

Cowley Fathers

Just to the right of the choir stalls in St James Church is an old black and white photograph of Richard Meux Benson – better known as Father Benson. He was born into a wealthy London family in 1824. Even as a child he wanted to serve God and be strong for the Lord. One night Richard's governess found him sleeping on the floor. When she picked him up to put him back into bed, he complained. "How will I learn to endure hardness, if I am not allowed to sleep on the floor?"

He went up to Christ Church, Oxford where he took a double second in Greats and Mathematics, obtained the Kennicott Hebrew Scholarship and was appointed a "Senior Student" (which other colleges call a "Fellow").

Benson was ordained curate in 1847, and three years later Christ Church, Oxford gave him the country living of Cowley. In those days our parish extended to Magdalen Bridge. For a long time no vicar had lived in Cowley. But Benson, who embodied devotion, reserve, austerity and self-effacement, lived here largely unnoticed for nine years, engaged in prayer and working with the poor. But Benson felt called to missionary work and set his heart on India.

His plans were made and he was on the point of leaving England when the Bishop of Oxford intervened. Bishop Wilberforce begged Benson to remain and deal with the large new suburb growing up on the Cowley side of Magdalen

Bridge. Benson stayed, and in 1866 founded the Society of St John the Evangelist (SSJE), the first religious community of men established in the Anglican Communion since the English Reformation.

The order became known as the Cowley Fathers and their ministry has made a difference all over the world, establishing houses, schools and medical centres in Scotland, India, South Africa, Japan, Canada and the United States. Father Benson believed God had called him to ministry to make a difference for God and in the lives of everyday people. His rule of life, followed diligently by members of the order, demanded Godly practices of Bible reading, study and prayer, and each member also developed an individual rule of life.

In the Cowley Fathers we have an amazing heritage. The name Cowley is known in countries all over the world because of Father Benson's love of God and his desire to know God's purpose and vision for the community. Their understanding of how to live out and demonstrate God's love touched the lives of thousands and thousands of people. Their work has inspired the PCC and ministry team as we have tried to discover God's purpose for us in Cowley. We want you to be a part of the work to which God has called us – and to discover how we might live out his purpose for our lives.

Howard

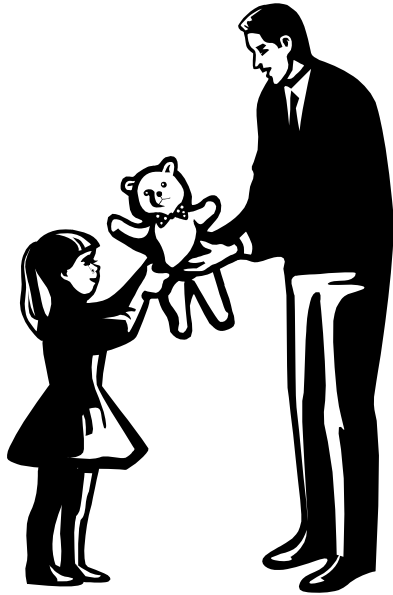
Chronicle

June 2009

Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

What is a dad? I ask this question to remind everyone that June 21st is Fathers' Day. To answer my own rhetorical question, a dad, for me, was a man who would lift me onto his shoulders when I was tired of walking, or wanted to see over the heads of taller people at the zoo. As I grew older he encouraged me in all my hopes and dreams. In my adulthood he cared deeply for my ups and downs, and now that he is no longer with me I often



hear his voice in my head telling me that so-and-so is, or is not, a good idea. Now I know that many people have had difficult relationships with their fathers, or in some sad cases, have not had a father in their lives, but it did occur to me that the description I gave of my dad is awfully like my idea of our Father God.

So on Fathers' Day let's thank God for being the One who lifts us up when we're weary, cares for our hopes and dreams, and encourages us throughout our lives. And at the same time, thank God for all fathers who love and care for their families.

We hope you enjoy your June Chronicle. Happy Mid-summer, and happy Fathers' Day. God bless.

Rosanne and Carol

Bell-ringing at St James

For some time a group of bell-ringers has practiced regularly at St James, but they are not available on Sunday mornings. Some people thought, "Wouldn't it be great to have a group of parishioners and local people trained up to ring the bells?" An expert was consulted, a call went out for volunteers to learn the bells, and on April 1st the first session began. I think most of us were enthusiastic and excited to be trying something new, but not quite sure what to expect.

We have had several sessions with Jonathan Cresshull and a group from the Oxford City branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. Our learners now number more than a dozen. The youngest is eleven years old. We haven't figured out who is the oldest, but Jonathan assures us

that age is no barrier, and that some ringers are in their nineties.

We've learned the difference between the handstroke and the backstroke, and what a sally is. And everyone has had a chance to ring the bells several times. We have even been to St Andrew's, Headington and to St Mary Magdalen to "have a go" on their bells! (Undeterred by their tied clappers.)

For now we meet at St James every Monday evening at 7:00 except on bank holidays. If anyone is interested in joining, you can come along to the church, or contact jonathan@cresshull.co.uk.



Saint of the Month

St Alban

As with our understanding of many of the saints, the details about the life and death of Alban are not all clear, so much time having passed.

St Alban was the first British Christian martyr. It is thought that Alban was a pagan who served Rome as a soldier in the army. He encountered a Christian priest who was being persecuted, and took him in.

Alban was so impressed with the devotion and teaching of the priest, that he became a Christian and was baptised by him. When the authorities came to Alban's home searching for the priest, Alban dressed in the priest's cloak so that he could make his escape. He was taken before the magistrate to be tried. Bede wrote this about the trial:

When Alban was brought in, the judge happened to be standing before an altar, offering sacrifice to devils . . . "What is your family and race?" demanded the judge.

"How does my family concern you?" replied Alban; "If you wish to know the truth about my religion, know that I am a Christian and am ready to do a Christian's duty."

"I demand to know your name," insisted the judge. "Tell me at once." "My parents named me Alban," he answered, "and I worship and adore the living and true God, who created all things."

The magistrate was furious at the deception and ordered Alban to sacrifice to Roman gods. When he refused, he was condemned to death.

Bede is the first writer to pinpoint the execution as having taken place at Verulamium. There are several legends about the event: that on the way to the execution, and finding the bridge already filled with people, Alban prayed for the water to part and crossed over on dry land; and that a spring emerged out of the hill to give Alban a drink of water. Another claims that the executioner, hearing his testimony, refused to perform the beheading; and that the person called to replace him cut off Alban's head, only to have his own eyes drop out.

The site became a place of pilgrimage, and eventually St Alban's Abbey was erected. St Alban is remembered on 22 June.

A prayer: Almighty God, by whose grace and power your holy martyr Alban triumphed over suffering and was faithful even unto death: Grant to us, who now remember him with thanksgiving, to be so faithful in our witness to you in this world, that we may receive with him the crown of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Deanery and Synod are words used within the church, and I wondered whether everyone understands what the words mean; after all, it is a form of jargon to use specialised words.

The Church of England is divided into geographical areas, each one having a cathedral and a bishop and known as a diocese. A diocese is divided into deaneries, each containing roughly a dozen parishes and having an Area Dean and a Lay Chairman. We belong to Cowley Deanery which has 13 parishes, and can be described roughly as those within Oxford but east of the bridge, plus Woodeaton and Sandford.

A synod is an elected group like a council, a ruling body, a meeting. The synod of each deanery is made up of the clergy plus lay representatives voted in by the parishes. From this synod, representatives are elected to sit on the Diocesan Synod and from there elected members attend the General Synod along with the bishops. The General Synod is more or less the ruling body of the C of E.

We have regular deanery meetings and we have special deanery meetings. We always begin with a short prayer service. Usually we deal with the business side of things, finance, plans and projects, and our vision for the future. We have a speaker and often divide into small groups to discuss what has been said. It is much more interesting than it sounds.

We also have special meetings. A few weeks ago we had one on a Saturday morning, when the Bishop talked to us about prayer. It was very interesting and thought provoking. The part of that talk which remains with me is that the joy of God's love is like sunbathing. One does not have to earn the sun nor ask it to shine; one just basks and allows the sun's rays to warm us. In a similar way we bask in God's love: we do not have to earn it or ask for it; it is there for us and we bask.

We held a special evening in Cowley about the Christian/Islam problems. Kenneth Cragg, a gentleman of 96 years who has spent 70 years in the Middle East as Assistant Bishop to the Archbishop of Jerusalem, talked for half an hour without notes (he did remain seated) and then took questions. We then moved to the Church

Deanery Synod

Centre for refreshments and a talk by two men who work at St Stephen's House along the Cowley Road. They work on courses to be run in the Middle East about the Muslim and Christian relationship.

One of the things that impressed me was the different attitudes to religion in different countries. In a country such as India, many gods and many religions exist and all are permitted. In the UK we have an Established church with the Queen at the head. We can choose whether we belong to that religion or something different or nothing at all, but the established church is the church where state events happen, coronations for instance, and the Sovereign has to belong to that faith. In an Islamic country the religion and the nationality are the same; the country is ruled by Islamic law and all citizens belong to the Muslim faith. I had not seen things in that light before.

Being a member of the Deanery Synod is a privilege. We are elected for a three year term and we are just beginning the second year of the current term.

Una

*My father counts
From the shed
my dad drags an old oak bench
to the edge of the barley field.
The smell of axle grease
hangs on his clothes. The air ripens,
a breeze carrying the scent
of rain-soaked earth. The crop ripples
like the sheets my mother shakes onto the
bed.
I could rock to sleep on its green surface.
A flash. My father counts beside me,
One one thousand, two one thousand ... five
The thunder presses into us.
He settles back,
one arm loose around me.
One raindrop, then a hundred, on my legs.
A flash forks,
hesitates, is gone.
The "crack" almost instant,
then rolling sounds
I let inside, and hold.* **Carol Thornton**

The Archway Foundation

The Archway Foundation is a small thriving charity founded in Oxford. It seeks to serve those in the city and beyond "hurt by loneliness." It offers individual befriending, weekly opportunities for meeting with others in a supportive environment, regular events and outings and subsidised transport to social evenings.

As recipient of The Queens Award for Voluntary Service in 2007, Archway values the commitment of its 80 volunteers who undertake a wide range of roles. Additional drivers, welcomers and befrienders are always needed. Regular support and training are provided.

Trusteeship is another important voluntary role. To complement the skills of our current management board of trustees we

are looking for

- a) someone with financial/accounting skills to fulfil the role of treasurer
- b) someone with a clinical background in mental health, public health or primary care (recently retired or in current practice).

Time commitment is a two-hour meeting three or four times a year with occasional input to a working group. Our constitution states that trustees should be regular members of a Christian church. For further information or an appointment without obligation, please contact Sheila Furlong (Director) on 01865 790552 or email office@archwayfoundation.org.uk

God Shines on Love Oxford

The coach was hired, many had signed up, lunches were packed, and plans were set for the Parish of Cowley to join thousands of people from across Oxford to Love Oxford, a magnificent outdoor service in South Parks. When the great day arrived it looked at first like it might be a wash out. The sky was dark and foreboding and as we boarded the coach, the rain came down in torrents. As we collected church members at St James and St Francis many said, "A little bit of rain won't stop us."

I remember wondering, "What have we got ourselves into this time?"

As the coach pulled up to the gate at South Parks the rain stopped, and as we walked across the field a bit of blue sky appeared. When the service began I looked around, and a lot of people were there. Some organisers estimated 3,000 people. It was affirming to see so many Christians of many denominations gathered together to publicly worship our God, and to pray for our city and one another. From our own parish about 50 people attended, the youngest a babe in arms and the eldest over 80. With the weather cooler than we had hoped, we returned to Cowley after the service to enjoy our picnic lunches at St Francis church and in the St James Church Centre.

The University's motto is, "Dominus illuminatio mea." *The Lord is my Light.* As churches in the city, we dream that our city will be transformed into a place where Christ is its light. We dream of Oxford being a place of safety, refuge and unity. The city is known as a centre for intellectual brilliance, but wouldn't it be great if it was also renowned for the brilliance of the love of God to be found here?

The vision for Love Oxford is strikingly simple. It is to encourage churches, on one Sunday in the year, to move their morning service to the heart of Oxford with the purpose of sharing God's love, rejoicing in public worship and encouraging one another. For many of those who went it was an amazing experience, one in which God's love shone on those gathered in South Parks and on Oxford too.

God in my life

Una Dean

I was startled when Carol asked me to write this piece; it is **not** an easy task.

I am a cradle Christian, born into a Christian family and brought up as a Christian. St James Church has been my family church for generations, but during my life I have attended many different churches and denominations.

As a child I had a simple faith. I remember my nightly prayer:

“God bless Mummy and Daddy, Roy and Ian.

Make Una a good girl,
And please make the war end soon.
Amen.”

I also remember the evening my father called up the stairs to say that on the wireless Mr Churchill had just announced that the war was over. I climbed out of bed and knelt on the lino and prayed my thanks to God.

I attended St Mary and St John infant and junior schools and when I was at I was at Milham Ford we had a religious assembly every morning. The teaching at these schools backed up my parents’ teaching. I did not attend Sunday School as it was in the afternoons, and my parents always took us for long walks on Sunday afternoons, along the river or canal or through parks and gardens.

As I grew up I began to see God as an integral and very important part of my life. I began to pray in my own words and to talk to God as I would to a friend of long standing. I discovered that God answers all prayers made in good faith but that the answers were not always those which I expected or wanted.

My husband liked to visit different churches – I think he was afraid of being cajoled onto committees – and so we visited a great variety of churches. After he died I came back to St James’.

I attended an Alpha course and that helped me to overcome the feeling of anger that I had about my husband’s suffering and death. I felt angry because of the suffering felt by my children and our families and friends over Gordon’s death. Alpha allowed me to talk out my anger and to see past it.

I felt called to the healing ministry but

resisted, claiming myself too humble to undertake such work. It was some time before God made me see that I was being not humble but arrogant. This ministry has been a great privilege, and a responsibility. I have seen small miracles and have indeed felt humble at witnessing God’s healing power. Later I felt a call to preaching and this time I obeyed God and enlisted on the training programme. Preaching is also a privilege and a responsibility but it is something I enjoy.

My Home Group has been a source of learning and is often very thought provoking. It has made me look at the Bible much more thoughtfully and see my faith in a new light. A few years ago I thought I was living a Godly life. Now I know better. I do try, though!

These things, along with church services, talks with friends, and discussions with friends of different religions or none, all have taught me the value of my faith. As I grow older so I am more honest with God, less likely to gloss over my misdemeanors, and much more willing to accept responsibility for my actions or lack of action. God is central to my life and I consult Him frequently, tell Him my joys and sorrows, and I receive comfort and understanding from Him.

God has always been an important part of my life. He has answered my prayers and carried me over rough patches. It may seem a strange thing for a blind person to say but God has healed me. As my sight deteriorated into total blindness God has healed my mind in helping me to accept. It has not been easy, but with God’s help I have avoided bitterness about it and although I get very frustrated at times, mostly I am able to cope. I am blessed with a caring family and good and caring friends. I am blessed indeed.

I sometimes think of a Christian journey as being like the road I once traveled into Israel. The road was fairly wide and on either side stretched minefields in both directions. Sometimes as I walk my Christian life I fall into the minefield, and when I do God rescues me and puts me back on the firm surface of the road.

Rosanne Interviews Margaret Weller

How many times, I wonder, have you heard a retired person say, “I don’t know how I ever had time to go to work?” I think many of us older folk say that or something similar. During our recent chat Margaret used those very words. When you hear about her busy life she leads I’m sure you won’t be surprised. You see, on two days of the week she can be found at St Francis Church helping run the Oxford branch of the Community Emergency Foodbank, that wonderful organisation that is designed to help people who have reached a crisis point in their lives.

So what else does Margaret do these days to keep her so busy? Well, you wait till I ask her the “leisure question” at the end and you’ll see. In the meantime let’s learn a little more about Margaret herself.

She hails from the small Buckinghamshire village of Wavendon which in her childhood had its own sop, two churches, (Methodist and C of E) and a pub. Although it is now a dormitory for the nearby burgeoning town of Milton Keynes, Margaret is pleased that her birthplace retains its rural status with its village green surrounded by (now very desirable) cottages. Born in

the middle of the Second World War, and because her father served in the fire-service in Coventry her mother returned to live with her own mother (Margaret’s grandmother) who was housekeeper at Wavendon rectory, the home of a very rich lady. Her grandfather was the coachman. It is interesting to note that this same rectory and its stables are now the home and music school owned by Sir John Dankworth and his wife, Dame Cleo Laine. After the war Margaret’s parents separated so she, her brother John and their mother stayed on in the village where the children attended the small local school. Amongst her friends was a family who kept some stable and she remembers riding over to the village of Milton Keynes long before it developed into the place it is today.

Primary school was enjoyed although she declares she was never an academic child. Sewing, art, and best of all, nature walks were her favourites. At eleven, despite there being a nearby secondary school, her mother chose to send her to a large girls’ school in Leighton Buzzard. This required a walk across the fields and then two train

journeys before the final walk at the other end. What resilient young people we were in those days!

Secondary school was a delight with the joy of learning Latin and Shakespeare. At fifteen she moved on to secretarial college in Bedford, a much easier journey, as by now she rode her bike to the station and stowed it on the train. However a bike was only a convenient mode of transport, whereas her big brother’s motorbike was an object of love and admiration. She would willingly spend an entire Saturday morning cleaning and polishing the adored machine in order for a ride in the afternoon. In fact when it came to dating boyfriends they didn’t stand a chance with Margaret if they didn’t own a motorbike!

Those were the days of village dances and socials with a host of teenage friends but also helping Granny with her jam-making, tending Grampy’s chickens and even learning to skin a rabbit for the pot. She remembers with affection the harvest festivals and their auction sales; in fact the richness of rural life – a safe and protected childhood.

Her first secretarial job at seventeen was at the RAF aeronautical college at Cran-

field. There, of course, she was surrounded by young airmen – fun! Then she took a post which she really loved as secretary to the matron of a convalescent hospital in Woburn Sands. All this time she and her brother kept in touch with their father who, after the war, ran a business in Oxford. Later John took over the business from him.

Margaret decided she would move to Oxford to be near her father and brother. She got a job as a medical secretary at the Radcliffe Infirmary. She shared a flat with John's girlfriend in Silkdale Close in Cowley. Through her brother she met Norman. She knew straight away that he was special and so it proved. They were married in 1969. After much hard saving they bought a house in Cricket Road.

Working at the old RI was a pleasure for Margaret but she willingly gave up the post when their first baby was born. After Nicholas in 1970 she gave birth to Catherine in 1972. At home with her babies she did some part-time typing and later took on some auxiliary nursing at the Churchill Hospital. Later she returned to full-time work at the Nuffield and then at the JR. She remained there until she retired, helping in the administration of the charity funds for thirteen years.

Norman, who sadly died from cancer two years ago, worked initially in the

car factory and then as an assistant curator at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.

Today Margaret fills her days with a host of activities. One of her favourites is Forest School, a project designed to take young children out into the countryside to discover the freedom and fun to be had building shelters, cooking on an open fire and getting close to wildlife. Her daughter, Catherine, who is a teacher, persuaded her to get involved. She told me that before she began helping with Forest School she had no idea that many of our local school children led such impoverished lives. By which she explained that their experiences of the world around them are so narrow.

She has one much-loved grandson, Freddie, who is far away in China. Her son married a Chinese girl and the couple are at present setting up educational and business links with the UK. Naturally they are much missed although Margaret tries to visit them once a year. Meanwhile she is busy with her various projects most prominent of which is her work with the Food Bank.

How would you describe yourself as a small child?
Quiet – a “home” girl who loved being in the open air.

Do you have a memory of childhood that you'd like to share?

I can remember when I was a

little girl we had a lovely uncle, Uncle Jim, who loved to take us on expeditions in the Lake District on our holidays. We children used to take the kettle to the stream for the water for the tea. One day it was pouring with rain and Uncle Jim was trying to light the fire to boil the kettle but the rain was running off his trilby hat straight onto the wood and he simply couldn't get it to burn. It was so funny.

Has God always been part of your life?

Oh yes, and when Catherine was ill (with leukaemia) I've never prayed so hard in my life. But my prayers were answered.

What are your views on modern society?

I enjoy Oxford as an international city. I love other cultures, though, and the fact that many of us work together. But I do think that children today grow up too soon and miss out on their childhood.

What makes you angry about life today?

Racism, people talking people down because of their race and culture. I like people for what they are.

What do you do in your leisure time?

(Here we are, readers – wait for it! RB)

Walking, going camping with my daughter Catherine, embroidery, any kind of stitch-

ery, flower arranging at my flower club and in church, gardening, my new music-group. I belong to the local National Trust Association; I belong to the University Pensioners' Association (they have interesting speakers and visits.) I enjoy jigsaw puzzles even tackling antique puzzles (which no longer have a picture to help) for a dealer.	And when I'm exhausted, I switch on the telly. Which period of your adult life has given you most satisfaction? While my children were at home. I hated it when they went off to university. If you could change something in a spectacular way	what would it be? Shrink the miles between England and China. Have you plans for the future? Just carry on as I am although I hope I'll have learnt to be a good bell-ringer (another of my leisure pursuits!)
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The Visit to Christ Church

When an event has been organised and every single part of it turns out "exactly as it says on the tin" you can look back and say that it was perfect. Well that was my impression of our visit to the cathedral on May 20th.

After gathering under the Tom tower just before Great Tom struck three, our small party from St James was met by Robert Walker who was to be our guide. Robert has been associated with Christ Church for many years and knows it so well. We crossed the great quad, a rare privilege as the general public has to make its entrance from The Meadows.

We were conducted round the cathedral and shown all the remarkable windows, memorials, and St Frideswide's shrine. Our lovely mother church is so unique in its age, size and beauty that the pleasure of the group was almost tangible. Added to this was the opportunity to visit the very garden featured by Charles Dodgson in "Alice in Wonderland" as the venue for the Duchess's garden party. Robert also pointed out the huge tree in the Dean's garden where the Cheshire Cat came and went.

The Christ Church Picture Gallery gave us the chance to experience some of the superb pictures owned by the college. We spent about half an hour there wandering at our leisure.

Then came tea in the Great Hall. We sat at one of the great oak refectory tables gazed down upon by Henry VIII and the many masters and famous former students portrayed in the magnificent portraits. Tea was served on big platters: sandwiches (with crusts removed) and delicious cream cake. And to follow, Choral Evensong in the cathedral.

Needless to say this was the high point of the whole afternoon. The singing was impeccable and the settings for the Nunc Dimittis and Magnificat were gorgeous. We filed out into the sunny quad with smiles on our faces almost as wide as the one worn by Alice's Cheshire Cat.

One of the nicest things about our visit was the fact that everyone, from the bulldogs in their bowler hats to the Sub-Dean knew that we were from St James Cowley. We were welcomed everywhere with a smile. It was particularly nice to meet Revd Andrew Meynell who was stewarding that day. And of course he knew who we were. We were even welcomed personally at Evensong.

May Morgan, who organised the event, deserves a huge vote of thanks. She has promised to arrange another one for sometime later in the year. So if I've whetted your appetite, watch out for the date, and don't miss it!

Gardening amongst the blossoms

What a lot of gardeners we have in Cowley! The number of plants at the Plant Sale was astonishing. Well done to Joan and the other organisers. I brought some plants along (and bought too many others!) I was quite disappointed that no one mentioned this series of articles to me. Are they so boring?

I have spent this week watching the Chelsea Flower Show. Isn't it amazing? It gives us a real boost and something tremendous to aspire to. If you feel rather disheartened by it, then remember the money they spend, the experts they use, and the fact that it only has to look good for a week. Surely your garden is wonderful too; it is an expression of you and it only needs to please you, not the judges! There can be great beauty in a wild unkempt space, as well as a carefully manicured lawn.

There were no lawns in the gardens this year, but probably next year they will be back, and the prominent colour is to be burgundy/red. So the 'experts' say! So when you see gaps that will need filling, consider this as you plan for next year!

Wildlife gardening is definitely IN this year. Did you see the tall shape filled with all sorts of textures – logs, bamboo canes, broken pots – all sorts of places for small mammals and insects to hide away? I quite like the idea of a smaller structure, so long as it is sited away from the house. Certainly my frogs need spaces to hide away from cats, no, not my cat, but neighbours who use my back garden as a feline motorway. Kitty sits and swears at the cats. I don't know where she learns such language.

Most of the tender plants are now hardened off now ready to plant out. Tomatoes, sweet peppers, aubergines, courgettes and beans are ready, so the cold frame will soon have grow-bags of tomatoes, and let's hope the blight leaves them alone. The forget-me-nots now have to come up in order to leave space for the beans and brassicas, and the strawberries need attention. We have eaten some rhubarb and the thinnings of gooseberries, the next crop is strawberries. Life is good in the garden!

Diana Pope

What is Love?

That question was put to a group of small children aged four to eight years old. Here are some of their answers. "Out of the mouths of babes..."

Billy (4) When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth.

Terri (4) Love is what makes you smile when you're tired.

Noelle (7) Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, and then he wears it every day.

Elaine (5) Love is when Mummy gives Daddy the best piece of chicken.

Tommy (6) Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well.

Nikka (6) If you want to learn to love better you should start with a friend who you hate. Aren't they wonderful? More next month.

A Pilgrimage to/with St Alban's

In conjunction with St Alban the Martyr Church in Oxford, some of our parish members will travel to take part in the St Albans Festival Pilgrimage on June 20th. A coach will depart from The Swan at 8:30.

Once there, they will take part in the following scheduled events:

10:30 – **Pilgrimage Procession:** from Roman Verulamium (site of Alban's trial) to the Abbey (site of his death and burial)

11:30 – **Solemn Concelebrated Eucharist**

Preacher: The Rt Rev'd Graham Knowles, Dean of St Paul's. Music sung by the Abbey Girls Choir and the Men of the Cathedral Choir.

4:00 – **Festival Evensong with Procession to the Shrine**

Preacher: The Revd Canon Giles Fraser, Vicar of Putney. Music sung by the Cathedral

Mothers' Union News

Cowley's got class! It's official!! Our wine, cheese and poems evening was proof positive of the excellent taste and creative talents of our M.U. members and guests. Together with an excellent supper, some good wines and friendly company, we were treated to a wide selection of poetry. Romance, humour, and pathos were all reflected in the poems and those people who read their own works were rightfully congratulated. Some 25 people spent three pleasant hours in the Church Centre on 16 May and many asked when we shall be "doing it again." Next year, maybe? To add to the success of the evening we made a profit of £52, half to go to our M.U. overseas fund and half to the parish.

The M.U. wave of prayer for the Cowley branch is due this year on Friday, 12th June at 2:15 pm. Susannah Reide will visit and the prayers will be in St James Church. The traditional strawberries-and-cream tea will follow in the Ranklin Room in the Church Centre.

The June meeting on the 15th has a change from the printed programme. The speaker will be an Oxfam representative who has been working recently in Africa and will tell us more about the worthwhile lifesaving work taking place there.

Men's Breakfast Club

Since so many parishioners take summer holidays in July and August, the men's breakfast will go ahead as usual in June and then take a break in September. The date for its resumption will be the 5th September. Gerald Ives asked the Chronicle to remind all male parishioners that everyone is welcome. The venue is The William Morris (Weatherspoons) and the changed time to meet will be 9:30 am (so that working chaps can get a lie-in!)

Local History at Templars Square

Templars Square is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year, and they have some special events lined up. In June, in association with Heart 102.6 radio station, they will be looking for old photographs of the shopping centre or Cowley. You can pick up a form from Roy Paggett Photography, and your photos can be scanned on the spot. You won't have to loan them out or give them up. From the photos submitted, one winner will be chosen at random to win a private helicopter flight over Oxford for up to five people. The best of the photos will be displayed at Templars Square throughout the summer. As the Parish of Cowley has been such an integral part of local history for centuries, it would be wonderful to see it well represented.

In July, in partnership with the Cowley Local History Society (cowleyhistorysociety.org.uk) the centre will host a display of local history. More news on this event when we have it.

Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Sung Eucharist
"Church at the Centre" every fourth Sunday
Also Sunday Lunch : every second Sunday

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am Parish Eucharist

Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union – St James (3 rd Mon)
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Tuesday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	10.00 am	Seashells Toddler Group : St James
	12.00 pm	Eucharist – St James
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club – St James
	2.30 pm	Friends of St Francis – St Francis (2 nd & 4 th)
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Wednesday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
Thursday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James
	7.00 pm	Eucharist – St Francis
Friday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer – St James
	5.30 pm	Evening Prayer – St James

Don't be like porridge, stiff and hard to stir;
Be like corn flakes, crisp and ready to serve.
(submitted by Una)

The Parish of Cowley office in St James Church Centre is open :

Tuesdays 1-3:30 pm,
Fridays 9-3:30 pm,
and by appointment.

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Howard has Friday as his day off.

Team Vicar

Revd Susannah Reide
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Susannah has Monday as her day off.

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