

From the Vicarage

By now I think most people must know that my eldest Daughter Felicity has become engaged and is planning to get married on the 4th April next year which is the Saturday



before Palm Sunday. The Vicarage family seems to have gone into overdrive on wedding plans and preparations. If it's not guest lists it's ideas about venues or discussions about flowers. For someone whose planning extends only as far as the next liturgical season all this forward thinking leaves me a little bemused.

Yet looking forward is something that Jesus was constantly engaged in. As we start our Lenten journey this year we think of the time that Our Lord spend in the desert in preparation for his new life. Up to this point he had been content to follow in his Father Joseph's footsteps as a carpenter building, renovating and joining. He was the person that you thought of if you needed a new door or wanted to build and extension. Jesus would have trained with Joseph from the age of 13 learning to make joints and corners, learning to choose the right wood for the job in hand. Then as he grew older he would have taken on more of the work himself.

Then suddenly Jesus changes course. He gives up the trade he has learned from Joseph and begins the work of his Father in heaven. For this too he has to serve an apprenticeship. He needs to learn about himself and what his limitations and strengths are. He needs to test himself to see how he will cope with the stresses and temptations of his new work. Thus the Holy Spirit leads Jesus out into the desert to be by himself.

What many people today forget is their own need to know themselves. We are so used to a twenty-four hour lifestyle with instant communication that we tend to ignore the fact that we need space and time just to be. Changes are going on around us all the time and we tend to react to them rather than preparing for them. We are all in need of our 'wilderness' time to have the space to plan for the future. We all need time for quiet reflection to catch up on the past and to look forward.

In the desert Jesus discovered what was really important by understanding what he could do without and what he needed. He discovered that his relationship with his heavenly Father was central to everything else and that he had a real need of prayer time. By putting God at the heart of everything Jesus discovered that he could overcome the more alluring temptations of the material world. Things like power and wealth which are transient assumed their proper perspective.

So we too can take this message to heart. By putting God at the centre of everything in our life we can find out what really matters to us. By bringing everything to God in prayer we can deal with the past and move forward into the future with confidence. Whatever life has in store for us nothing can defeat us if God is there as our guide.

So, as we enter the season of Lent let us all make more time in our lives for prayer. Let us be prepared to bring to God all those things that trouble us and cause friction in our lives and ask Him for help. God will answer our prayers, not always in the way we expect but always in a way that has our best interests at heart.

May God Bless you all, David

Benefice News

Local Police Number

08453 30 2010

For all non-emergency calls

Fly Tipping and Litter

To report to Staffordshire Moorlands

District Council call

Freephone 08001693159

Used postage stamps



These are collected and sent to various charities. Please trim the stamps leaving a narrow border of envelope. There are collecting bags at St. Bartholomew's, St. Luke's & St. Paul's Quarnford. The stamps represent a simple way for all of us to contribute to the welfare of others without cost to ourselves. Please collect your used stamps and put them in one of the church bags.

Toufic - Our sponsored child

Just before Christmas we received a lovely card, coloured by Toufic, wishing us all a Happy Christmas. At the beginning of January the following letter arrived

"Dear friends, I write you this letter to tell you that I returned back to school after a happy vacation. I hope you are well and I thank you for your love. Special thanks for your lovely card. God bless you. On behalf of your child, Toufic. Teacher"



A ROADSHOW is to help residents in Longnor to connect to scores of public services.

District Council customer services advisors will visit Longnor next month as part of a Moorlands Connect campaign to improve access to council services.

The aim is to ensure that people can access as many council services as possible within their own communities, including viewing planning applications and reporting waste collection concerns. Internet access will also be provided at the event by the 'e-bus', and advisors will demonstrate how council services can be accessed online.

In addition Staffordshire Police will be holding a surgery to answer any questions regarding local policing issues.

The roadshow will take place between 9.30am and 12.30pm on Saturday, 16th February at the Honeycombe Centre.

So please come along! The Council would welcome residents' feedback to help develop services in your area.

For further information please contact Linden Vernon at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council on 01538 395613.

The Benefice

Continuing a series of short articles on the organisation of the church this month we are looking at the DEANERY. What follows is a short definition of what a Deanery is in within the Anglican church. In the Church of England and many other Anglican Churches a **deanery** is a group of parishes within a smaller region of an archdeaconry. The more formal term, rural deanery, is less often used. A deanery is presided over by the rural dean.

The deanery synod has a membership of all clergy who are licensed to a parish within the deanery, plus elected lay members from every parish.

The term deanery is also used to apply to the ecclesiastical districts of Jersey and Guernsey, which are Royal Peculiars and whose deans hold a status more equivalent to an archdeacon than a rural dean.

The term deanery is also often used to refer to the house, or official residence, of the dean of a cathedral.

The main purpose of the Deanery is to act as a forum for a group of Parishes with a particular Archdeaconry. In our case we link together the four benefice of Alstonfield, Ipstones, Longnor, and Waterhouses. This covers seventeen churches. Each Parish within the Deanery is represented by its Clergy and two lay people. The main business is conducted at Deanery Synod Meetings which are held three times a year. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss issues that are common to all Parishes such as the Parish Share, to share good practice among the Parishes, to coordinate activities that involve all the parishes such as youth and school work. The Deanery Synod also invites speakers from different areas of Church life to come and give presentations.

Information can then be taken back to individual PCCs.

The Deanery structure is an important part of Church life as it is the first tier of local church government. Ideas that affect the whole church can be brought to a Deanery Synod. Here they are discussed and voted upon. If passed the idea will go forward to Diocesan Synod where the whole Diocese gets the opportunity to debate it. Again if passed the idea can be taken forward to General Synod and could become part of the whole

Confirmation Classes

Confirmation Classes have started at the Vicarage but it's not too late to join. At present we have three candidates and one person who has come along as a sort of refresher course. In the past Confirmation Classes have been run exclusively for those who are looking to confirm the promises made on their behalf at their baptism and so join the Church of England. This year I want to open these classes to anyone who wants to learn more about the church, its faith and beliefs and the rituals and practices that it has adopted over the centuries. Those seeking Confirmation should be 11 years or over. I hope that a number of people will use this opportunity to come along and find out more about the Christian faith.

From Tuesday 19th February We will be using the Course as part of our preparation for Lent. Should you wish to know more about what we will be doing then please ring the vicar on 01298 83742.

**Dates for your diary -
February**

6th History Live at Hollinsclough

Benefice Lent Course

This will start on Tuesday 19th February and run during Lent. This year we will be combining with our confirmation candidates to look at the foundations of our faith. The evening will begin with refreshments. Come along at 7pm to the Vicarage and join the group to explore the Church and the Christian faith.

Teddies for Tragedies

Keep up the good work for all those children traumatised by conflict. If you would like to join in the scheme for knitting Teddies then please contact Janet McNicol who will be pleased to provide you with the necessary information.



Mobile Library

Quarnford /Flash	Springhead Road Junction	10.20 - 10.35
	Flash School	10.45 - 11.30
	Travellers Rest	11.35 - 11.55
	Lower Summerhill	12.00 - 12.15
Hollinsclough	Chapel	12.25 - 12.55
Longnor	The Square	2.05 - 2.35
	Old Saw Mill	2.40 - 2.45
Barrowmoor	Badgers Croft	2.55 - 3.05
Reapsmoor	Swallow Moss	3.25 - 3.30
	Park House	3.35 - 3.40

Friday 1st Feb, 15th

Sheen	Dovefield	12.35 - 12.45
	Cross Cottage	1.55 - 2.05
	Ball Ridge Farm	2.10 - 2.20
	Woolaway	2.25 - 2.40

Monday 11th Feb, 25th Feb

Magazine subscriptions were due in January

Deadline for the Magazine

All material should be delivered to Lynda by 20th February. Please send to Mrs. L. Bricklebank, Cottage of Content, Hollinsclough, Buxton, SK17 0RG. Telephone 01298 83541 or email lynda@coatetown.freeserve.co.uk

Paid box adverts at £2/month (£20/year) to be in all editions of the Parish Magazine.



WHEN I BECAME A MAN I PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS

Longnor

St. Bartholomew's Church News



I am delighted to be able to report that attendance at Sunday services at St. Bartholomew's is up on this time last year. It has been very welcoming to see more people. The Communion & Plough Blessing service was well attended and we are very grateful to Norman Mellor for providing a Plough and to the family and Mavis for taking part in the service. I hope that next year we will have more farming families coming.

At the time of writing we are awaiting a visit from the Archdeacon to give the go ahead to have the British Legion Standards properly mounted on the wall and a Book of Remembrance created to honour past legionnaires. We hope at the same time he will give the OK to have the clock face refurbished. If this is the case then the work will start in late April or early May. It would be good to have it completed ready for the summer.

As you will know we did not pay our Parish Share in full last year. We did manage to pay £12,000 as well as our regular expenses. At the time of writing we are waiting to meet with representatives of the Diocese to see what can be done to make things more affordable for us. We are hoping to have a reassessment. Failing this it will either mean trying to raise more funds or consider taking on additional parishes to spread the cost.

A number of people have asked about progress on the Organ. The money for the repairs has been raised and we are now in a queue with the Organ Restorer. This is a very specialised task and there is only one firm that the Diocese approves of in this area. I very much hope that the work will be undertaken sometime this year. As soon as I know more I will pass on the information in the magazine.

Donation to Longnor Church

Birthday Memories of Bill Etches from Marian and family.

Gratefully received

Best Wishes to Maud Preston who has been in North Staffs.

Reapsmoor

St John's Church News



Last Month we had an Insurance Assessment carried out on St. John's. At the time of writing we are awaiting the results. We

have discovered however that we were paying for insurance on the building which we did not need because of course it is owned by the Peak District National Park. We hope therefore that we can reduce our premiums as we are now only looking at Contents Insurance.

That said we need to continue to raise additional funds in support of the higher bills we now face for heat and light and for the continued increase in the Parish Share. We are part of the Parish of Longnor and last year we were about £1300 short of our total. If you have any ideas about how we can raise extra funds please get in touch with either the Vicar or Marjory.

Thanks

I'm afraid that the following was omitted from last month's magazine.

A big thank you to Chris Wilshaw for the lovely Christmas arrangements, which took up 2 nights of her precious time in the bitter cold, we are very grateful to you.

Quarnford

St Paul's Church News



The weather has been dreadful this month and I hope this accounts for our drop in numbers at the Sunday Services.

I am delighted to be able to inform you that the school has given the church a key to their new extension which has a very nice toilet. This we can now use on a Sunday if needed. The Key is kept in the church vestry and may be accessed through the Church Wardens. We are also using this school room for our PCC Meetings which makes them much more comfortable. Our next PCC Meeting will be on Friday 22nd February not Friday 15th as originally planned as this was in half term and it would not have been possible to arrange heating.

The Vicar is considering offering a regular "Sunday Club" for children but during the

week, not on Sunday. This would run after school and involve games, stories, and prayer time. He will be approaching the school during this month to see if it is possible to run it in the school. It would last for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour after the end of the school day. If the school are agreeable he would need help from one or more ladies to guarantee a mixed gender team at each meeting. If you would be interested in helping with this project or you think your son or daughter might like to come along then please get in touch with the Vicar.

Flower Festival 2008

Sadly, at the time this magazine was printed we had only received one reply to the questionnaire in the January magazine. If the 2008 Flower Festival is to go ahead we need financial and practical help. Closing date for replies - February 21st.

PCC Meeting

Friday 22nd February at Flash School A decision will be made at this meeting about the Flower Festival.

Quarnford Quest

Winners for January:

1 st B Stead	Number 57	£15
2 nd M Naden	Number 34	£10
3 rd J Kidd	Number 67	£8.50

Winners helping us here in Quarnford this month are from London, Devon and Buxton.

**Membership forms are available in church, Flash Bar Stores or from Janet
Tel: 01298 812053**

An Orangutan's Reading List

One day the zoo-keeper noticed that the orangutan was reading two books: the Bible and Darwin's Origin of Species. Surprised, he asked the ape, "Why are you reading both those books?"

"Well," said the orangutan, "I just wanted to know if I was my brother's keeper or my keeper's brother."

Sheen

St. Luke's Sheen



I was greatly encouraged by the attendance at the Benefice Service at the end of December. Perhaps I should let Janet take more Benefice Services.

This year we will need to look for a replacement Organist. Helena is going to University in September and will be hard at work preparing for her A Level Exams from May onwards. If you know of anyone who would be will to come and play for our Main services please ask them to get in touch either with the Vicar or the Church Wardens. I am sure that the church would be willing to consider sponsoring someone who wanted to train on the organ. We have a very good Instrument at St. Luke's and it would be a great pity if it were to fall silent.

On Sunday 17th Feb we are having a special Children's event in church to introduce our New Sunday Club. It will start at 2.30pm with refreshments and games and end at 3.30pm with a short act of Worship. It will be aimed at the 5 - 11 age group but other children and their families are very welcome to come along. If it is successful then it will be repeated on a monthly basis on the 3rd Sunday. Why not come and give it a try?

We have this month just received our Quinquennial Report and the church wardens are reading it. It will be the main item on the agenda of the PCC Meeting which will be Monday 18th February at 7.30pm in church.

JANUARY'S ONE HUNDRED CLUB RESULTS

1 st No 24	Carol Alcock	£20
2 nd No 76	Helen Bury	£15
3 rd No 88	John Gould - (Newfields)	£10
4 th No 29	Jean Belfield	£7
5 th No 54	Brian Thompson	£5.50
6 th No 27	Susan Shann	£4

Thank you, to all 123 Members

If anyone would like to join the 100 Club please phone Ann on 84396 or see George Grindon or any PCC member. It cost just £12 a year and the money raised is split equally between the church and prize money.

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS - Thank you to Gwen Fearn

LENT LUNCH -Monday 25th February from 12.30 to 1.30 in Sheen Village Hall
Please come and join us for lunch of home made soup and warm bread and all you need to give is a donation to the Lent appeal.

MOTHERS DAY SERVICE - early notice for Mothering Sunday service which is on 2nd March.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY - to Gwen Fearn who is 94 years young on 7th February and Amy Riley who is 92 years young on 29th February.



VILLAGE HALL MEETING - 8pm in Sheen Village Hall. Anybody is welcome at the meetings.

WHIST DRIVE - 22nd February 8pm in Sheen Village Hall. All profit goes to St Luke's Church.

AEROBICS CLASS - New Year!!!! New Class

Come and get in shape for Easter. It's early this year so no time to waste, come and join us. Thursday night from 7pm, first time free and after that £2.50 per session in Sheen Village Hall.

For more information contact Pam 84809 or Julie 84507. All you need is loose fitting clothing and a pair of trainers

NEW CLASS - Learn to Crochet Thursday 7th, 14th 21st February 1pm to 3pm in Sheen Village Hall. You only need a 3.5 or 4mm crochet hook and ball of smooth double knitting wool. It costs £2.00 per session. For more information or book a place please contact Ann on 84396.

SHEEN WI - February meeting is on Thursday 28th in Sheen Village Hall at 2pm. Please feel free to join us. We have guest speakers and refreshments are served.

POST OFFICE OPENINGS IN SHEEN

Sheen Post office opens as normal Monday mornings 9am onwards.

New Year's Eve Party

Once again Sheen saw in the New Year with style and stamina! A big thank you to all who helped with setting up the room and of course cleaning up afterwards. Many thanks to Martin and Charlotte for once again providing the music - it just gets better and better. One more thank you to everyone who came along and made it such a good night. Total money raised from ticket sales was £301.00, this will go towards the upkeep and improvement of the Village Hall.

Hollinsclough

News from Hollinsclough School

We are pleased to welcome Marie Keane as our new Key Stage 2 teacher. Over the last ten years Marie has taught in many schools in the Buxton and surrounding area and we feel that she will be a great asset to our team.



In History the juniors are studying Britain in the 1930's and 40's. They are especially looking at the 2nd World War and the changes that have taken place since then. We would particularly like to hear from anyone who remembers these years and who would feel able to come in and talk to the children.

We are now into the second term of the Key Stage 2 music project. This involves all the children learning music through the violin. Two music specialists, Mr Gerrard & Mr Brown, visit the school every week to teach the pupils. All the teachers are expected to join in as well and, on a personal note I am greatly enjoying these lessons. I am also very surprised at the good progress we are making and by the fact that we can now all play several tunes.
June Wherry, Headteacher

Hollinsclough Chapel



Services for February
3rd Margaret Crawshaw HC
10th Colin Smith
17th Janet Evans
24th At Earl Sterndale

All at 2.30 pm

Hollinsclough Action Group

The next meeting is at 7.30 Monday, February 4th in the Chapel Hall.
Everyone welcome

History Live

Wednesday February 6th at 7.30pm in the Chapel Hall.

"The Use of Water Power on the River Dane", with Tony Bonson who will base a talk, illustrated by slides, on his recent book on the subject.



Our famous refreshments are included in the admission price. We're a friendly bunch who love to see new faces and also welcome back old friends.

Newtown

St. Paul's Newtown

Our attendance figures for the year are holding at about the same level and we now need to focus on ways to attract more people into worship both on a Sunday and at our midweek service on Thursday morning. We have the warmest church in the Benefice as well as a hearing loop. Let's see if we can make 2008 a year of growth.



Thanks

Many thanks to Mr. Stan Riley and Victor & Edith for their Christmas donation and also to Jason & Helen Kidd for the gift of a beautiful Christmas tree which, when decorated gave our Church that extra Christmas buzz. Further thanks to all who attended our Christmas Holy Communion service, it was very nice to see so many children in church and thank you to those who brought party food and wine to make our Christmas celebration such a great success.



Gradbach Chapel

Services for February

3rd Rev Simon

Sutcliffe 2.30

10th Sunday School 10.30

17th E Massey 2.30

24th A Massey 11.00

From the Readership

Betty's Mincemeat Almond Slice

This freezes well, but is rather fragile so needs careful handling, especially when first baked.

Use an 8 inch (20cm) spring-form or loose-based deep sandwich tin.

Ingredients

6oz butter

8oz self-raising flour

6oz golden caster sugar

5oz ground almonds

2 small eggs, beaten

few drops almond extract

10oz mincemeat

½ oz flaked almonds

Method

1. Line the base of the tin with non-stick baking parchment. Heat the oven to Gas 4/180C/350F.
2. Rub the butter into the flour; add the sugar and ground almonds; combine together with beaten eggs and almond extract.
3. Press half of the mixture into the tin using the back of a metal spoon; spread the mincemeat evenly over to within ½ inch of the edge; cover with the remaining cake mixture right to the edge of the tin; sprinkle on the flaked almonds.
4. Bake for 45 – 50 minutes until golden brown; leave in the tin for 30 minutes; carefully remove and slide onto a serving plate.
5. Serve warm or cold.

"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home."

- Edith Sitwell

History Notes

Alstonfield Deanery Magazine

February 1918

Longnor

BAPTISMS.

Dec. 25—Baptized and entered into Christ's Church on Christmas Day: William Isaac Smedley, son of John and Mary Ann Weston.

It is good thus to mark in humble reverence the birthday of HIM WHO is the Great Saviour of all mankind.

Jan. 20—Duncan Alison, son of Luke Arnold and Mary Gregory (at Hollinsclough).

OUR SOLDIERS.

Seen home in Longnor area: Ptes Nadin, E. Prince, C. Weston, G. Milner.

Our sympathy with Pte. C. Cope, Gunner Tom Kirkham and Pte. Jesse Wood (wounded).

We hear that Pte. is now Sergt. Alan Langdon.

BURIALS.

John Edge, of Yew Tree Cottage, Warslow, aged 56 Years.

Eli Ball, Leek Workhouse Infirmary, aged 76 years.

Jacob Bagshaw, of Hardingsbooth, aged 74 years.

A.E. H. STANHAM, BA.,

Vicar and Surrogate.

QUARNFORD AND RAMSHAW.

The roads in this parish were a mass of ice on the day of special prayer; nevertheless, there was a very good attendance at Church, chiefly men. The collections for the Red Cross came to £2.

SOCIAL.

On Dec. 28th, a very successful Social was held in the Schoolroom. After all expenses were paid, we cleared £6 5s. 3d. £5 was given to the Day School Fund and the balance handed over to the Church wardens.

The Wardens have generously given the proceeds of this Social and of the Sale of fruit at the Harvest to the School and Red Cross, thereby depleting their Fund, about £10.

CHURCH BOILER. Mr. Isaac Kirkham has kindly given an additional 2/6

FUNERAL.

Dec. 29—John Wardle, Newtown, Hayfield, aged 56

SHEEN.

The Churchwardens desire to express their gratitude to all those who contributed towards the success of the Christmas Social. Thanks to the hearty response which was accorded, considerably over £6 was realised on that occasion. Considering the number of counter attractions during the week, and on the night itself, the large number present indicated the popularity of our pleasant Socials and Dances. Gifts, either in coin or kind, were kindly sent by the following :— Mrs. Rose, Mrs. F. Beresford, Mrs. R. T. Bassett, Mrs Birch, Mrs. T. Brandon, Mrs. Belfield, Mrs. Critchlow (Mare Dole), Mrs. Calladine, Mrs. G. H. Critchlow, Miss. Critchlow (Pilsbury), Mrs. A. Goodwin, Mrs. W. Gilman, Mrs. A. Gee, Mrs. Humphries, Mrs. Heath, Mrs. Lawton, Mrs. J. Lomas, Miss Landgren, Mrs. J. Manifold, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. E. Prince, Mrs. G. Riley, Mrs. J. W. Riley, Mrs. Redfern, Mr. Smith (Broadmeadow), Mr. G. Smith, Mrs. S. Stubbs, Mrs. J. Stubbs, Miss Shenton, Mrs. Titterton, Mrs. Wheeldon, and Miss. H. Wright.

Replies have, at the time of writing, been received from eleven of the eighteen recipients of the Christmas Boxes sent to Sheen soldiers. Needless to say they all express their great surprise and extreme pleasure in the most welcome gift, and desire that the donors should receive their heartfelt thanks. They say that the seasonable gift and wishes have not only shown that they are not being forgotten, but have encouraged them on to further efforts in the great undertaking

which they, along with others, are engaged in. Their one desire is that the war may come to a speedy conclusion, and permit them to come back to Sheen, and personally thank all those who have contributed to their happiness during this Christmas time. Those who have replied are :—B. H. Bury, J. W. Critchlow, R.S. Bury, J. H. Bury, T. Sutton, T. H. Critchlow, C. Critchlow, C. Finney, J. Lomas, W. Manifold, A. Wilson.

February 1958

QUARNFORD.

Social Events. Will you all note that this year we have arranged a mid-Lent dance on Friday, March 14th. We do hope that as many as possible will be present.

The profits from the last dance amounted to £7 12s. 4d. and also from the recent Whist Drive £4 18s 3d.

Many of you will have seen displayed in the Church porch the statement of accounts with regards to our Christmas Bazaar. £38 19s 6d happened to be the total profit.

Donations on the occasion of the Bazaar were received from the following :- Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson. £5; Mrs. Hudson, £1.

ALTAR Flowers Feb. 2nd. Mrs. Saxton; Feb. 16th. Mrs Gardner. Donations received instead of gifts of flowers: Mr. Stanley Frodshan. 10/-: Mr. Harry Frodsham 5/-.

BURIAL January 21st Heather Rose Murray, aged 6months.

R. W. THOMPSON, Vicar.

SHEEN.

BURIAL OF ANNIE STUBBS. This took place on Saturday. 28th December. She was 68 years of age. The following gave money in lieu of flowers :-£1 10 0: Mr. and Mrs. C. Cope: £1 : Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Birch, Mr. and Mrs. G.G. Critchlow, Mr. George and Miss Hilda Critchlow (Brund). Mr. and Mrs. J.R.

Gould. Mr. and Mrs. W. Grindley. Mr. M. Harrison, Mr. J. Heathcote, Mr. and Mrs. J. Jones. Mr F. F. Oliver and family, Mr. and Mrs. A. Riley, (Spilsbury). Mr. and Mrs. Samson Stubbs. 10/-: Mr. and Mrs. T. Cantrell, Mr. and Mrs. Laynes. Mr. and Mrs. Lownes. Mr. and Mrs. S. Sutton; 5/- : Miss Margaret Cantrell: 2/6: Mr. George Cantrell.

J. V. PHILP, Vicar.

A Weekday Page for Women

Monday's Washing

When the winds blow hard, to prevent sheets blowing over and over the clothes line, clip two or three clip-on pegs to the bottom of each sheet inside to weight them.—MRS. W. M. BIRCH.

In short.—When hanging out the washing, clip the clothes pegs on to a piece of tape or string an hang them round your neck. This saves a lot of time as they are so near at hand.—MRS. R. LYNCH.

When rubber rollers stick together, as they often do when using detergents, just run a little clear water over them and they will be free at once.—MRS. B. SEAGER.

To prevent clothes-prop from falling, screw a spring-peg at top of prop in line with the V cut. The line is gripped by the peg.—Miss L. TUDOR.

Dry socks together.—To save line space when washing socks, pin with rustless safety pins three or four socks toe to welt of each other, and peg the top one only to the line, letting the others hang below.—MRS. B. SHAW.

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From the Diocese

The Bishops' Lent Challenge from all four bishops in the diocese is designed to encourage congregations to make a practical difference to their lives to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce the impact of climate change. The challenge is available for free download from the diocesan website - www.lichfield.anglican.org/lent - in both colour for individual use and black and white (for photocopying). The Lent Challenge material includes suggestions for an accompanying Lent Course. Please note that the documents currently online are uncorrected proofs - the final documents will be online by the end of this week.

February 2008: The Rt Revd Gordon Mursell, Bishop of Stafford

Let's hear it for Anglicanism!

The media have reported what they think is depressing news for Anglicans in England. First came the announcement that Tony Blair has been received into the Roman Catholic Church. Then statistics showed that in 2006 the numbers of people in England attending Roman Catholic worship had exceeded those attending Anglican worship for the first time since the Reformation. And I've lost count of the number of times I hear remarks in the media about how mainstream churches in the UK have "lost it", or are in "terminal decline."

Now in part we only have ourselves to blame. We English Anglicans are extraordinarily good at talking down our church. It's frightening to ask yourself: how often have I been in a conversation with non-churchgoers during which I've

criticized "the Diocese" or "the Evangelicals" or "the Prayer Book groupies" - or simply failed to use the opportunity to say what I really value about my church and my faith? And we are incomprehensibly obsessed with sex - or at least that's the impression we often give. Perhaps we've never really got over the fact that one of our founders (Henry VIII) had serious marital problems.

But all this is light years away from the real purpose and vision of our church, which is to proclaim and celebrate what God has done and is doing for us in Jesus Christ, who died for us and now lives and reigns as lord and king. There's a crucial moment in Matthew's Gospel when Peter (rather reluctantly) gets out of the boat and walks towards Jesus on the water. At first he stays upright; "but when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened" and begins to sink. And Jesus both rescues and rebukes him, saying "you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:30-31). Notice two things: first, Peter is able to walk on water for as long as he focusses single-mindedly on Jesus. The moment he gets worried about the wind (or gay bishops, or the parish share), he starts to sink. Secondly, the word translated "doubt" really means "look in two different directions at once."

Now this is not to say that gay bishops or the parish share don't matter. It is to say that they only matter in the context of what we believe about Jesus Christ. If as a church our overriding priority, in worship and PCC meetings and wherever Anglicans come together, is who Jesus is and what Jesus is asking of us today, we will find these secondary issues look after themselves - because what unites us will then be far greater than what divides us.

The churches that are growing - irrespective of church tradition or social background - are those where this happens. The churches that are declining are those where Jesus has somehow slipped quietly off the agenda and been replaced by the latest crisis or issues to do with institutional maintenance. No wonder that puts people off.

Anglicanism has not lost its way. There are already twenty times as many practising Anglicans in Nigeria as there are here. I have myself witnessed Anglican churches in Malaysia and Hong Kong that are pulsating with life and faith and engaging with justice and peace issues in their locality. And there are countless signs of hope and new life here in our own diocese. If you don't see them in yourself, or your church, ask yourself the hard question: how Christ-centred is my church, and my faith? Or (to put it another way) does your church really behave like an institution (interested in keeping itself going) or like a movement (passionate about its goals and values)?

Anglicanism is a living branch of the Jesus Movement. We stand for a Bible-based faith that is both life-changing and thoughtful, both enthusiastic and challenging, rooted in tradition but deeply engaged in contemporary life and culture. A contradiction in terms? Nonsense. It's the faith Jesus came to teach and to live. So let's celebrate it. For nothing less is good news for our world.

+Gordon Mursell
Bishop of Stafford

Grants from St John's Hospital, Lichfield

St John's invites applications from registered charities for grants to relieve

hardship, need or distress within a social or medical context. Normally the grant will be for capital projects only, and in addition will be given to those groups or organisations whose beneficiaries live or work within the Diocese of Lichfield, an area which covers Staffordshire, much of Shropshire and adjoining parts of the West Midlands Conurbation. These beneficiaries should also fall within a category which would otherwise be eligible for residence in an almshouse. Applications should be made on the official form available from the Steward to the Trustees. The deadline for completed applications is 29th February 2008. Successful applicants will be notified by the 30th June. Further details and an application form can be obtained from Mr R M Hartley, Steward to the Trustees, St John's Hospital, St John Street, Lichfield, WS13 8PB, or by phone: 01543 251884.

Debt advice from the Church of England

The Church of England has compiled a post-Christmas debt check for consumers worried about how much their wallets have been hit by Christmas and New Year spending. It has also published a range of prayers for people living with debt. Coming at a time when 18 per cent of adults in the UK have £10,000 or more of unsecured debt, the release of the 10-point checklist coincides with the launch of a new section of the Church of England website, called Matter of Life and Debt, dedicated to helping people escape from debt problems - and containing sound advice, real-life case studies, useful resources, and helpful prayers. The new resources can be accessed at cofe.anglican.org/debt.

St. Valentine

Historical archives make mention of at least three different individuals (and perhaps as many as seven) credited with the name of Saint Valentine (or Valentinus). The three discussed here were all martyred for their faith and have been recognized by the Catholic Church. The first is described as a priest who resided in Rome and the second is described as a Bishop who resided in Interamna (known today as Terni) in Italy. These two Saint Valentines appear to have been alive during the second half of the Third Century and are said by some sources to be buried on the Flaminia Consular Way...but at different distances from the City of Rome. The ancient Flaminian Gate is now called the Porta del Popolo, but was formerly referred to as the Gate of Saint Valentine. The name seems to have originated from a small church dedicated in the name of the saint which was in the immediate vicinity. Official reports regarding the interrogation of both the aforementioned saints are preserved, but are of a relatively late date and deemed to have little, if any, historical value. Some authorities on the subject believe that the two Saint Valentines mentioned above are likely one and the same individual...a Roman priest who became Bishop in Interamna and was then sentenced there before being returned to Rome for execution. Since both lived during the reign of the same Roman emperor and are believed to have died on the same day, this assumption probably has some validity. The third Saint Valentine is said to have practiced in Africa with a number of associates prior to his martyrdom, but nothing further is known of this particular personage and it is doubtful that he is associated in any

manner with the modern day celebration of Saint Valentine's Day.

In 496 A.D., Pope Gelasius declared February 14 to be the Feast Day of Saint Valentine...Patron Saint of Lovers and Engaged Couples, with particular jurisdiction over the quarrels which arise between sweethearts. The patronage of Saint Valentine also extends to epilepsy (from which he is believed to have suffered), bee-keepers, plague, greetings, travellers and young people. His representations include: birds, roses, a bishop with a crippled or epileptic child at his feet; a bishop with a rooster nearby; a bishop refusing to adore an idol; a bishop being beheaded; a priest bearing a sword; a priest holding a sun; and a priest bestowing sight upon a blind girl. Throughout the world, there are several special resorts that exhibit a romantic year-round theme (but particularly on February 14 with elaborate celebrations) and which are named in honor of Saint Valentine...Saint-Valentin in France (also known as "le village pour les Amoureux"), Saint-Valentin in Austria, Saint-Valentin in Quebec, Canada (founded in 1835 and granted the unique distinction of being the only location in the world with permission to use a heart-shaped date stamp on outgoing mail) and Sakuto Cho in Japan, for example.

Saint Valentine: Holy Priest of Rome:

The date of this Saint Valentine's birth is not known. Along with Saint Marius and his family, Saint Valentine assisted the martyrs during the persecution they suffered under the rule of Claudius II (also known as Claudius the Goth and Claudius the Cruel). In addition, since Rome was at the time involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns, the emperor found it difficult to recruit the male populace into joining his military leagues. Believing this

to be because Roman men were adverse to leaving their loved ones or their families, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements within the City of Rome. Saint Valentine and Saint Marius, however, continued to perform wedding ceremonies in secret. When it was discovered that Saint Valentine was defying the emperor's decree, he was apprehended and dispatched by Claudius to the Prefect of Rome who, being unable to force the saint to renounce Christianity, ordered that Valentine be clubbed, stoned and then beheaded. According to tradition, while Valentine waited in prison for his execution, he corresponded with those under his care by sending letters and love notes to his parishioners. It is also believed that while incarcerated, the Bishop fell in love with a young woman who visited him during his confinement. According to some sources, this was the blind daughter (whose name may have been Julia) of Asterius, the jailer. It is said that God enabled Valentine to miraculously restore the girl's sight. Popular belief indicates that Valentine's farewell message to his love contained a closing that has now transcended time: "From Your Valentine." The saint was executed on February 14 in either 269 A.D. or 270 A.D. In 270 A.D., Pope Julius I is said to have built a church near Ponte Mole in the saint's memory at a location once known as *Porta Valentini* and now called *Porta del Popolo*. The relic bones of this Saint Valentine, who may also have been a physician, are now housed within the Church of Saint Praxed in Rome.

Saint Valentine: Bishop of Interamna:

This Saint Valentine is said to have been scourged, imprisoned and beheaded by Placidus, Prefect of Interamna. The relic bones of this Saint Valentine are housed in a basilica in Terni, a town in Italy which

hails Saint Valentine as its Patron Saint. It is believed that the saint, who lived in the Third Century, dedicated his life to the Christian community of Terni, becoming the first Bishop of the town. Adored by the populace, the fame of Saint Valentine's holiness and miracles reached Rome, his name being linked with love because, according to legend, he was the first religious personage to oversee the celebration of marriage between a pagan man and a Christian woman. Sentenced to death in Rome, he was martyred on February 14 along the Via Flaminia and swiftly buried in order to prevent rioting by the Christians. It is said that three of Saint Valentine's disciples managed to find the body, transferring it to Terni, where the remains were interred within a sacred place. The Basilica of Saint Valentino was later erected in the same location to honor the saint and invoke his protection and blessing. Every year on February 14, the town of Terni now hosts exhibitions, fairs and cultural events which attract many tourists to the area.

While there are no definitive written accounts of any of the aforementioned Saint Valentines, all of whom lived in the Third Century and apparently died on exactly the same day, there is a more recent and documented connection to Ireland. In 1836, Pope Gregory XVI sent a gift to the Carmelite Church in Dublin...recognition of the work carried out by the former prior of the Church, Father John Spratt, widely-known as a very holy man. The gift was a relic of a Christian martyr...a small gold-bound casket which contained the earthly remains of one Saint Valentine (which it might have been if indeed, there is

more than one, is not clear). The relic had been exhumed from the Cemetery of Saint Hyppolytus on the Tibertine Way in Rome, placed into a golden casket and transported to Dublin, where it was enshrined with great ceremony in the little Carmelite Church. Every year, on February 14, the casket is carried in solemn procession to the high altar for a special Mass dedicated to young people and all those in love.

There has been some speculation in modern times that the name of Valentine was originally "Galantine," signifying "gallant," which is a word with obvious associations to courtship. The shift in consonant to "V" is explained by the way Medieval French peasants pronounced the letter "G."