

BE CONFIDENT IN EASTER!

I was glad I watched BBC 'Question Time' on 9th March. The panel of five included the Bishop of Rochester, the Right Reverend Dr. Michael Nazir-Ali.

There were many questions put to the panel, on topics ranging from Tony Blair's interview with Michael Parkinson and the subsequent 'God and Blair' debate to the state of the National Health Service and the considerable ethical issues concerning fertilisation.

I thought the Bishop was outstanding. He gave a clear, confident and polished performance. And I have to say I felt proud he is 'our' Bishop! Here was a

Bishop who was expressing his Christian Faith with regard to complex and difficult matters in a way which clearly engaged with his audience.

The Festival of Easter approaches. This is the greatest of the Christian festivals. Easter tells us that Jesus Christ confronted evil, died for our shortcomings and sins and gives us hope for the future through the gift of eternal life in the resurrection. Wow! What a fantastic truth Easter celebrates!

I hope you will find time to revisit the Easter story. Read one of the accounts in the Gospels of the New Testament of the Bible. Imagine how

it must have been for those who witnessed it. Imagine what impact it might have had on you, had you been there. Ask yourself what it means for you and for your future now.

As I talk with people in my travels I often hear it said that some feel they are just not good enough. Some feel religion is too complex and distant from everyday life. May I ask you to reflect on the fact that none of us is ever good enough?

What we celebrate at Easter is that God knows that. And so he has confronted the issue. The death of Jesus, which we recall on Good Friday, reminds us that Jesus died for those things in our lives which make us feel

not good enough. Through his death Jesus has brought reconciliation to us. He has, as it were, built a bridge, to link us back to God. And the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Day reminds us that death is not the end. That is really something to be excited about!

The faith the Church professes enables us to grapple with the complex issues we face in the world.

My prayer is that Christians will flock to Church this Easter to affirm their faith, however weak it might sometimes feel, and to open up their lives and futures to the love and purposes of the living God.

Canon Paul Miller

Baptism Welcome



A local family recently brought their children to be baptised at St. Mary's, Shortlands and to affirm their wish that their children be brought up as Christians.

Peter and Sara Brown, whose elder daughter, Rhiannon, was baptised at St. Mary's in November 1999, brought their two younger children, Callum and Bethan, to Church to be christened this month.

Photographed above with Peter and Sara (left) are Rhiannon (7 years), Bethan (12 months), Callum (3 1/2 years), Andy Butler and Ann Dineen-Newton who are Bethan's Godparents (right) and Canon Paul Miller, who officiated at the service.

Holy Week and Easter at St. Mary's, Shortlands

Sunday, 9th April: Palm Sunday

- 8.00am Holy Communion
(Book of Common Prayer)
- 10.30am The Blessing of Palms,
Procession and Sung Eucharist
- 6.30pm Service of Words and Music for Holy
Week - 'The Journey to the Cross'
including congregational hymns
and choral anthems by Heinrich Schutz,
Edward Bairstow, Anthony Baldwin,
Johann Cruger and Kenneth Leighton,
Organist: Paul Isom
Music directed by Ian Brentnall

Wednesday, 12th April

- 10.00am Holy Communion and Address

Maundy Thursday, 13th April

- 8.00pm The Eucharist of the Last Supper
and the Washing of Feet
Anthem: Ave Verum (Mozart)

Good Friday, 14th April

- 10.30am Family Service for Good Friday
led by the Reverend Alison Newman
- 2.00pm An Hour at the Cross
led by Canon Paul Miller

Sunday, 16th April: Easter Day

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 10.30am Family Eucharist of Easter Day
with the Distribution of Easter Eggs
- 6.30pm Evensong

What does your child have in the bedroom?

Seven out of ten children in Britain have a television in the bedroom, and five out of ten have their own DVD player. A third have their own computer. A third also have an Ipod or MP3 digital music player.

All in all, there is an estimated £28 billion worth of electronic equipment in our children's rooms across the country - and sadly it is encouraging the disintegration of communal family life. For these sort of 'toys' are keeping children so engrossed that they are spending less and less time with their parents and siblings.

These are just some of the findings of a recent survey done for Lloyds TSB Insurance. The results of the survey have disturbed some psychologists, who believe that children are missing out on the more social outdoor activities enjoyed by previous generations.

Previous studies have found that children tend to spend more time on their own if they have such electronic equipment in their bedrooms.

Many psychologists argue that family time is essential for parents to help children to develop into fully functional and happy adults.

Pyramid Rock!



Group and encounter Joseph, who trusted God in spite of everything. Joseph had a key role in God's BIG plan - discover how you too are part of God's plan. Come and join the trail!

Monday 21st - Friday 25th August, 2006, 10am - 3pm in St. Mary's Church Hall. The cost will be £5 a day per child or

Are you of primary school age? Would you like to travel up the Nile? Listen to Red Hot News?

Open the Scrolls in a Pyramid

£23 for the whole week. Bookings are now being taken; please contact the Reverend Alison Newman on 8658 7784 for a booking form.

Holy Week - the most important week for the Christian

This year Easter Day falls on 16th April. The week leading up to it, which begins with Palm Sunday on 9th April, is very special in the church year, and is known as Holy Week.

Palm Sunday is the day when the Church remembers the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The gospels tell us that he had gone up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, and that

when he entered the city, the crowds gave him a rapturous welcome, throwing palm fronds into his path. On this day churches worldwide will distribute little crosses made from palm fronds in memory of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.

The next significant event of Holy Week falls on Maundy Thursday. This day focuses on one of the final acts concerning Jesus to be related in John's Gospel - the washing of the

disciples' feet by Jesus. The ceremony of the washing of feet of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the mediaeval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

'Maundy' is an unusual word, relating to this mediaeval practice of foot-washing. In the Middle Ages, church services were held in Latin. The opening words of a typical service on this day are based on the words of Jesus as recorded in John 13: "A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is "mandatum novum do vobis". The word 'maundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (command).

In England, in bygone years, as an affirmation of humility, the monarch would wash the feet of a small number of his or her subjects. This has now been replaced by the ceremony of the 'Maundy Money', in which the Queen distributes specially

minted coins to the elderly at cathedrals throughout England.

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. The most solemn day in the Christian year, it is widely marked by the removal of all decorations from churches. In Lutheran churches, the day was marked by the reading of the passion narrative in a gospel, a practice which lies behind the 'passions' composed by J. S. Bach. Both the St. Matthew Passion and the St. John Passion have their origins in this observation of Good Friday.

The observation of a three hour devotion from 12 noon to 3.00pm on Good Friday goes back to the 18th century. The 'Three Hours at the Cross' is often an extended meditation on Jesus' final moments on the Cross, with periods of silence, prayer or hymn singing.

Lent ends with Holy Saturday. The Easter Orthodox churches hold the 'Paschal Vigil' - a late evening service which leads directly into the following Easter Day.

For all Christians, coming to celebrate Easter with the Church is a very important part of our observance celebrations. You will find a warm welcome at St. Mary's this Holy Week and Easter.

Thank you to those who have offered help with SPAN deliveries!

... but more help is still needed, so please, if you are thinking about offering to deliver even just a few copies, call Alan Jones (8460 5437) or the Parish Office (8460 5682).



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St. Mary's Quiet Day

**Saturday, 13th May
10am - 4pm**

The Sisters of St. Andrew, Edenbridge.

Transport will leave St. Mary's at 9.45am and return at 4.45pm
The cost for the day is £15 including lunch.

This is a chance to come away for spiritual refreshment and simply 'To Be' for a day.

The day will be led by the Sisters of the Community.

To reserve a place please contact the Parish Office (8460 5682),

St. Mary's Golf Day

Monday, July 10th at Westerham Golf Club

11.00am Coffee and Bacon Rolls, Tee off 12.00 noon

Playing for the Robert Carpenter Memorial Cup

Cost for the day £55, including bacon rolls, 18 holes of golf and a three course dinner. Guests for dinner only £20.

Please book your place through the Parish Office (8460 5682)

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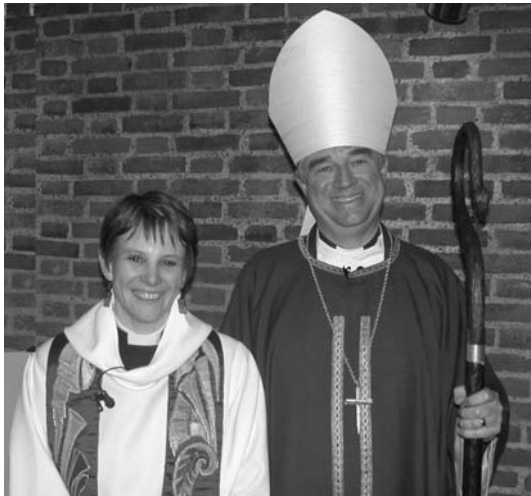
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Alison Arrives !



Here is a selection of photographs, all taken on March 13th - the day The Reverend Alison Newman began her ministry at St. Mary's, Shortlands.

The church was packed for this event with friends of Alison's from all around the Diocese as well as many members of St. Mary's own congregation, who gathered to welcome Alison into her new post as Associate Vicar of St. Mary's, Shortlands.

Licensed and authorised (left) - The Reverend Alison Newman with the Bishop of Tonbridge.

A new ministry begins (right) - Canon Paul Miller photographed with the Reverend Alison Newman, Shortlands new Associate Vicar.



All the members of the Newman Family - Alison was delighted that all her children were able to join her and Mark for this very special occasion - two of whom had travelled back from university to be with the family.



Husbands and wives together - Paul and Lynne Miller with Alison and Mark Newman (the background picture is a rainbow made from the hands of St. Mary's Pre-School Children).

The Cross Road

*He chose,
he chose the cross road.
Darkness, desertion and
desolation
pierced him like the thorns
on his chosen way.
In his broken, bleeding body,
through the heat and dust
and mockery,
through the heaving crowds
of feeble men
he stumbled with his death
tree.
Up, up, up the steep and
cruel high road
to the skull place of the
outcast
where the cross road had its
end.
In the nailing and the
piercing,
in the searing suffocation,
in the bearing of the whole
world's filth.
His cross road set me free.*



From the Registers

Holy Baptism:

We welcome into God's Family
5th Mar Callum Brown
Bethan Brown
Sophia Tween

At Rest:

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:
14th Mar Nicholas Chalk, aged 55

Demelza Fundraiser...

A Spring Concert

by The Beckenham Ladies Choir
at Penge Congregational Church,
on Saturday, 8th April at 7.30pm.
All proceeds to Demelza House.
Tickets £5 tel: 8650 8749

SPAN thanks

We record our
thanks this month
for donations
totalling £22.93



Remembering

Nick Chalk

Nick was born in Streatham in 1950, and was educated at Dulwich College Prep. School and Cranleigh School. He worked in the family business, J. Hart and Son, at Smithfield.

Nick loved travelling, and spent time in Australia, New Zealand, Africa and India. But his great love was sport. He played most sports involving a ball, particularly enjoying hockey and golf. In later years he coached hockey at the Dulwich and Tulse Hill Hockey Club. He also took a great interest and spent considerable time in researching his family history.

Nick had worshipped at St. Mary's for some 15 years. A large congregation joined Mary, his mother, and Penny, his sister, for a service of Thanksgiving at St. Mary's prior to a private committal at Beckenham Crematorium.

Easter Lilies

If you would like to remember a departed loved one at the Great Festival of Easter, we invite you to make a donation to the Flower Fund as a memorial to that person. A list of the names of all those who are to be specially remembered will be placed on the altar on Easter Day, to affirm our hope in the Resurrection to eternal life and the Christian's eternal security in Christ.

**Please contact Molly Tout
on 8464 9593.**

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WORSHIP

Every Sunday

- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion, except the first Sunday in the month in term time. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 4-14.
- 10.30 All Age Eucharist or Parade Service (1st Sunday in the month, term time).
- 18.30 Evening Service

Every Monday

- 17.00 Evening Prayers

Every Wednesday

- 10.00 Holy Communion

Every Friday

- 20.00 Night Prayers
- For information on any service, please contact the Parish Office.*

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