

# Radlett Ecumenical Parish



# Unison

Christ Church



St. Anthony of Padua



St. John's



United Free Church



Re-dedication of  
Junior Church Room  
after refurbishment in  
memory of Elsie Gawn

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## March / April 2008

50p

## **RADLETT ECUMENICAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL**

*Chairman:* **Revd William Hogg**, (856606 wijoho@btinternet.com) address below  
*Secretary:* **Anne Carter**, 4 Field View Rise, Bricket Wood, AL2 3RT (279870 anne@mjcarter.com)  
*Press Officer:* **David Clout** (854403 dclout@herths.atl.org.uk)

### **ST ANTHONY'S (ROMAN CATHOLIC) CHURCH The Crosspath**

*Parish Priest:* **Revd John Elliott**, The Presbytery, 22 The Crosspath, WD7 8HN  
(tel & fax 856165 radlett@rcdow.org.uk)

*Chairman of the Parish Council:* **Peter Stanley**, 473 Watling Street, Radlett (853542)

#### **SERVICES**

Mass on Saturday at 6 pm (vigil)  
Mass on Sunday at 10am  
Mass on Tuesdays & Fridays at 10 am, Holy Communion on Mon, Wed, Thur & Sat 10am  
Confessions on Saturday 10.30 am - 11 am

### **CHRIST CHURCH (ANGLICAN) Watling Street**

*Vicar:* **Revd William Hogg**, The Vicarage, Church Field, Christchurch Crescent, WD7 8EE  
(856606 wijoho@btinternet.com)

*Parish Evangelist:* **Cptn Alan Dodd** CA 46 Elm Walk, Radlett, WD7 8DP (839412 edgwareuk@yahoo.co.uk)

*Churchwardens:* **John Duthie** 93 Watford Road (852571), **Philip Reason**, 38 Shenley Hill (855285)

*Parish Secretary:* **Susan Brown**, Church Office open Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, 9 - 12 noon,  
closed Tues. (tel 859963, fax 857998, office@radlettchurches.org.uk)

*Hall Letting:* Tel 01923 850345 or 07999 729883

#### **SERVICES**

8 am Holy Communion (1st Sunday 1662)  
9.15 am Choral Communion (4th Sunday Morning Prayer)  
11 am Family Worship (1st & 3rd Sunday non-Eucharistic;  
2nd & 4th Sunday Communion)  
6 pm 1st Sunday of month - Choral Evensong. (Other weeks - see weekly notices)

### **ST JOHN'S (ANGLICAN) CHURCH Gills Hill Lane**

*Vicar:* **Revd William Hogg**, (856606 wijoho@btinternet.com) address above

*Warden:* **Helen Warne**, Edgebourne, Gills Hill Lane (859618)

*Hall Letting:* Tel 01923 859963; Fax 01923 857998

#### **SERVICES**

9.45 am Parish Communion (2nd Sunday Family Service)

### **UNITED FREE CHURCH (Methodist / United Reformed) Station Road**

*Minister:* **Revd Sue Keegan von Allmen** (01438 813629 suekva@supanet.com)

*Lay Leader:* **Dr Alan Callow**, 35 Park Road, WD7 8EG (854501 alanca@ntlworld.com)

*Hall Letting:* **Ian Sutherland**, 43 Goodyers Avenue (855944)

#### **SERVICES**

9.15am Communion on the 2nd Sunday of each month.  
10.30 am Family Service (with Holy Communion on 4th Sunday)

*Chaplain at Watford Peace Hospice:* **The Revd Canon Michael Carter** (279870 mail@mjcarter.com)

Contributions for *Unison* to an Editor by **Monday 14th April** for the **May/June issue**.  
To advertise or give information of Future events contact Eleni Patel

**Mar/Apr Unison will be available for distribution on Sunday 27th April.**

Unison is on the Web at <http://www.radlettchurches.org.uk/unison/current.pdf>

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printed by AC Global Media, Hagden Lane Watford WD18 7DL Tel (01923)255611 colin@acglobalmedia.com

Dear Friends,



Preparing to speak at Aldenham School Chapel recently I wanted to find a verse that would sum up the Christian message in a neat way and the one that occurred to me was the following from 2 Corinthians 5 – *‘God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself’*.

It is amazing to think of Paul writing these words so soon after the death and resurrection of Jesus! How could he and others be so sure that the almighty, eternal God was there in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? It seems that the first Christians recognised in Jesus the fullness of God at work in his teaching, his miracles, in his very nature and personality, so that first Peter and then the others realised that he was the Christ, the expected Messiah or Anointed One of God, foretold by the Hebrew prophets. And all this was perfectly confirmed by His sacrificial death on the cross and subsequent resurrection. Even Paul, previously an avowed enemy of Jesus’ followers, came to realise suddenly and dramatically that this was so. God was in Christ – *‘in Him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell’* (Colossians 1). And we can say, because of the Easter message of resurrection, that God **is** still in Christ.

And why? What is the purpose of all this? *To reconcile the world to Himself*. Humankind, made in the image of God - with the ability to imagine, to create, to experience the spiritual, to love - humankind had gone bad and continues to go bad in so many ways, falling far short of the way God meant us to be. All too often we have ended up separated from God, not in his image but most unlike Him. We need to be reconciled, we need to be brought back into that relationship of love and perfection and beauty from which our errant nature and behaviour have divided us. And wonderfully, in Jesus, God has bridged the gap and done the reconciling, by first Himself coming close to us in the person of Jesus and then sacrificially paying the penalty that we deserved and finally by rising from the dead to open the way to us for eternal life. And we have his promise that He will always be there to enable us to make that choice.

He has done his bit – are we ready to do ours? All we have to do is choose aright.

Happy Easter, and God bless

**William Hogg**



## Editorial: My night with Mel

Call me wet, but it wasn't until last Spring that I saw Mel Gibson's 2004 film, **The Passion of The Christ**. Even then, I recorded it to watch alone some weeks later at Pentecost. I was moved to such an extent that I spent several hours immediately afterward researching how the film was made. Several months on, I still reflect on it.

In part, I wanted to wait until the film was on television so that I wouldn't be influenced by audience reaction. Of course, when the film first appeared in 2004, I spoke with friends who had seen it and was eager to find out what they thought. Of the eight practising Christians I discussed it with at the time, only one person thought that it truly depicted the Passion. Everyone else thought that it was gratuitously violent: 'It couldn't have happened like that.'

But why would we think such a thing? Is it because we cannot truly face the enormity of Christ's dying for the sins of mankind past, present and future? **We seem to have digested this notion to the point where it has become a mere intellectual construct.**

We have often heard that Christ's suffering was like none other. Many of us of a certain age who were raised in more traditionally Christian homes heard time and time again that the physical torment and emotional loneliness that He endured was unremitting. Religious teachers and parents said, 'None of us can imagine what it was like. And none of us ever will have to endure suffering of that magnitude. Remember, He did it for all mankind, it will never be repeated.' Many of us as youngsters then weighed such statements against the news stories we saw and read about physical torture of political or wartime prisoners. Such pain is incomprehensible.

Anyone seeing **The Passion of The Christ** will find it incredible, all the more so because the actor who played Christ, Jim Caviezel, actually underwent some of the scourging. He also dislocated a shoulder and suffered from hypothermia as he was tied to the cross for hours at a time. **In fact, Mel filmed the crucifixion scene twice. It was too windy the first time, and he thought the audience would be focusing on the moving cross rather than Jim's depiction of Christ.** So, Jim spent the better part of two days tied to the cross. He also spent most days standing for eight hours whilst the crew applied his makeup. Throughout the film he prayed that the viewers would see Christ, not an actor. How discouraging this must have been as he, on the cross, could see cast and crew below on their breaks, conversing and laughing amongst themselves, oblivious to him.

However, back to the contentious matter of physical pain. Do we shy away from Mel's film because its blood makes us uncomfortable? Are we afraid to admit that our own sins scourge Christ? What a terrible thought that is. What if it were true? How many times have we denied Christ: walked away from doing something morally right, not wishing to be unpopular? Or refused to admit the truth? Or compromised a colleague just to make our own lives easier?

Perhaps we fear our own insignificance in the universe. We are brought up today to receive and offer constant affirmation, even when it is ill-deserved. We take our egos and those of our families so seriously that we have forgotten how to examine our conscience. **Are we afraid to ask who we really are? What is inside our souls? Are we are afraid of our own silent cry at midnight?**

It must have taken great courage for Mel to undertake **The Passion of the Christ**. I wonder if he took a deep breath every time he or his agent rang to invite actors to participate in the film, awaiting a 'no'. I certainly would have refused. Besides, retelling the Greatest Story Ever Told opens the door to the Devil and his works. Random misfortune suddenly takes on new meaning. During filming, three men were struck by lightning. The man writing and mixing the soundtrack had numerous problems with new, state-of-the-art equipment. It was only when he yelled at the Devil that everything began working properly. Jim Caviezel said that he felt like cursing when he was on the cross because of a strange, negative energy trying to force its way in.

However, many of the cast and crew were inexplicably moved by working on the film. The actor who played Barabbas converted to Christianity as did one of the guards who scourged Jesus. Those who were already practising Christians became more open about their beliefs as a result. Even many of those who professed no faith took away a new meaning about the life of Christ.

**Mel Gibson said, 'One of the greatest hopes I have for this film is that when audiences walk away from it, they will be inspired to ask more questions.'** If you haven't yet seen the film, be sure to catch it next time it's on television. It's a daring effort and its message a powerful one, not just for Lent but for life.

**Cynthia Hunt**

<http://www.thepassionthemovie.com/theproduction/text.html>  
<http://www.chasingthefrog.com/reelfaces/passion.php>

## Can you be a practical good neighbour?

### Radlett and Aldenham Good Neighbours

The Good Neighbours Scheme for the whole Parish of Aldenham has been running since 1973 to help the community on a voluntary basis.

For full information see the Winter 2007 edition of “**Around Radlett**”.

They collect prescriptions, help with a doctor’s appointment, particularly in an emergency, granny sit, shop, visit or provide transport on short trips for a sum to cover petrol and car parking fees at hospitals.

#### **The following roads or buildings require volunteers at present:**

- Newlands Avenue (some help)
- Watling Street – Park Road to Goodyers Avenue (both sides), Brook Court, Everett Court
- Station Road (both sides), The Crosspath, Scrubbitts Square, Thelusson Court, Aldenham Road
- 1-30 The Ridgeway, 36 – 57 Loom Lane, Maytrees, The Pathway
- Gills Hill Lane (Willow Way to Loom Lane), Cragg Avenue
- Hawkesley Court, Nightingale Court (both Watford Road), Craigmount Flats, Faggots Close
- The Woods, The Sycamores (off The Drive), Regents Close, Cary Walk (off The Drive)
- The Drive, Brendon Court (off The Avenue), the new flats at the former Boatworks, Watling Street.

**If you can help,**

**Please contact Rosamund Gray (Co-ordinator) on 01923 857712**

### **“Love your neighbour as yourself”**

Could you spare some time this year?

Would you like to help others maintain independence and dignity in their homes and communities, particularly in later life?

If so, call **Pauline on 01992 552069** to find out about volunteering for the **WRVS**

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## Your Prayer Page: Boundaries, Barriers, and the Faith God Gives

Jesus was forever crossing boundaries and finding ways through the barriers that stood in His way. It was against the laws of the time; for example, to mix with prostitutes and tax collectors, but Jesus partied with them. Samaritans were despised, but Jesus healed one of their lepers, spoke to a Samaritan woman by a well, and told a story about a good Samaritan. And in Gethsemane we see Jesus struggling to cross the boundary between saving His own life and laying it down for His friends.

One of the boundaries He calls you and me to cross is that between the person who **observes** the passion and resurrection of Jesus from a safe distance and the person who, by faith and prayer, becomes spiritually **involved** in the events of Holy Week and Eastertide.

If we have the faith and courage – and the Lord will give us both if we ask Him – we can watch with Him in Gethsemane, stand beside Him as he is condemned and mocked and scourged, draw close enough to hear “Father, forgive them....” and know that we ourselves are included in that prayer. And then as Easter breaks upon us with its bright radiance, we can linger by the Tomb with Mary Magdalen, as the One she takes for the gardener appears; or, cowering behind locked doors with the other disciples, we can hear His greeting, “Peace be with you,” and our hearts are filled with joy.

Sadly, our faith can be – and often is – a shadowy and ineffectual thing. We make a measured act of faith in a time of prayer; or in a moment of emotion we may reach out for faith and believe we have it in our grasp; only to find that the next day or week or year, we can be just as **faithless** as we have ever been.

Nothing can ensure we will be faithful for ever: but there is one basic truth we often forget.

The more we use the faith God gives us the stronger and more life-changing it will become. So here are two Faith Exercises, one or both (or neither) of which you may decide to use.

A . ‘I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings...’ Philippians 3, v 10 (first part) NIV. Learn these words by heart. Then, when wandering thoughts invade our prayers, and try as we might, we cannot control them, just repeat these words, over and over and over. This can help us in two ways. First, the words act as a **shield**, protecting us from the mental chatter that often bombards our prayers. Second, they can be a means of **re-focussing** our hearts and minds on God. Try it and see: you may be surprised.

B. Choose one event from our Lord’s Passion that speaks especially to you. Meditate on it each day of Holy Week. Then for the next seven days, do the same for one of the Easter events. Begin by picturing the scene – the sounds, the smells, the colours, the expressions on peoples’ faces as the action unfolds. Feel yourself caught up in the raw emotions. Allow our Lord to look or speak directly to you. Respond to Him with all the faith and love of which you are capable. Then commend yourself and your loved ones to His service.

A blessed Holy Week and a joy – filled, Christ – filled Easter to you all.

## To Be a Deacon

Well, actually it should say 'to be in formation as a Permanent Deacon'.

Hold on! What is a deacon in the first place? Well, first of all, a deacon is the first level of cleric in the Catholic Church, the three levels of cleric being deacon, priest and then bishop. There are two types of deacon: a Transitory Deacon and a Permanent Deacon. A Transitory Deacon is a stage reached as part of the formation as a priest and normally this occurs in the final year of study at the seminary. A Permanent Deacon is different in that the candidate will not become a priest but will remain a deacon, hence the term 'Permanent'. The candidates for the Permanent Diaconate [as it is termed] need to be either single men of at least 25 years of age [35 in Westminster Diocese] or married men of 35 years of age [40 in Westminster Diocese]. The single men, once ordained, must live a celibate life, i.e. they cannot get married, and the married men cannot remarry if their wife predeceases them.



The role of the deacon is of service to the community. He has specific duties to perform in the Church and there are three main areas in which he will serve: Word, Liturgy and Charity. A deacon would normally read the Gospel at Mass; he assists the priest at Mass and is particularly concerned with those in need.

My own personal journey started some 10 years ago, here in Radlett, although I have always been involved in the Church, in one form or another, since childhood. It started so to speak, at a Wednesday evening prayer group held in the church. As usual, we were discussing several random passages of Scripture and trying to find a common theme between them all. After long discussions on the meaning of the passages, and they sometimes were loud arguments, it was suggested that I would make a 'good' deacon. This idea was immediately pooh-poohed by me. 'Don't be stupid,' I said, and nothing further was mentioned. However, about four years ago something, although I can't remember exactly what, brought me back to that conversation. I started to wonder whether that person was right and that perhaps I could be a deacon. I continued to think it over for another two years. Then about two years ago, I read a leaflet which was at the back of St Anthony's Church, which was all about the Permanent Diaconate. With this in my hand, I spoke to Father Richard, our parish priest at the time, and he said that I should investigate the matter with the Diocese and see what came of it. And here we are; I am now 'in formation'.

So what does that entail, you might ask? Well, I am currently studying one Sunday a month in the seminary at Wonersh, just south of Guildford. There are also three long weekends of study in each year. This formation will last for three years, finishing in June 2010. The study involves lectures and talks on Theology, Scripture, Canon Law, Liturgy, Moral Theology, Marriage and Baptism, to name a few subjects. I will have to write many essays, on these subjects, which are set by the formation team.

At the time of writing I have already completed two essays, and I am well on the way to completing the third. As well as the academic study at Wonersh, there is a long list of pastoral training to be completed in the parish. This requires me to take part in many activities, such as Reading, Ministry of the Eucharist and Leading Services. Some of these activities I have done in the past, some I still do, but I still need to improve on all of them. One of the more difficult things that I also have to learn is the art of preaching! At the end of each year of study, I will be assessed to confirm that I am able to progress onto the next. And, assuming that I get to the end of the three-year formation period, God willing, I will be ordained into the Permanent Diaconate and serve in the parishes of Radlett and Shenley.

God bless.

**Tony Barter**

## **Parish Retreat**

This year's Retreat will be held over the weekend of Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May, (supper) to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May, (lunch) at the Chelmsford Diocesan House of Retreat in Pleshey (between Great Dunmow and Chelmsford).

The conductor will be Canon Robin Brown, the St Albans Diocesan Local Ministry Officer and his addresses will be built around the subject of hope. The cost will be approximately £120 per person and application forms will be available in March.

Please put the dates in your diary now.

I would be happy to talk with anyone thinking of making a retreat for the first time.

**Bob Ogden (856039)**

## **Blakenhall Heath Link**

We are delighted to hear that Reverend Deborah Murphy will be licensed at St Aidan's, on 16th May at 7.30pm.

## THE ANGLICAN SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

### Open Invitation to All Young People

Every year the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham holds a Youth Pilgrimage for young people aged 11 and above. It is a very special few days which comprises worship, prayer, Bible study, fellowship and fun.

While it takes place at an ancient site of pilgrimage, it aims to be a shamelessly contemporary youth event which helps young people to find and live out their faith in the modern world.

The worship makes use of state of the art technology and the music and dance is led by CJM, an incredibly creative group of musicians and liturgists. Bishop Lindsay Urwin leads the teaching ministry. The worship is catholic in feel and focuses strongly on the Eucharist.

If you would like to find out more about the Pilgrimage in 2008, please visit [www.megabite2008.org](http://www.megabite2008.org) where you can download a booking form.

“We need and therefore welcome a new generation of younger people from our congregations who could carry the torch our Churches’ common endeavour into the future.”

*Revd William Hogg, Chair of Radlett Ecumenical Council of Churches*

The Radlett Centre buzzed with excitement when an audience of local primary school children and their parents attended a recent Sunday concert in which they had a introduction to classical music.



The entertaining and instructive afternoon was given by The Thorne Trio, a wind instrument group of clarinet, bassoon and oboe, who specialise in such educational events.

The artists played some excellent classical favourites and explained how the individual instruments made their various sounds. Audience participation was very much required at various points in the programme.

The event was organised by The Radlett Music Club and generously supported by The *Cavatina* Chamber Music Trust and Hertsmere Borough Council.

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## Platt Awards 2008

Applicants must show sufficient **drive** and **initiative** to be planning an expedition or project where they will face a variety of physical and intellectual **challenges**. These challenges are often provided by medical electives or gap year schemes arranged by charities or specialist organisations such as Tear Fund, World Challenge and VentureCo. **Community** projects will be favourably considered.

All awards, ranging from £200 to £800, will be granted in support of an individual rather than as a contribution to general funds. Last year's candidates exhibited considerable **commitment** and **imagination** and had worked very hard to raise the necessary funds.

Any young person who fulfills all above criteria, wishing to apply for an award should write to:

The Secretary  
The Platt Subsidiary Foundation 57A Loom Lane  
Radlett  
Herts, WD7 8NX

Interviews will be conducted in April, and the Governors' decisions will be announced by the middle of May 2008.

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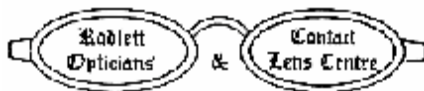
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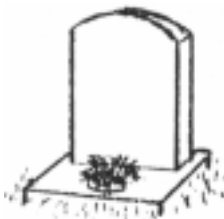
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## Women's World Day of Prayer

A very special service takes place this year on March 7. It is a service which draws together, in prayer and worship, Christian women from all over the world, in a way which is quite unique. It is interdenominational and powerful.

The service we will be celebrating here in Radlett will be celebrated on this same day, in hundreds of thousands of churches, worldwide and spoken in as many languages. It takes place in countries where the Christian population is very much a minority and in those where it is the majority, in densely populated urban areas, and in far flung isolated communities. It reaches out to rich and poor alike and is, indeed, an immensely unifying experience.

The service is prepared each year by the Christian women of a particular country and subtly reflects the traditions, needs, joys and fears of its people.

This year it's the women of Guyana. In the past it has been prepared by Poland, Ghana, Romania, Panama, South Africa and Paraguay.

The order of service comes in a booklet. This contains a geographical description of the country, a summary of its history, its religions, economy, area etc. It's fascinating! Guyana is 52% Christian, 34% Hindu, 9% Muslim and 5% other ethnic religions and has a population of 751.000.

Obviously, the services have to be slightly adapted, e.g. some countries have a tradition of two- to three-hour services. Other countries don't. Some might even consider twelve hymns a trifle excessive! Each place makes the alterations (or omissions) necessary to suit the service to their own particular needs, but the **essence** stays the same.

Here in Radlett the four churches take it in turn to host the service, and it is the responsibility of that church to gather an ecumenical group to organise it. This year it is at Christ Church and the speaker is the Revd Bridget Adams.

The service will be at 7.00pm and followed by refreshments.

Do PLEASE come. Put 7 March in your diary.

It is, indeed, 'Women's World day of Prayer, but we are not at all exclusive. *Men are more than welcome.*

**Margaret Gunn**

From Radlett Banner of Faith, April 1904

On account of the unusually large attendance of Parishioners at the Easter Vestry, the meeting had to be adjourned to the Girl's School. The accounts, audited by Messrs Bennett & Forfeitt showed receipts £242 7s 0d, expenses £224 16s 4¼d, which, after the payment of £7 owing to the Vicar, would leave a balance in hand of about £10. Such a result was considered very satisfactory.



## **Tribute to Meta Roberts 1909-2008**

Meta was born in Birkenhead; her father was a soldier and her mother the sister of soldiers, Cameroon Highlanders. When Meta was two years old, her mother died of TB and Meta was also unwell. The doctors gave her little chance of survival in urban Merseyside, and so it was decided she should go to her father's parents in Ottery St Mary. And so Granny, a strict Victorian, became the key figure in the young Meta's upbringing. 'What would granny say?' was a constant refrain through Meta's long life. Ninety years later Meta still felt the injustice as she recalled being punished just for asking Granny what certain words meant which the boys had shouted at her in the playground. When the relationship got too strained Meta sought consolation with the horse in the field at the bottom of the garden. This was the start of a lifelong love of all God's creatures, especially those with four legs.

When her aunt married a farmer, Meta enjoyed the opportunity to ride his shire horses and rapidly displayed a natural talent.

Her first employment was as a secretary with a firm of solicitors in Newton Popleford. At the start of the war, Meta joined the Bank of England. During the war Meta was evacuated with other members of staff to the manager's estate at Whitchurch; for Meta there was the added bonus of being asked to exercise the manager's horses. There was some surprise that a secretary could ride so well.

For much of the time, the confidential nature of Meta's work required her to have a private office. Not liking pomposity, she was greatly amused when male colleagues expressed surprise at this and felt no need to explain the reason.

After retirement Meta enjoyed many a cup of tea, walks and swimming with Mary Stacey, who lived in the manse next door.

Well into her nineties, Meta was organised to try Abbeyfields home, but she decided she could not stay as it was full of old people and she had important letters to write. She promptly organised a taxi home. And so a live-in carer was organised for Meta. With a new occupant of the manse next door, Meta had a 'Golden Year' when she renewed old acquaintances and visited places from long ago, bringing back many memories. Meta also enjoyed many new experiences. After the Ecumenical Covenant Service at St Anthony's, Meta remarked how dramatically relationships between Catholics and Protestants had improved in her lifetime.

Meta's ability to amuse others was there to the end. When Revd Maynard Beal from Illinois visited her, her eyes were closed. Open your eyes, he said. 'Why should I, I will only have to close them again,' came the reply.

## Playing Hooky

In the early 1960s I lived with my parents in Newlands Avenue.

One Sunday evening my mother and I decided to play hooky. 'Let's go to evening service at the Methodist church in Station Road instead of our own Congregational Church in Watling Street,' we said to each other. So under cover of darkness, my mother and I set out along Newlands Avenue on foot.

Low and behold we had not travelled far when a big black limousine drew up alongside us. 'Would you like a lift to church?' asked a kindly voice from within. Yes, you've guessed it! It was a fellow member of our Congregational Church. Our hearts sank! My mother and I did not like to confess our intended plan so meekly accepted the kind offer and joined evening worship at the Congregational Church as usual.

The opportunity for us to play hooky never arose again for various reasons. But in due time both the Congregational and Methodist churches ceased having evening services, and some years later the two became one.

Mind you, I must confess I still feel a little sorry we didn't get to the Methodist church that Sunday evening.

**Alan Vine**



## *Baptisms*

### **St Anthony's**

20th January Emily Georgia DEEM

### **Christ Church & St John's**

20 January 2008 Vincent CAPALDO



## *Funerals*

### **United Free Church**

18th January Meta ROBERTS (98)

### **Christ Church & St John's**

20th December Ian CHRISTMAS (47)

21st January David MOLYNEUX (76)

21st January Jane (Gwendoline) ELLIS (92)

4th February Walter KNIGHT (74)

8th February Kathleen LE SUEUR (89)

### **St Anthony's**

18th January Mary Dooley O'CONNOR (85)

# The Centenary Celebration in St. Albans Abbey

Sunday, 20 January, was a typical dull, damp, winter's day, not one for going out, but over 2000 people made the effort to visit St. Albans Abbey. Why? The occasion was to mark 100 years of ecumenism. What a day, what an event and what effect, if any, will it have on those who attended?

In 1908 Fr. Paul Watson, an Anglican priest in the diocese of New York, introduced an eight day period of prayer for Christian Unity. Over the following decades the ecumenical movement grew and has born fruit. Then in 1968 a worldwide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was promoted, with the support of the World Council of Churches and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

The celebration of the Centenary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in the Abbey Church of St. Albans was a special occasion as it was also 25 years since the formation of the denominational chaplains to the Abbey.

The theme of '**That they may be one**' was truly demonstrated by the welcome all received on entering the Abbey. The program was due to commence at 4pm, but soon after 2.30pm crowds of all ages and denominations descended on the Abbey. There they wandered though and around it on the aptly named **Unity Trail**. There were over 30 stalls from various groups and societies displaying details of the activities and of course looking for volunteers to join them.

The afternoon contained a varied programme, which included the famous London Gospel Choir, who sang with a strength and richness that reverberated through the Abbey; a composite Salvation Army band, which provided the day with stirring martial music and popular tunes; and Pam Rhodes, the BBC presenter of **Songs of Praise**, who spoke about her love of presenting the programme and of several of the moving stories of the wonderful people she had encountered over the fifteen plus years of her connection with it.

The main service commenced at 6.30 p.m. was led by Dr. Jeffrey John, the Dean of St. Albans, and a procession of all the Church representatives led by the choir who then processed from the sanctuary to the main altar in the Nave. To stress the significance of the celebration, Bishop Martin Lind, Bishop of Linköping of the Lutheran Church in Sweden, was present, accompanied by a group of his flock. Also present was the Roman Catholic Archbishop Coccia of Pesaro, Italy, also accompanied by priests and some of his congregation.

The first part of the service was the signing of a twinning agreement between the Diocese of St. Albans and that of the Archdiocese of Pesaro, Fano, Urbino. This ceremony was conducted with a degree of ecclesiastical jollity.

The service continued with a series of prayers and readings given by the leaders of the 12 denominations attending. The sermon was delivered by the well known Dominican preacher Fr. Timothy Radcliffe OP, a leading theologian and writer. He led us through the development of ecumenism, its meaning and went on to question why for at least for the past three decades little or no progress has been achieved. He asked us to reflect on what we are going to do about it and, more importantly, whether the church leaders were prepared to commit themselves to a genuine attempt to obtain unity? His words rang out clearly through the magnificent Abbey. We only hope that they and we ourselves listened and heard his clear message.

As the congregation left one could hear the same question being asked frequently, **'Where do we go from here?'**

**Anne Carter, Chris Parkin, Peter Moss**

**Conchita Pereira Lamelas-Silver writes:**

A year ago, the Carol Service at Christ Church in Radlett lifted my spirits; this year the celebrations of 'The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity' at St. Albans Abbey have inspired me to write again.

It was not only the act of praying together that lifted my spirits, it actually was seeing and feeling that the Spirit of Christ is not only alive after 2000 years but **willing to move forward**. That was my feeling within the Abbey's walls.

Regarding this year's celebrations, it has been proved that we can pray together, so do you think that we should **move forward** and share what some of the churches praying together have got in common? The Sacrament of Communion -- some churches already do, but others do not.

I was disappointed at St. Anthony's in Radlett during The Prayer for Christian Unity that we were unable to receive Communion: the greatest of the sacraments instituted by Christ among His loving and most loyal disciples, probably the greatest of all the sacraments to represent unity. At St. Albans Abbey, it showed that apart from 'pray without ceasing', we would like to spend the time and energy to underline and emphasise what we can share more than what we can't share.

I suggest that for the next 100 years we focus only on what we can share together rather than on where we differ...

We don't here in Radlett have the power to resolve doctrinal differences, however, by praying together in **communion** and **unison**, we can **move forward** inspiring the 21st Century challenges and 'utopia' to achieve unity among faiths and religions and perhaps influence the willpower of other institutions within our churches to making decisions.

We often ask ourselves how to be a 21st Century witness of Christ among not only Christians but other religions and churches, too.

My open question is: Shall we Roman Catholics, in the near future, when praying for unity share the Sacrament of Communion?

# Diary

## March

- 3 Monday Lent Talk – Steve Berry, a Builder**  
8pm St John's
- 6 Thursday Holy Communion at Phillimore Court**  
11am Residents' Lounge
- Radlett Art Society**  
"Botticelli the Primavera" by Michael Sangster  
7.30 for 8pm The Radlett Centre
- 
- 7 Friday Women's World Day of Prayer** see page 15  
7pm Christ Church
- 9 Sunday Hymn singing at Phillimore Court**  
3pm Residents' Lounge
- 10 Monday Lent Talk – Adrienne Freeman, a Music Therapist**  
8pm St John's
- 12 Wednesday Radlett Music Club, Delrow House, 8pm.**  
Amy Dickson, saxophone & Catherine Milledge, piano  
"Rachmaniov, Milhaud, Creston". £6 Conc. £5
- 
- 13 Thursday RECC 8pm at St Anthony's**
- 8-17 Lifeboat Week**  
House to house collection in aid of Lifeboats
- 
- 15 Saturday Lifeboats Sreet Collection**  
outside Watling Street shops
- 
- 17 Monday 8 pm Holy Week Service at St Anthony's**
- 18 Tuesday 8pm Holy Week Service** at United Free Church  
**Lifeboat Flag Day** at Radlett Station
- 19 Wednesday 8pm Holy Week Service** at St John the Baptist Aldenham

## **March** continued

- 20 Thursday 8pm Maundy Thursday Service** at St John's
- 21 Good Friday Act of Witness, 11am** at the War Memorial
- 23 Easter Sunday** Services at all our churches

**Hymn singing at Phillimore Court**  
3pm Residents' Lounge

## **April**

- 3 Thursday 10am-3pm Holiday Club** for 5-11's at St John's
- Holy Communion at Phillimore Court**  
11am Residents' Lounge
- 13 Sunday Hymn singing at Phillimore Court**  
3pm Residents' Lounge
- 17 Thursday Aldenham Parish Council "All Faiths" meeting**  
8pm The Radlett Centre
- 22 Tuesday 8.15pm Radlett Music Club**  
Audley Horn Trio, "Beethoven, Elgar, Brahms"  
The Radlett Centre, 8.15pm £12 Conc. £10.50
- 24 Thursday Radlett Art Society**  
"English Caricature- Hogarth to Punch"  
By Andrew Davies  
The Radlett Centre – 7.30 for 8pm
- 27 Sunday Hymn singing at Phillimore Court**  
3pm Residents' Lounge



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# **SAINTHOOD: HOW CANONISATION WORKS**

Since we have been reading about saints in the pages of **Unison** for the past several years, it seemed apposite that we examine how someone is formally recognised as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church today.

The canonisation process is detailed and involves a careful evaluation of the facts submitted to the Congregation for Causes of Saints, a panel comprised of theologians and cardinals at the Vatican.

Canonisation can take many years, sometimes centuries. Normally, the process does not begin until five years after the candidate's death, although the Pope can now make certain exceptions, such as in the case of the late John Paul II. In any event, the candidate's life must reflect heroic virtues and an exceptional love of God. Detailed examples must be given and verified.

## **Venerable status**

Once the candidate has died, a sponsor group, the Actor Causae, recommends him (or her) to the bishop of his diocese. The bishop then investigates the evidence the group has submitted. If he finds the information to be true and verifiable, he submits a report to the Congregation at the Vatican. This is known as the Apostolic Process. The Congregation review a summary of the case, called a Positio, which nine of them study. If a majority approve it, it goes to the rest of the Congregation for further examination. If they endorse the information submitted, the Prefect of the Congregation then declares the candidate to be venerable. The status of venerable means that the candidate was a role model of Catholic virtues. However, the faithful are not allowed to pray to those with this designation.

## **Beatification**

This step follows the designation of venerable. In order for the candidate to qualify, the Actor Causae must submit evidence and testimony that one miracle occurred upon intercession to the posthumous candidate. Recent examples from the past decade include a cancer sufferer being healed and an inexplicable mending of broken ribs incurred in a car accident. Both of these have been reportedly attributed to Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The only exception to the requirement of a miracle is in the case of martyrs, who can be beatified without them. Once the panel decides that the candidate should attain this status, they approach the Pope to confirm the decision. If he does, then the candidate has the title of Blessed (Bl.) conferred upon him, can be venerated locally and feature on prayer cards. People may also have Masses said in his honour. However, only people from the his local area have permission to venerate him in these ways.

## **Canonisation – the final step**

If the Actor Causae can gather evidence of a second posthumous miracle attributed to the candidate, then they can submit the candidate's name for canonisation. However, the Congregation's examination of evidence is rigorous, requiring testimony from eyewitnesses and physicians. The panel write and examine several reports during this stage. The same cardinals and consultors, as they are known, must vote in all discussions. Prior to 1983, when John Paul II streamlined the process, a prosecutor from the panel used to refute evidence presented in order to further help the Congregation arrive at a well-considered decision. He was known as the Devil's Advocate, although this position has since been eliminated.

If the panel finds the evidence submitted proves the case for canonisation, they approach the Pope. If the Pope agrees, he issues a Bull of Canonisation. This is a command to the universal Church to recognise and venerate the new saint. The saint will have a feast day (the day of his death) and Masses in his honour. Churches, schools and other institutions can be named after him. He may also be declared a patron saint of a profession or cause. The Pope holds a ceremony of canonisation at the Vatican, which is open to the faithful. It should be noted that the faithful ask saints only to mediate with the Lord on their behalf. Strict adoration is for God alone.

**Watch for another Saint of the Month in the May/June issue of Unison.**

**Cynthia Hunt**



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