ourselves, we began to pray. As my family are devout Catholics, we prayed a rosary together and the soothing rhythm of the words helped to loosen the knot in my stomach.

The days that followed the earthquake were a strange blend of frantic activity and simply waiting. That Sunday, we attended an outdoor mass, it was a supremely surreal experience to be surrounded by sirens and helicopters in the midst of a church service. Nonetheless, I have never felt more surely the mysteriousness of God's presence as I did then: that inexplicable feeling that although we were like ants in the path of a flood, we had not been forgotten and were certainly not alone. A few days later we received news that the airport's runways had survived and that we could fly home. It almost seemed too soon, with the rebuilding of Chile having just begun, and I would have liked to have helped where I could.

The experience has also had positive effects; it has made me feel more connected with Chile and with my family there than ever before. It has also reminded me of why I became a Christian in the first place. It was that same 'God sense' that first drew me through the doors of St Mary's, the almost tangible sensation that there is more to life than I can see. The prayers we said that night now seem almost unnecessary, they were more to comfort us than to alert God that we needed Him, He was there anyway.

Camila Ruz

Farm Sunday, 13 June 2010

Sunday 13 June 2010 is Farm Sunday – a day when many farms are opened up to the public so that people have the chance to visit a working farm, learn about modern farming, and have some fun. The open day takes place through an organisation called LEAF (Linking the Environment and Farming; see www.leafuk.org).

In the fine the tradition of Church charabanc outings, Ginny and I and the Sustainability Group (the Green Group have decided that Sustainability is the heart of our concern concern, and our name should reflect this), thought that a parish trip to a farm that Sunday after Church would be a great idea.

Our plan is to have our normal Sunday worship, with a visiting preacher, Rev Sarah Brown, who will help us to reflect on Food and Farming (she is from a charity called Farm Crisis Network, and wrote to Ginny about farmers and farming last autumn). After the service we would eat our own packed lunches, then set off in a coach from Church at 13.00 to a farm, returning at 18.00.

We are exploring farms to visit and are looking at Trinley Estate (www.trinley.co.uk), an arable farm with White Park rare breed cattle, just outside Andover. They are part of the Environmental stewardship scheme and have woodland and footpaths on the estate. There will be activities on the day, possibly including someone (and some hawks!) from the Hawk Conservancy Trust located nearby. Bring footwear that will let you explore. We may meet some local people; apparently the local vicar and the youth club plan to be on car parking duty for the day.

The day will be suitable for active people of all ages and it would be great to have a coach full of all generations. If the coach is full, the price per seat will be £10. We would like to be able to offer places for children at £5, so if you could make on donation above the £10 to help with costs, we would be very grateful.

Please invite your friends, and sign up on the sheet at the back of Church as soon as possible: we need to know numbers as soon as possible in order to book the coach.

Ruth Lampard

Up before the lark!

Last year I horrified the Young Adults Bible Study Group when I told them of my plans to listen to the dawn chorus one Saturday morning in May. I explained that I would be getting up at 03.00 to drive to an area just outside Woking to listen to the dawn chorus; they thought I was completely mad!

I did go, and had the most wonderful experiences of my life. A group of 15 of us walked along a tow-path listening to the first blackbird singing, then a robin joined in, and bird after bird added to the chorus.

Our guide from the Surrey Wildlife Trust was able to identify the song of each bird, and point it out to us, so that we could listen and distinguish one bird's song from another. We moved on to some army ranges (not in use until 07.00) and heard the song of many other birds, including the rare Dartford and Willow warblers – and a cuckoo. I returned home to a smashing cooked breakfast and a nap. It was a real, rare treat and an adventure.

Sunday 2 May is International Dawn Chorus Day, an annual celebration of the world's oldest wake-up call – the dawn chorus – and the beauty of bird song. Fortunately there is no need to go as far as Woking because The London Wetland Centre has dawn chorus walks departing at 05.00 and 05.15am. Booking is necessary (see their website www.wwt.org.uk or call 020 8409 4400) for more information. The RSPB and Wildlife Trusts also run dawn chorus events in May.

Ruth Lampard

Admission of Patricia Vincent to the Order of Bernardo O'Higgins.

Ivor and Patricia Vincent lived at 101 Barkston Gardens on Ivor's retirement from the Diplomatic Service and were members of this parish. Together they founded a charity called 'The Andean Project' the aim of which was to ".....relieve poverty and sickness, to advance education, and to promote any other purpose which is charitable by English law for the benefit of the people of the Andes Mountains". In support of the charity they moved to Chile in the late eighties and gave up their London home. On Ivor's death Pat continued to live in Chile and in recent years took up residence in the coastal town of Arica near the border with Peru, pursuing her dream of establishing botanical gardens at sea level and in the mountains in order both to provide local employment and to conduct research into the properties of plants at these altitudes and their potential for the future.

Unfortunately Pat has contracted cancer in recent years and returned to London for treatment at the Royal Marsden Hospital. The Chilean Government has just made her a member of the Order of Bernardo O'Higgins in the grade of Knight Commander (Comendador) for services to the people of Chile and, in particular, for the 'valuable contribution made to the development and preservation of the flora and fauna of the Chilean Andean region'. The ceremony took place recently in the London care home where Pat now resides (confined to her bed and in a serious condition). The Chilean Ambassador (His Excellency Rafael Moreno) and his staff deserve credit for arranging an occasion which was entirely sensitive to Pat's circumstances. If anyone who knew Pat would like to visit her or otherwise convey their congratulations, please contact John Barker (8571-0737).

Hope and Glory

A concert by Manor Light Opera, in celebration of St George's Day on Saturday 24 April 2010 at 7.30pm, held at St Mary's Church Hall, Hendon Lane, Finchley N3. Tickets cost £12 to include "nibble".

John Barker

Years Mind

Linda Beachamp
Roy Denmman
Vera Sloane
Alan Payne
Geoffrey Payne
Arthur Fell
Edward Mason
William Rogers
John Warwick
Karl-Hans Osbahr
Margaret Stubbs
Molly Kemm
John McLean
Gillian Brown
Jytte Lynner
Diana McLean
Claudine Allport
Michael Bryeson
Richard Barton
Jytte Mackenzie-Charrington
James Bolton-Dignam
Yvonne Madley
Sidney Perry

Contributions for the May Clarion should be sent in to the church office by 26 April 2010.