

Easter Joy!

The scriptural accounts of that first Easter Sunday morning present us with a very mixed bag of emotions. Fear, anger, surprise, shock, confusion, joy are felt by the women and disciples who discover the empty tomb.

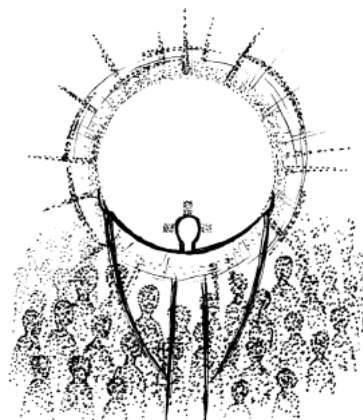
Although Easter is a celebration of resurrection joy, none of us are joyful all of the time. Each day stimulates a variety of emotions which are part of our differing lives. There are those who suggest that for the Christian joy must be uppermost in our hearts. Yet we know that at times this can never be possible.

Our lives are characterised and touched by the same emotions which gripped the disciples and the women as they come to realise that Jesus has risen from the dead.

The miracle of the Easter has nothing to do with constant happiness. Rather it is the gentle, quiet, assurance that although we are affected by so many things, yet in our innermost being there is that inner strength which comes from the knowledge that

God has the power to breathe new life and hope into the most distressing of situations.

When we reflect on the personal tragedies which affect so many people, and even ourselves, for the Christian there is the knowledge that the risen Christ can bring hope, strength, and confidence.



St Paul said that nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Jesus' own resurrection and the effect it has had on millions of Christians down the

centuries, is proof enough that death has given way to life.

The tree of defeat has become at the tree of glory and where life was lost their life has been restored.

With my best wishes in this Easter season.

Chronicle

Giving and Christian Stewardship

Those of us who have struggled with our weight know well that it is not simply a case of going on a diet for the odd week or two, but of re-educating ourselves in our eating habits that will really transform our situation and bring about a permanent improvement in our health.

A similar programme of re-education needs to be undertaken with regard to Christian Stewardship. Too many still regard it as a means of extricating a parish from its financial problems, as a "crash diet" for a week or two, and not as a way of life in response to God, a steady programme of growth in Christian discipleship.

Christian Stewardship is a response to God

The Christian understanding of Stewardship is derived from the revelation of God to which the Bible bears witness. God is the Creator of all things and the Lord of all history; in Jesus Christ he acted to save the world; through the Holy Spirit, he is at work in the Church and in the world to fulfil his purposes.

God the Creator

Because God is the Creator and has given men and women a special place in his purposes on earth and dominion over all other living creatures, men and women are called:

- to worship God and to give thanks for his goodness

- to use the natural world and other living creatures in the service of God and all people and not for self-interest and exploitation.

God the Saviour

Because God has made himself known most fully in Jesus Christ, and has acted uniquely and decisively in him to save the world and to give forgiveness, grace and eternal life, men and women are called:

- to put their trust in God and live in companionship with Jesus Christ

- to follow Jesus in showing love to others; to use their minds, bodies and possessions to glorify God, and to give practical help to people in need.

God the Holy Spirit

Because God has formed the Church, entrusted the Church with the Gospel and given gifts to men and women through the Holy Spirit:

- the Church is called to make Jesus Christ and the Gospel known.

- individual Christians are called to use their gifts in his service.

A response in active giving

So the Christian seeks to give, because God has given to us. "We love, because he first loved us".

To describe our response and love we use the words "Christian Stewardship". We do so because the word "steward" is used in the Bible to express the concept of responsibility for the use of material possessions and spiritual powers.

Christian Stewardship may therefore be defined as the response which we the Church, collectively and individually, are called to make to God for all that he has given us and done for us, above all in Jesus Christ.

In this response:

- we worship God with praise and thankfulness;
- we look on the universe as God's creation;
- we treat the earth and its resources as God's provision for the needs of all humankind;
- we regard our lives, our powers, our possessions, as gifts from God to be enjoyed and used in his service;
- we seek to share in Christ's mission to the world.

Our response in Christian Stewardship is therefore active:

- as we respond to God in praise and thanksgiving
- as we look on the universe as God's creation
- as we treat the earth and its resources as God's

provision for the needs of all humankind

- as we seek to consecrate our personal wealth to God
- as we regard our lives, our powers and possessions, our money and material wealth as gifts from God to be enjoyed and used in his service
- as we seek to be "Stewards of the Gospel" and to share in Christ's mission to the world

A Christian Stewardship Mission is an effective method of teaching the principles of Christian Stewardship and of encouraging Church people to face up to the challenge which is involved.

It means giving time to God

- In public and private prayer, acknowledging his claims on us
- Giving him the opportunity to speak to us

- Giving him service (that is, the service to our neighbour) a proper place in our daily lives

It means making an honest assessment of our abilities and the gifts God has given us and then putting them to work!

- For each Christian is a member of the Body of Christ and as such has a particular function to perform - just as the ear or hand in a human body.

It means regarding our money and our material possessions as a trust from God, to be used for his work in the world.

Unless our money gift has cost us something, it is not really a thanksgiving but more like a tip. And one of the tensions in our discipleship lies in whether we live our life and give to God the odd crumb, or whether we give to God first, and then manage the rest. If Christian disciples do the first, they will never be satisfied: If they do the second, they will always have enough.

CHRISTIAN GIVING CHALLENGE 2005

Next month, our two congregations will be asked to respond to the challenge to review what we contribute to the life of our churches by way of our time, our talents and our money.

As part of our preparation for this, we shall be having congregational gatherings both at St James and St Francis churches when we shall eat together and listen to visiting speakers. Please make every effort to share in these occasions.

Friday 29th April at 7.30 pm at St Francis & St James

Speakers:

**St James - The Revd Bruce Gillingham,
Rector of St Clements**

**St Francis - Canon Keith Lamdin,
Director of Training and Evangelism**

PULL UP A CHAIR

He is close to all who call on him sincerely – Psalm 145.18

The old man was very ill, so his family called the minister. When the minister came in, he noticed an empty chair by the bed and said, "I see I'm not your first visitor today."

The old man smiled and said, "Let me tell you about that chair. Years ago I found it difficult to pray. A friend told me not to worry about it. He said 'Just sit down, put a chair in front of you, and begin to talk to him as you would to a friend.'" Then the old man added with a smile: "I've been doing that for the last 30 years, and it's been wonderful; it really works."

Soon the old man died. His daughter called for the minister. She said, "When I left him this morning, he was sleeping comfortably. But when I came back, he was gone. Then I noticed something: his hand was on the empty chair beside the bed. Isn't that strange?"

"No," the minister replied. "The One in the chair just took him by the hand and they left together."

If it helps you, pull up a chair today and spend some time talking to the Lord. Come to him confidently, for He couldn't love you more than He does at this moment – and that will never change. The Bible says: "Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy and we will find grace to help us when we need it." (Hebrews 4:16).



Rosanne interviews Joan Coleman

A few weeks ago I read an interview with the naturalist Bill Oddie, in which he said that in his opinion country-folk really don't know much about the wildlife around them and only consider the countryside as a place in which to live and work. Well I think generalisations are rather dangerous, but a statement like that is just not true. Frank, my husband, and I grew up in the Oxfordshire countryside and we have quite a wide knowledge of wildlife but even more so Joan, a farmer's daughter, is a dedicated environmentalist and knocks Bill Oddie's theory firmly on the head. You only have to see the provision she makes in her garden for wild birds and talk to her about trees and wild flowers to know how she feels.

She was born and grew up in Staffordshire on a farm with the most delightful name- 'Poppinjay Farm'. Her grandfather farmed in the area and most of her family are still involved in agriculture in various parts of Staffordshire. With only one man to assist her parents with their dairy herd, Joan, her four sisters and one brother were expected to help bring the cows in for milking before going off to school. In the evenings, the second milking of the day, the children were again there to give a hand. Not that Joan minded, she loved the fields and hedgerows with all their

natural diversity and cites sitting on top of a load of sweet smelling hay as one of her happiest childhood memories.

A bright child, she loved to read. She joined the local Brownies but (she can't remember why) never joined the Guides. Her mother was an active local politician and was elected to the Uttoxeter Urban District Council. In 1975 when Joan married Graham it came as a surprise to see her wedding photograph in the local newspaper accompanied by the headline 'Mayor's daughter marries'. Though high flyers themselves their policy was never to 'push' them, always to encourage. Thus it was that Joan sailed through her 11+ exam and went on to study at the prestigious Alleynes Grammar School in Uttoxeter. She enjoyed her school days doing well in all sciences. Going on to read biology and geology at Leicester University, she followed that with a post-graduate teacher-training year at Keele University. So what brought her to Oxford?

We have Peers School to thank. Having qualified in 1971, Joan found herself looking for her first post in the middle of a postal strike. She had to answer an advertisement, to teach science at Peers, by telephone. She got the job and found a bed-sit in East Oxford.

Though never a Girl Guide she joined the Rangers later in her teens and so decided to make friends in our area by joining the Angelmead Ranger Guide/ Scout unit. Not only did she find friendship there but a husband too. Graham was a scout leader. Before long Joan and he were 'walking out together'. In 1975 they married in the country church where she had been taken as a child and where she had taught Sunday school. Her father was a churchwarden there and a local parish councillor, a position he only relinquished on reaching his 90th birthday.

Once married and settled in Cowley, Joan and Graham began attending St Luke's and like so many of my interviewees, found a warm welcome there. She was particularly grateful for the support she received when she lost her first baby. Happily though, son Tom was born in 1979 and daughter Polly arrived three years later. I have fond memories of Tom and Polly as the 'Babes' in one of our famous (or should I say infamous?) pantomimes – "'Robin Hood'. Both young people are busy carving out careers for themselves in London and Joan and Graham have what she calls 'an empty nest'.

Once the children were born St Luke's mother and toddler group provided friendship. Joan mentioned how active

and supportive Father Ross was at that time. Then there was playgroup at Garden House in Hollow Way, where she first met Gwen. Having left teaching, for a while jobs in the office at Grove Cranes and also a spot of waiting at table in the Randolph Hotel provided some extra funding. However she was persuaded back into education by the head of the science department at Peers. Between 1990 and 1998 she held the post of head of science at Milham Ford School, coupled with responsibility for both health and social care and careers. As with so many teachers she buckled under the pressure of so much administration and decided to leave it all behind.

She secured a post in the John Radcliffe Hospital library. The establishment is the Health Care library of Oxford University, where documents from all over the southeast area of England are co-ordinated. Her work involves linking with the British Medical Association library in London as well as other eminent places such as the Radcliffe Infirmary. Joan finds the work fascinating and she loves it.

With an allotment where she grows most of her own vegetables, a husband with a host of interests and hobbies, a full time job and her children to keep in touch with, it's a busy life. Yet she manages to return to her roots in Staffordshire from time to time. Her father has a house quite near to Poppinjay Farm and she visits him and the village where she was born whenever she can.

How would you describe yourself as a child?

An outdoor tomboy – I have a picture of my brother and I by the stream with a jam jar catching bullheads or climbing trees.

Have you any memorable moments of your childhood?

The smell of meadowsweet along the brook reminds me of haymaking. But I also remember the smell of the day I got sprayed with oil. I was sitting on the hay bales on the front loader of the tractor holding three puppies. Suddenly the hydraulics burst and sprayed the puppies and me with oil.

Has God been part of your life since childhood?

As a biologist I have a faith in an overall spirit of nature that must be God. Seeing the seasons change and the beauty of nature I feel part of the great creation.

What do you consider the best part of modern life?

Graham and I enjoy travelling – getting on a plane and experiencing the Great Lakes, the Everglades and so on at first hand – that's wonderful.

What disappoints or makes you angry about life in the 21st century?

War upsets me. Men causing untold grief around the world.

If you could effect a change, however big or small, what would it be?

I'd like to move my allotment next to my house!

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

Mainly on my allotment and in my garden. I've got a new shed and I want to build some new benches for it. I enjoy a good read – I read all the time even on the bus to work. I belong to a weekly fitness league class, oh and I do tapestry as well.

Do you have a hero or heroine past or present?

Rachel Carson who wrote 'Silent Spring'. I read it at university and it was at that point that I really began to understand the inter-relationships within the natural world.

Do you have any plans or ambitions for the future?

I hope to retire at 60 and continue to enjoy life. I'd also like to live in a property with a really big garden.



Ministry of Healing

A monthly service on the first Tuesday of the month, alternating between St James and Sr Francis Churches



Healing Services:

Tuesday 5th April 7.30 pm

St James Church

Tuesday 3rd May 7.30 pm

St Francis Church

The ministry of healing is available at St James' Church every Sunday during the 10 o'clock service.

Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving to mark the Diamond Jubilee of John Goodwin's Ordination to the Ministry of Christ's Church



Trinity Sunday - Sunday 22nd May
11.00 am in St James Church
(note later starting time)

Celebrant: The Right Revd Henry Richmond
formerly Bishop of Repton
Preacher: Canon Richard Orchard,
Canon Residentiary
of Derby Cathedral

Celebration Lunch to follow!!!!
All welcome!!

ANNUAL MEETINGS



ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

THURSDAY

21st April 7.30 pm in St James Church

Elect your Churchwardens, Deanery Synod Members and Church Council members; look at our finances; and hear where we are going as a parish

ST JAMES CHURCH ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday 24th April 11.30 am *following the Sunday Service*

Be involved in electing your church representatives, our review of the last year, and our thinking about the next year

ST FRANCIS CHURCH ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Thursday 12th May 7.30 pm *following the Eucharist to be confirmed*

FROM THE MARCH PCC.....

The PCC discussed the formation of a group to decide on our mission giving for the year. Members of the congregation will be invited through the Links to put forward suggestions. Reports were received from the Treasurer on Finance, from a Deanery Synod representative about their latest meeting which had centred on Fairtrade and from St. James' and St. Francis' Church Committees.

The Parish Accounts had been audited. They were formally approved and adopted. Arrangements for the Christian Giving Initiative are all in hand.

The new Church Centre is now progressing despite a six- week delay. It will be opened by Bishop Richard on St. James' Day.*

Arrangements for the installation of a new heating system at St. Francis' Church were discussed in some detail.

M.C.

* *there are more delays*



ST MARK - APRIL 25TH

Mark, the son of Mary, whose home in Jerusalem became a place of rest for Jesus and his 12 apostles, is considered the traditional author of the second gospel. He is also usually identified as the young man, described in Mark 14.51, who followed Christ after his arrest and then escaped capture by leaving his clothes behind.

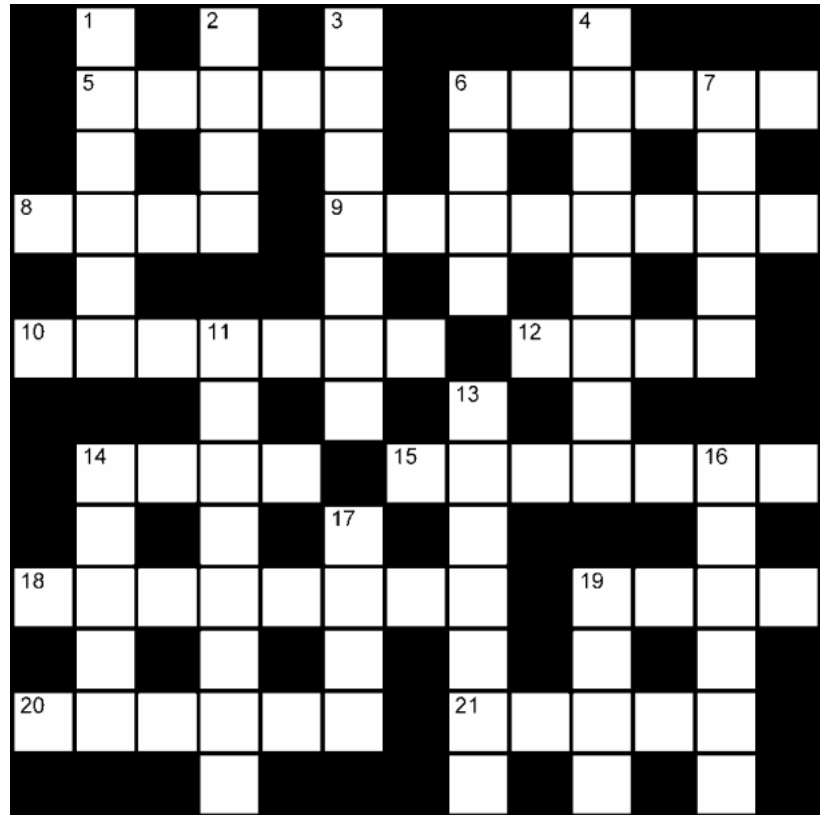
Papias, in 130, said that in later years Mark became Peter's interpreter. If so, then this close friendship would have been how Mark gathered so much information about Jesus' life. Peter referred to him affectionately as his 'son'.

Mark was also a companion to Paul on his journeys. When Paul was held captive at Rome, Mark was with him, helping him.

Mark's Gospel, most likely written in Italy, perhaps in Rome, is the earliest account we have of the life of Jesus.

Early in the 9th century Mark's body was brought to Venice, whose patron he became, and there it has remained to this day. The symbol of Mark as an evangelist, the lion, is much in evidence at Venice.

April's Crossword



Clues Across

- 5 An exclusive group of people (5)
- 6 Densely wooded area (6)
- 8 Afforded (4)
- 9 The worship of idols (8)
- 10 Father of James and John (7)
- 12 Eat (4)
- 14 Domain (4)
- 15 Rein (7)
- 18 Outpouring (8)
- 19 Used to be (4)
- 20 Mediterranean evergreen shrub (6)
- 21 Forepart (5)

Clues Down

- 1 Elders of Israel, part of the Sanhedrin (6)
- 2 This place (4)
- 3 Paul received 39 of these (7)
- 4 Bringing into existence (8)
- 6 Stream (4)
- 7 Attend to (5)
- 11 Forever (8)
- 13 Enlarge (7)
- 14 Intense suffering (5)
- 16 Guarantee (6)
- 17 A particular point in time (4)
- 19 Small forest (4)

March's Solution



Apologies to all Crossword solvers. Last month's grid did not correspond to the clues. This was due to a computer (more likely a human) error on the part of the Editor!!!

Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>exc 2nd Sunday</i>) All Age Eucharist (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)
1.00 pm	Cowley Asian Christian Fellowship

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am	Parish Eucharist <i>[Family Eucharist - 2nd Sunday of the month]</i>
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Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Group – <i>St Francis</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Service – <i>St Francis</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	12.00 pm	St James Prayer Group – <i>13 Clive Road</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	9.30 am	Eucharist - followed by coffee – <i>St James</i>
	11.00 am	St Francis Prayer Group
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist - <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Friday Club – <i>alt Fridays at St Francis</i>
Saturday	9.15 am	Morning Prayer & Breakfast - <i>St Francis</i>

Arrangements for Baptisms, Banns of Marriage, Weddings, Confessions and Home Communion can be made with any of the clergy.

Day Off

Stephen has Friday off, Except in emergency, please try and respect this day of rest. Lorne can be contacted in the evenings and at weekends.

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