



Margam

Ministry Area Magazine



March 2024





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Preparing for Easter



February may be the shortest month of the year, but it has certainly packed a punch – and that is reflected in this month’s magazine. There’s a wealth of news and views from across the Ministry Area.

Lent is a time of prayer, contemplation and thoughtfulness and each of our churches, Mothers’ Unions and other groups have been busy as we prepare for the coming of Easter. There’s food-for-thought from our regular contributors, Adrian Warner and John Berry, requests for support of various kinds from the Ministry Area, Margam Calling and Churches Together, and a heartfelt thank you and explanation about how our donations are helping in Ukraine.

It’s also a time of change. We are delighted to welcome Fr Wayne and Archdeacon of Margam, Fr Mark Preece. We also say a fond farewell to Fr Mark Broadway, who has already left us for pastures new, and to Fr Mark and Mthr Ruth in Margam Abbey, who are leaving us at Easter. Thank you all for your friendship and service to us – we send all our best wishes to you for the future.

Enjoy reading this issue – and if you’d like to contribute to the April magazine, please send your articles and photos to me by 20 March.

Happy Reading!

Helen Murdoch

*Please send magazine or website contributions to me at:
helen@helenmurdochmarketing.com or call me on 01656 773645 or 07721 864493,
or by post to 7 Birch Walk, Porthcawl CF36 5AN*

Cover Image: Fr Wayne with Bishop Mary at the licensing of Fr Wayne as the new vicar in the Margam Ministry Area serving Porthcawl.

Keep up with Ministry Area news and updates:

On the brand new website: www.margam.org.uk

And remember the Facebook pages too:

www.facebook.com/PorthcawlParish

www.facebook.com/TheParishOfKenfigHill

www.facebook.com/MargamAbbey/

www.facebook.com/pyleandkenfigchurches

Margam Calling

www.margamcalling.org.uk and www.facebook.com/MargamCalling

WORSHIP IN THE MINISTRY AREA

ALL SAINTS, Porthcawl

Sunday: Mass at 08.00 & 10.00
Monday: Mass at 12.00
Wednesday: Mass at 10.30

MARGAM ABBEY, Margam

Sunday: Mass at 08.30 & 11.00
Wednesday: Mass at 10.00

ST DAVID'S, Nottage

Sunday: Mass at 09.30 & 17.00
Thursday; Mass at 10.30

ST JAMES, Pyle

Sunday: Mass at 11.00
Wednesday: Mass at 10.00

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, Newton

Sunday: Mass at 08.30 & 11.00
Evensong at 16.00
NOTE: from 29 October Evensong at 16.00
Tuesday & Friday: Mass at 10.30

ST MARY MAGDALENE, Maudlam

Sunday: Mass at 09.30
Wednesday: Mass at 11.00

ST THEODORE'S, Kenfig Hill

Sunday: Mass at 10.00
Family Mass 1st Sunday of the month
Wednesday: Mass at 10.00

*For details of all other services,
visit www.margam.org.uk*

Dear Friends,

Fr Jonathan

March is a very busy month for many of us, with many different opportunities available for all of us to consider God, our Father and Jesus, His Son. It is Lent and this year it is so much earlier and seemingly so close to the time when we have celebrated Jesus' birth.

Many of us may consider Lent as being a depressing time when we feel compelled to give up something or refrain from certain activities, so that we grow in our relationship with God. This period between Ash Wednesday and Easter should be a time to step out of the busyness of the world and spend time dying to ourselves! It's about re-orientating our will to that of Christ's and living that out in the world.

The origin of the word Lent arises from the old English word for spring and would serve to mirror the Jewish Passover. Spanning a period of forty days, it connects with the forty days Moses spent on Mount Sinai and the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness in preparation for the start of his ministry, which would eventually lead him to the Cross. The Church saw the need for mirroring these times in order to remind Christ's followers of the great sacrifice he made for us. When we come to Palm Sunday and proclaim our 'Hosannas' we become celebrants of the coming King! Then of Easter Day, God's great love story finds its fulfilment in the context of an empty tomb.

Lent is a living, and can be an energising, time which should enable us to deepen our spiritual selves, so that we are strengthened to follow Christ's call on our lives.

So as we continue on our Lenten journey, may we take time to reflect on our relationship with the one who gave his life for us, so that we may know the riches of the love of God.

It was *St Gregory of Nazianzus* who once wrote:

‘Yesterday I was crucified with Him. Today I am glorified with Him!

Yesterday I died with Him. Today I am made alive with Him!

Yesterday I was buried with Him. Today I rise again with Him!’

Love and prayers,

Fr. Jon

Dear Friends,

Rev Dr Duncan Walker

I'm always shocked when I see brand new cars being tested by driving them into a wall. Dummies are catapulted through the windscreens as steel crumples. Then scientists crowd around taking measurements. They assure us it is sensible and makes us all safer, but part of me has doubts. I feel much the same about March this year.

Lent is always a challenge.

Of course, it is right to ask us to concentrate on the temptation of our Lord and what this means to us personally. Temptation, or any falling from the wayside is always uncomfortable, especially when we think deeply. The thought that we are often lost or that we swallow the lies of the Devil, are disturbing.

But it is sensible. There is something about the dangers of temptation which take us to a higher level: the realisation that we can only walk away from Satan by walking towards Jesus. Doing this is not so easy. As March leads us through Lent to Palm Sunday and then Good Friday we are shocked by this intense journey.

We are constantly reminded that overwhelming and negative forces increasingly crowded around our Lord. Of course, it was wonderful in the sense that it was all for us, and yet the spectacle of the plotting, lying and violence are toxic. This is especially so because we love Jesus, so much, that what happened to Him feels very intimate to us all.

Personally, I hope every Lent and Holy Week that this might be the year when they love Him and rejoice in His life. And yet as Lent marches on and Holy Week unfolds there is the dreadful realisation that He will be nailed to the cross.

There are several ways to cope. Some sail through it all, oblivious to any meaning. Others simply survey the landscape and get through one prayer at a time. Palm Sunday lifts our spirits, and yet, all too quickly the crowds melt away and Jesus is caught in the savage jaws of His sacrifice.

Desolation accompanies us as we read the long Passion narratives.

Even though we have read them many times before, the words catch in our throats and tears cannot be quenched. By the time we get to Good Friday grief leads us as words bring little comfort. It is in the hushed devotion of vigils, as we gaze upon altars of repose, that the first stirrings of hope lead us as a kindly light.

Easter, and we pray that it comes, will explode with a triumph which lifts us in body, mind and spirit. Throughout most of March we have been overwhelmed by Christ's passion, on Easter day we realise why he sacrificed. The empty tomb is shocking, and also uplifting, it is the rock upon which we can build our lives.

*With Christian Greetings,
Duncan*

WE NEED YOU!

Do you have one spare evening a month
to undertake the role of Minute Secretary
for the Margam Ministry Area Council (MAC) Meetings?

Meetings take place on the first Wednesday of the month, except
for August and December. The venues for the meetings alternate
between the different churches in the Ministry Area.

Think you can help? Please contact
Fr Jonathan Durley, Ministry Area Leader at
JonathanDurley@churchinwales.org.uk

OR

Wendy Xerri, Ministry Area Lay Chair at wendyxerri@gmail.com



WANTED

YOUR HELP

We are looking for people with the following skills, or an interest in being involved in a new type of service in the Ministry Area.

If you or someone you know might be interested please pass on these details. Being a regular worshiper, age or being a professional are not essential.

Band Members - Singer

We are forming a worship group and if you're a musician, instrumentalist or singer who might be interested please get in touch.

Sound Board Operator

If you're interested in sound and have the ability to operate a sound board setup for a service or are interested in learning, please let us know.

Lighting Setup Operator

If you're interested in or have expertise in setting up and operating stage lighting please let us know.

Live Streaming -Filming

Interested or able to live stream services or make small videos for Instagram or Facebook.



Contact James

mmamissiongroup@gmail.com or 07432 483527



Music resources within Margam Ministry Area

Tony Harris (Tel: 01656 784230 Email: tony.harris106@outlook.com)

Throughout my faith journey, the ability to experience and participate in a variety of styles of worship has always been a source of great joy and encouragement to me. For me, participation is the key word. As a choir member I've experienced spine-tingling touching moments during classical, sacred pieces. As an onlooker, I have been deeply touched by virtuoso organ recitals. But, nothing has made worship more personal to me than joining with a group of other musicians & singers to pool our God-given musical gifts and make a joyful noise for the Lord. Worship doesn't have to be musically perfect, most importantly it should be heartfelt, joyful, genuine, and inclusive.

I'm sure there must be a rich seam of musical talents throughout our churches covering a multitude of instruments and people drawn to a variety of musical styles. Churches Together (Cytûn) in Porthcawl recently sent a note to their member churches with the ambition that, between us, we gather a list of musicians/vocalists across Porthcawl.

Ministry Area, who would welcome the opportunity to meet together occasionally as a worshiping group? *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24-25*

The intention is that once the group has had a sufficient period to gel musically then hopefully there will be opportunities to act as a joint resource across the churches, either during occasional services where considered appropriate, or potentially at bespoke events run through Cytûn (e.g. Songs of Praise or similar).

In parallel to that, within the Ministry area we are always looking for and encouraging musicians to come forward to join our own Margam Calling worship team. I'd love to hear from instrumentalists – piano/ keyboard, guitar, strings, woodwind, brass ... harp? ... Anything basically, as well as singers of course. Please do prayerfully consider if you'd be interested and open to developing mission through music in either the Porthcawl area or the Ministry Area more broadly.

Many thanks and God bless, Tony

Thank you for your donations for Ukraine

Mike Hnyda

I wanted to say a huge thank you, once again, for the donation for Ukraine from the All Saints Coffee Mornings. Thank you to everyone for your generosity.

I have acquired 3 boxes of specialist life-saving catheters for Ukraine with this donation.

The catheters were requested by vascular surgeon Major Yuriy Sivash, who will send them to hospitals in the south and east of Ukraine near the front lines.

On one of my trips to Ukraine in 2022, I had the pleasure of meeting Major Yuriy Sivash, who was based at Druzhkivka Military Hospital about 20 miles from the front line and I have kept in contact with him to provide medical equipment.

Major Yuriy and the other surgeons asked if we could supply Fogarty Catheters (balloon catheters) which remove blood clots from veins and arteries during surgery and save the lives and limbs of injured soldiers. Last year, I took a large supply of these Fogarty Catheters which were distributed to military hospitals at Druzhkivka and Pavlohrad and general hospitals at Kramatorsk and Kherson.

These catheters are very expensive and due to the generosity of everyone at All Saints church and your coffee morning events, I was able to buy a box of 30 catheters for £720 plus VAT to send to Yuriy. I am working with an individual, Tony Aggarwal, who sponsors me on all my trips to Ukraine and Tony very generously bought 2 boxes of catheters for me. The company we buy the catheters from also gave me 20 free catheters.

When I informed Major Yuriy, he was delighted and said this was the best news he had had for ages and asked me to thank everyone involved. Here are some of his WhatsApp messages to me:

“On behalf of all vascular surgeons, I thank you for your constant help, for your support in these difficult times. Mike, this is the best news I’ve been getting lately.”

“I shake your courageous hand. Thank you again. Without these

catheters, it is impossible to successfully perform any arterial operation in case of vascular injury.”

“Once again I sincerely thank you and your friends for this important package. These catheters will save more than one life of a Ukrainian soldier! Sincerely Yuriy Sivash”

Without your generosity and support I would not have been able to buy this life-saving equipment and everyone’s generosity will have a direct and major impact in Ukraine and save lives – which is incredible. A huge thank you to everyone at the All Saints coffee events – you have enabled me to buy this brilliant medical equipment for Ukraine.

Thank you and best wishes,
Mike and Karen Hnyda

To see Mike and Yuriy’s photos, please visit www.margam.org.uk/margam-ministry-area-magazine

Mike’s father was from Ukraine and, aged 16, escaped Russian conscription to join the freedom fighters. In memory of his father, Mike has been raising money for Ukraine since the Russian invasion in February 2022. He has himself also made several trips to Ukraine, taking much-needed humanitarian aid.

Ministry Area Magazine

Magazine subscriptions are now due.
Annual subscription for 10 issues is £7.00.
The price for a single issue is 80p.

PLEASE NOTE: all profits go to your own church.

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YOURNAME-Mag24.





News from All Saints

Pam Rossini

February has been a very wet and grey month with over twice our normal rainfall, so attendance at services has generally been a little depleted.

However, a service for the licensing of the Rev Wayne David took place on 13th February and, although again it was wet and cold, a glow was in All Saints church as we prayed for Fr Wayne in his calling as vicar in the Margam Ministry Area. It was a delight to welcome Bishop Mary and the church was full with many of Fr Wayne's friends from Llandaff and Pontypridd alongside those of us from the Porthcawl churches and the wider Ministry Area. An excellent buffet was available for all afterwards, where old friends met up and new acquaintances were made. Fr Wayne was in good spirits, and could relax and enjoy meeting his new family.

The following day was Ash Wednesday and the congregation were each signed with the cross - we would all endeavour to keep a good Lent.

After the service a soup lunch was available for all, and we could meet and get to know Fr Wayne better. Our first impressions have been good. He is very affable, with a good sense of humour and very down-to-earth. Most importantly he gives a good sermon which can be heard even at the back of the church!

Our estimation went up even more when the dishwasher in the kitchen broke down with water everywhere and towels mopping up the worst of it. Without any bother, Fr Wayne disconnected the machine, pulled it out and, with some help, manhandled it outside. In no time at all, Jayne had mopped up the mess and the kitchen was back to working order, minus the offending dishwasher. We were mightily impressed.

One of our dear parishioners died at the end of January and his funeral service was on Monday 19th February. Alf White, and his wife, Jan, had been members of All Saints since they had come from Yorkshire. They were both quiet, gentle people, well loved by their

two daughters. Jan sadly died of cancer, but Alf still continued to come to church and, without fuss or bother, continued in his quiet way. His world was rocked when one of his daughters died suddenly. Alf never complained how bad things were, he just got on with life as best he could. He will be sadly missed by all his family and his church family for the dear man he was.

On a happier note, Anousha, Maria and Etienne's daughter, has been accepted in Bangor University to study medicine. She will be the third generation of their family to become a doctor. Her mother, Maria, is a doctor locally and her grandmother, Hannah, was a doctor and child psychiatrist, so Anousha has big footsteps to fill. We congratulate her and wish her well for a successful future. Hannah, Maria and Etienne must be so proud.

Next month I will be giving you two recipes for the most delicious cakes. There was such a selection at the MU Croeso Tea, all looked equally delicious and tempting. These ladies are doing a fine job and the afternoon teas are very popular. Well done, Judith.

We were sorry to hear that Fr Mark is moving on and wish him a happy time in his new post. He is a fervent and energetic young priest, and I'm sure Maesteg will benefit from his presence. We will miss you.

Finally, a little prayer on my mirror

"Dear Lord, help me not to overlook the giving of thanks to you before I begin asking."

Wishing you all a good Lent, Pam

Easter cards now on sale in the Porthcawl churches. A big thank you to all the card sellers for all that they do to boost church funds. The stalwart amongst them is Jean Flower. Jean has been selling cards in our Porthcawl churches for over 30 years. Jean loves taking photographs which she then makes into greetings cards for all occasions. She pays for all the materials herself and all the proceeds from the sale of the cards go into church funds. Jean is continuing to make and sell cards and they are on prominent display in All Saints and St John's. Why not spare a moment to take a look and help support church funds.

Pay every month!

Adrian Warner

Over the years I have agreed to my bank giving a few pounds monthly to a number of charities: several local churches, Oxfam, MacMillan Nurses, the Salvation Army, Guide Dogs and some that are forgotten. I do wonder how many worthy charities there are, all doing their best to capture regular subscriptions. Worldwide, thousands I suspect, each with professional fund raisers being paid huge salaries out of it. Each is a very needy cause and worthy of support, (many do not have any government support, such as the Lifeboats) but rely purely on charitable gifts and legacies and wills. Free will writing is another ploy to tease out donations.

One trouble is that they come back all too soon with the story that they could do even more good works if only the monthly amount could be raised.

Yesterday, outside Central station in Cardiff a very plausible doctor tried to get me to sign to give to Médecins Sans Frontières. His literature was convincing, and they cannot accept any money from governments to avoid being under biased control. But there is also Greenpeace, the National Trust, Cancer Research, Wikipedia, earthquake appeals, drought disasters, animal rescues, neglected children, Alzheimer victims, the homeless and so on. Just look on the internet! How I wish the world was able to organise itself, utilising the time and skills of everyone including the unemployed and the retired, with training to fill the gaps where there are needs.

How I wish the world would stop causing huge refugee problems by war, greed and racial hatred. There seems to be little harmony; the rich want more, rich nations want more dominance, and the poor get less.

If I give any more then I will be in need of aid myself!

However, I CAN give my thoughts and hopes and time by volunteering and so we can give daily.

There is a saying that the more you give, the more you will receive.



News from St David's

Pat Parry

Although February is the shortest month it has been a busy one in the Porthcawl Churches. On the 13th, All Saints was full for the Licencing of Fr. Wayne David by Bishop Mary. As well as members from the whole Ministry Area, there were representatives from the other Churches in Porthcawl. It was a wonderful service taken by Bishop Mary who also did the address. Fr Graham Holcombe played the organ and Choir stalls were full again with members from several churches. Following this there was a splendid buffet in the hall and a chance to speak to Fr. Wayne.

Father Wayne was at St David's on the following Thursday morning for our Ash Wednesday Service. The first time Wednesday has been on a Thursday! He had brought along half of his celebration cake which we managed to share between all of us with our coffee.

Another anomaly - Pancake Day on a Saturday not on a Tuesday, provided by the ladies in St John's. The pancakes were very much appreciated. It was also the final draw for this season of the church 200 Club. Their committee are keen to get new members to join.

Finally, St David, our Patron Saint. We usually have a celebration supper for this occasion but because it would mean going out in the dark and wet, we thought we could celebrate at our Thursday service, the morning before St David's Day with Welsh music followed by bara brith and Welsh cakes.

I was surprised when Fr. Mark read out a letter from the Bishop saying that he would be moving to Maesteg in the Llynfi Ministry Area on a temporary basis on February 17th before being given another parish. I didn't expect it to be so soon. We didn't get a chance to say goodbye, but we all signed a card to wish him well. Personally, I would like to thank him for his time with us and for holding the fort during the interregnum.

Newton Nottage Mothers' Union

Judith Shawe

Hello from an extremely wet and windy Porthcawl – not that I'm out and about in this weather!

Welcome to Fr Wayne as he begins his ministry with us here. I look forward to seeing you at our MU meetings on the first Tuesday of the month, and at the Thursday Group whenever! Should you wish to join the happy throng and become a member, we'd be delighted!

Our speaker at the last Tuesday meeting was Sandra Owen who spoke to us about the work of the Sandville Self Help Foundation. All of us know that the Sandville exists, but not many knew what happens there. Thank you Sandra, we look forward to visiting you soon.

Mothering Sunday will upon us soon - March 10th to be exact. We'll be having a cake sale in All Saints' Hall after the 10am Mass, so come prepared to spend! Kelly and Maria did a great job last year. St David's and St John the Baptist will also celebrate the day – no details as yet.

Copies of the MU Lent Course are available on the noticeboards – please help yourselves. If they've gone, I can print more.

The next Croeso Tea is on Saturday 16th March, everyone is welcome!

The Thursday Group is organising Easter activities, including a children's service followed by an egg hunt – details will be on the weekly sheet.

Starting with the April meeting, the Tuesday Group meeting will be held in the church rather than the hall. This is to accommodate an exciting new initiative which starts in April – no, I'm not telling you – ask Maggie or Jane!

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, 6th April at 2pm in All Saints' – wear your Easter bonnet, and enjoy fellowship and a good chat . (Gentlemen, do your best with the 'Easter Bonnet' situation, but please make an effort!!) There'll be afternoon tea (for a small charge). Visitors are welcome. Further information on the weekly sheet.

Fr Wayne will be our speaker at the May meeting – Tuesday May 7th at 2pm in All Saints church.

I leave you with the words of St
Richard of Chichester :

*Thanks be to you,
our Lord Jesus Christ
For all the benefits which you
have given us',
For all the pains and insults
which you have borne for us.
Most merciful Redeemer, Friend
and Brother
May we know you more clearly,
Love you more dearly,
Follow you more nearly,
Day by day.
Amen*

Judith x

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Celebrating 200 years of the RNLI

Come and listen to the bells at St John's church in Newton on Sunday 3rd March at 3pm. A team of volunteers will be ringing "a Quarter Peel" in celebration of 200 years of the RNLI.

The public are invited to listen "on the Green" for the anticipated 45 minutes duration. Donations can be made to the RNLI Porthcawl online site.



200 Club

A gentle reminder that subs for the 2024-2025 year are now due. New members are very welcome – WE NEED YOU!

1st June 2024 – All Saints 200 Club

July 2024 (date to be confirmed) – St John's Summer Fayre

3rd August 2024 – St John's 200 Club

Date to be confirmed – St John's Harvest Lunch

16th November 2024 – St David's 200 Club

8th December 2024 – St John's Christmas Lunch

8th February 2025 – St John's 200 Club

..... and possibly more!

We are looking for soft toys for the Summer Fayre and would be grateful for donations, large and small, single or buy the bagful! Need help getting them to us, please ring Linda on 01656 772014.

A little light relief

These notices on a church bulletin board show that it's always wise to proof-read carefully.....

This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the church. Bring a blanket and be prepared to sin.

Potluck supper on Sunday at 5pm
- prayer and medication to follow.

News from St John's

Diane Jackson



This month just gone, has seen the long awaited arrival of our new vicar, Fr Wayne. It is undoubtedly a very busy time for him. As well as settling into his new home, he has been taking services in all our three churches (and attending the 200 Club coffee morning) and, of course, meeting his new congregations. Not an easy task! I am sure that, as in the other two churches, we have done our best to welcome him and I hope he does feel welcome. He can be assured that our prayers are with him, for his ministry and his personal well being during his life here with us in Porthcawl.

We were all very sad to hear that Fr Mark had departed very suddenly to the Llynfi Valley, without us having a chance to say Good-bye and to thank him for his ministry during his time with us. Through this page, which hopefully he will read, I am sure I speak for everyone in wishing him and his family every happiness and good wishes for whatever the future holds for them and to thank him for all the work he has done for our ministry area during his time with us.



As we have now entered Lent, a period for quiet reflection and for those with strong will power, it is a time for abstinence as we prepare for the crucifixion and the glory of Easter Day.



As always, the Flower Guild will be decorating the Church for Easter with lilies. If you wish to contribute towards the cost of the lilies, either in memory of a loved one, or just because you want to see the church filled with beautiful flowers, there is a suggested price of £5 per lily. All donations will be gratefully received.

Envelopes will be in church for your donation which you can give to Denver or one of the members of the Flower Guild.



News from Margam Abbey

Bev Gulley

As February draws to a close, and we move into March and Easter, we give, in advance, a big *'Thank You'* to our congregation for attending what will be a busy period, and our volunteers, and retired priests, whose efforts enable the Abbey to stay open to visitors, facilitation of events and services, Lenten lunches, plus behind-the-scenes maintenance.

March:

March sees talks from Bev Gulley, Pam Scourfield, Professor Cath Bright and May Baxter-Thornton, part of the *'Festival of Celebrating Women'*, concluding with a concert by Mthr Ruth Greenaway-Robbins (Soprano), on the 16th March at 7pm, based on the work of Morfydd Owen, an influential 20th century female composer.

The March *'Super Saturdays'* come thick and fast (having commenced with the Dynamic Harps ensemble). On the 2nd March, the Cardiff Chamber Choir perform a varied programme, cost £8, payable on the door (to include refreshments), and on the 9th at 5pm, the Swansea Bach Choir (cost £15). What an amazing month of events, including St David's Day, Mother's Day, and Holy Week. See our Facebook page *'Margam Abbey Church'* for a full itinerary.

Tours and significant events - We will be undertaking tours for the Friends of Oystermouth Castle, Oddfellows group, an educational visit from Ysgol Cwm Brombil, assisting with a Head Teachers Leadership Conference, and the Inauguration of the new High Sheriff of West Glamorgan, Melanie James.

April:

- The Abbey will open weekly Tuesday to Sunday (Monday opening in half terms and school holidays).
- The CADW Stones Museum will reopen (Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays).
- Resumption of fortnightly tour/talk Saturdays at 11am.

We look forward to:

- The Service for the Knights Templar.



- Hosting a field trip from the history undergraduates at Swansea University.

- **Life Events:**

- ◇ Good Luck and every blessing to Huw and Jo for their wedding.
- ◇ To Jools on his christening.
- ◇ Diamond (60th) Wedding Anniversaries: Congratulations to Doug and Hilary Snook, and to Averil and Bob Williams, who are having a Blessing at the Abbey, to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

Volunteers – We are always looking for volunteers for the Gift Shop, as general welcomers to the Abbey, or anyone who would like to learn about its history. If you are interested, contact Bev Gulley on 07530 421220 or 01656 670811.

Our Children’s Corner is looking super, with bean bags, a reading area, and activities, so welcoming for younger visitors and little ones at services. Please bring your little ones along anytime, whilst you enjoy a cuppa with us. Thank you Liz for all of your work on Children’s Corner.

Finally, we bid a sad farewell to Fr Mark and Mthr Ruth Greenaway-Robbins, who will be leaving in the first week of April.

We are grateful for their amazing contribution to the life of the Abbey, over the last 19 months and wish them well for the future; Mark as a Psychotherapist for 6 months and Ruth as a Curate in the Cardiff area (location tbc).



Welcome and congratulations to Mark Preece who Bishop Mary licensed as Archdeacon of Margam in St Theodore's Church in Port Talbot on Sunday 11th February.



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News from St Theodore's

Margaret Griffiths

A warm welcome to Fr Wayne David who has begun his ministry in Porthcawl and across the Margam Ministry Area. Four of us from St Theodore's choir helped to augment the All Saints choir at Fr Wayne's licensing service. It was a full house in All Saints and extremely full in the Church Hall afterwards for refreshments.

Work continues on re-assembling St Theodore's organ. To the untrained eye, the job looks like a very large, complicated jigsaw puzzle! Since the internal workings of the organ had not been exposed since it was installed in 1909, more work was uncovered which has delayed things. This means we have to postpone the concert, featuring Huw Tregelles Williams, due to take place on April 19th. The concert will now take place in the autumn.

Like me, many of you will be fed up with all this rain we've had. It got me thinking that in some parts of the world, the issue is not enough rain, with the consequent drought and hardship for people. So, this year we are donating the proceeds of our Lent Lunches to Christian Aid who support projects to relieve poverty all around the world. Our lunches take place each Wednesday throughout Lent at 12 noon.

Did you spot my deliberate mistake in last month's magazine? I mentioned the Women's World Day of Prayer being hosted this year by St Theodore's for our area. As was pointed out to me **all** are welcome to the service on 1st March at 2pm as it now called the World Day of Prayer – it's still organized by women though! The service will be especially poignant this year, as the featured country is Palestine.

As I write this article, I am looking forward to Josef Gray's concert in St Theodore's on Saturday 24th March at 7pm. Josef will be joined by Anne Wilkins, soprano from Bridgend and two young singers from LARS (Loud Applause Rising Stars). There are tickets still available online and at Theo's Charity shop, Kenfig Hill.

News of another concert – I am a member of Sounds Familiar mixed choir based in Porthcawl. We are performing a concert on the 9th March in North Cornelly Methodist church at 7pm. The concert is part of the celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of the church.

Good Neighbours

John Berry BEM

A number of comments about my having been burgled some years ago (see last month's magazine) prompted me to write more fully about what happened, which hopefully shows an unfortunate incident in a different light. The following is factual as pieced together from conversations with neighbours and the police plus my personal involvement.

We have private parking behind the houses where I live, so I parked there on my return from Germany and let myself into the house through the rear door; as I did so I sensed that something was not right. I saw immediately that a number of items were out of place. Upstairs I saw a pair of my shorts and other clothing on the floor in a corner of my bedroom – I never leave clothes on the floor. In a pocket of the shorts was an invoice from a locksmith in Barry for replacing the locks on the front door. Then my front door bell rang and – it was the police - at that point I discovered I could not open the front door! The police came round to the back door and the story begins from there.

My 'visitor' had telephoned the locksmith at midnight; he was convinced my visitor was John Berry! He let the guy into the house and changed the locks on the front door. The following morning my visitor took himself to the local Antique Shop where he told the proprietor he was John Berry, that he had inherited the house from his grandfather and preferred more modern furniture so, would he clear the house!! Fortunately the dealer didn't do house clearances and was interested only in antiques. I have only a few items that could qualify as antiques, he took them away.

That evening, when having their tea, the dealer's wife said she was uncomfortable about the visit to my house and had her husband noticed the birthday cards. She thought it strange there should be birthday cards on display if the owner had recently died.

They telephoned a neighbour further along my street and asked her had anybody in the street had a birthday recently. The prompt response was, "Yes, John Berry was sixty and had open house. Why

are you asking?" They started explaining what had happened and my neighbour stopped them saying, "It's all wrong, call the police." They met with the police outside the front door, but there was not any answer. I loved the way the police said, "So, naturally, we went to the YMCA." There they were told I was on holiday in Germany, but another neighbour had a set of keys. Off they went to the other neighbour who, bless him, refused to give the keys to the police, but insisted on opening the house for them himself! He did a bit of muttering about me changing locks and not telling him, so they used the back door, but a search of the house proved it was empty; the police were then allowed to have the keys, but only in exchange for a signed receipt! (My key holding neighbour was actually a Fireman and worked closely with the police). The police returned to the house later that evening; a lot of lights were on, but they went to the back and let themselves in; they found my 'visitor' on my bed, fully clothed. He was taken to the police station for questioning, where he convinced them he knew me and had my permission to stay. While they were questioning him my immediate neighbours were concerned at all the lights burning in the house, knowing I was not in the country, so, they rang the police, asking them to investigate. The police had carted the guy off to the police station and left all the lights on! My neighbours knew I had not returned as my car was not there, also I never burned so many lights at the same time.

The young Irishman must have been born on the Blarney Stone, he certainly convinced the police. He didn't fare so well trying to book into the Seabank Hotel where he opened a (my!) leather travel folder on the Receptionists' desk; on the top was a photograph of myself with the then Mayor and the owner of the hotel at the recent Civic Dinner Dance. When the owner saw this and pointed out it was himself in the picture he was offered the photograph as a gift from his would-be guest saying it had been faxed to him that day – in colour and framed! (The owner was in fact a good personal friend). My few antiques were returned, I lost a few inconsequential items, the locksmith didn't get paid, the police were hoodwinked and my visitor received a short custodial sentence. Good neighbours proved themselves.

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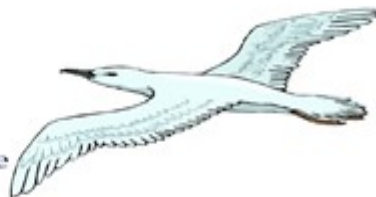
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Liberty lib'ar-ti, n.

freedom from constraint, captivity, slavery, or tyranny: freedom to do as one pleases:

the unrestrained enjoyment of natural rights: power of free choice : privileges:

permission free range: leisure: disposal: the bounds within which certain privileges are enjoyed .

"Chambers"

Jamaican Memories

John Berry BEM

Fr. Wayne's encouraging introduction of himself reminded me of my Boys Choir of forty voices in Jamaica. They came from around the rural sugar-producing community in which I worked. A group of five boys walked five miles to choir practice every Friday after school; most weeks I was able to take them home to Milk River.

The drive was on a good metallic road, but without street lighting and my VW Beetle with its 6volt battery didn't have very good headlights! One evening taking them home, the boys were chattering among themselves, sometimes involving me. The Head Choirboy was in the front passenger seat; he had come along for the ride and was somebody to talk to on the return journey. We almost simultaneously saw a single light on the road ahead, but too far away to know much about it. As we came closer the light seemed to veer from one side of the road to the other, so I slowed down to 5mph; the man on a bicycle suddenly came from the other side of the road across the front of the car. I braked and felt a slight impact; we got out to see what had happened, but couldn't see the cyclist or his bike! We ascertained they were not underneath the car so I told the boys to stand to one side while I turned the car around for the headlights to aid our search. Then one of the boys called out as the man crawled out of the (dry) ditch beside the road. The boys helped him out and pulled up his bicycle, which had a bent wheel and was scratched.

The man was too drunk to talk properly, but drunk enough that the fall hadn't hurt him! The local boys were encouraging me to leave him and just carry on – easy enough for them. They all knew him and told me he had been in the magistrates court that week for being drunk in charge of a donkey! I agreed to leave him with his bicycle and speak to people in Milk River, which we did and they convinced me to leave it with them.

I reported the incident to the local police who were not very bothered and couldn't understand why I was reporting it; I paid to have the wheel straightened and didn't hear anything further about it.

Another memory of Milk River was standing on a riverbank in the Jamaican sunshine watching the rain falling on the other side a few feet away!

The Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross have formed part of Christian devotion at Passiontide for many centuries because they enable us to engage actively with the path of suffering walked by Jesus.

They originated when early Christians visited Jerusalem and wanted to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus, tracing the path from Pilate's house to Calvary. They would pause for prayer and devotion at various points.

Eventually, those pilgrims brought the practice back to their home countries and ever since then Christians of differing traditions have used this form of devotion.

The Stations of the Cross are often represented by images or carvings and are usually mounted on the inside walls of a church or chapel but may also be erected in such places as cemeteries, corridors of hospitals and religious houses, or on mountainsides.

Prayerful meditation through the Stations of the Cross is especially common during Lent and on Fridays throughout the year, in commemoration of Christ's Crucifixion on Good Friday. The devotion may be done individually or in a group and is particularly important in Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Methodist traditions.

Each station is commonly visited with some variation of the prayer "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world" and with a reading from a relevant passage of scripture.

The Stations are used as a mini-pilgrimage, imitating the Via Dolorosa, or Way of Sorrows, in Jerusalem to Mount Calvary. Tradition holds that the pilgrimage was initially followed by the Blessed Mother; though, the earliest mention of a Via Sacra, or Holy Way, was in the mid 15th Century, and permission was granted to erect Stations inside all churches in 1731 by Pope Clement XII. Both St. Francis of Assisi and St. Alphonso Maria de' Liguori wrote devotional guides for the Stations of the Cross that remain popular today.

The series of stations is as follows:

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus takes up his Cross
3. Jesus falls the first time
4. Jesus meets his Mother
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the Cross
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls for the second time
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
9. Jesus falls for the third time
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments (sometimes called the "Division of Robes")
11. Jesus is nailed to the Cross
12. Jesus dies on the Cross
13. Jesus is taken down from the Cross
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb





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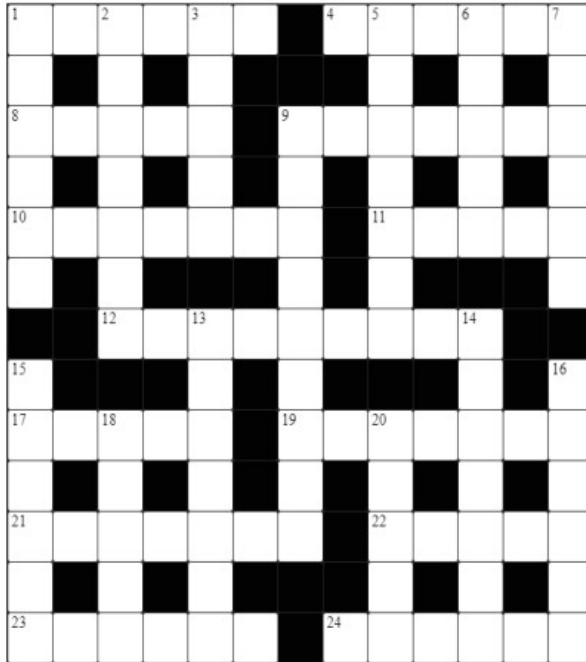
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Quick Crossword



Across

- 1 Means of approach (6)
- 4 Inequitable (6)
- 8 Stanza (5)
- 9 Bike rider (7)
- 10 Austere (7)
- 11 Tool for trimming lawn boundaries (5)
- 12 Sparkling Italian wine (9)
- 17 Demise (5)
- 19 Beneficiary of a will (7)
- 21 One of the Marx brothers (7)
- 22 Trust (5)
- 23 Large seas (6)
- 24 Bray (6)

Down

- 1 Counsel, recommend (6)
- 2 Cut short (7)
- 3 Fragrance (5)
- 5 US coins (7)
- 6 Growing old (5)
- 7 Go to bed (6)
- 9 Female singing voice (9)
- 13 Native American-style haircut (7)
- 14 The largest living bird (7)
- 15 Musical piece or movement in slow time (6)
- 16 Male relative (6)
- 18 Unaccompanied (5)
- 20 Blunder (5)

Quick Crossword Answer (page31)



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Pause for Thought

The River

Way up in the mountain
Just a little trickle,
Shimmering and glimmering under the sun
Never time for resting till the day is done.

Home of silvery fishes darting about
Men come with rods, hoping for trout.
Growing longer and stronger on your way
Letting us paddle on a bright summer's day.

Onward going miles over yonder
Way past the valleys and towns you are free
Lovely old river
Till you meet the sea.

*Written by Margaret Gates,
as Margaret Lench at school when she was 9.
She remembers it with precise clarity seventy years later!
Submitted by Adrian Warner*



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Saint James, Pyle		

Saint Theodore, Kenfig Hill	Mrs Margaret Phillips	07748 678827
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A Snapshot of the Ministry Area





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