

# Pastoral Letter

## Revd Roger Hagon shares his thoughts...



Dear Friends

You cannot but be with the one you love. Children and parents need each other. Friends want to spend as much time together as they can. Lovers cannot be separated. And when one of us suffers, the other simply wants to 'be there'. Only this can explain the long, and often silent, vigils when sitting with someone is enough. You cannot but be with the one you love.

This power of love is very visible in Holy Week – God's love for us and our love of God. God cannot but be with the one he loves – and that's you and I! In Holy Week, Jesus brings God's love close when we feel challenged, when we simply need to keep going, when we are mis-judged, condemned, bullied, or when we feel sick at heart, frightened, alone, or in great pain. He is there. We see him present to our human condition as the great drama of his Passion unfolds. You cannot but be with the one you love. He is there with us and for us.

And so we are there with him; we come to church in Holy Week in response to love's call. On a personal retreat many years ago, I spent several days imagining I was with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. In a complete turnaround of perspective, I felt he needed me. I became, in prayer, the angel comforting him! He said to me, "Don't leave me". We sat together, back-to-back, in silent vigil.

I wonder where, in which services, and in what circumstances of our lives we will meet God this Holy Week? And, as Easter dawns, I wonder where and when we might feel his consoling presence, quickening our hearts with words and a presence which again expresses his all-pervasive love?

**Roger**

### Inside this issue:

<i>Pastoral Letter</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>Choir Notes</i>	<b>8</b>
<i>Sunday School</i>	<b>9</b>
<i>Bishop of Croydon</i>	<b>10</b>
<i>Mothers' Union</i>	<b>14</b>
<i>Diary</i>	<b>18</b>
<i>In Memoriam</i>	<b>22</b>
<i>Choir Association</i>	<b>25</b>
<i>Contact List</i>	<b>31</b>



# Choir Notes

With Holy Week and Easter nearly upon us, the choir's diary is as busy as ever.

We continue with the weekly Compline service, on Wednesday evenings at 9pm (3rd and 10th). This ancient, short service is held by candlelight in the Lady Chapel. It only lasts about ten minutes, but is a beautiful sung plainsong service, and a wonderfully atmospheric and calming end to the day. Copies of the plainsong are provided so everyone can participate in the whole service, led by the choir.

During Holy Week, the choir will be singing various services. One highlight for us will be the 8pm Maundy Thursday service, which will end with the choir singing Allegri's Miserere - one of the great choral works of all time. On Holy Saturday we will have a devotional evensong at 6.30pm, largely unaccompanied and setting the tone for the last evening before the Easter celebration.

As ever, the choir seeks to enhance everyone's experience of St Mildred's, and we thank you all for your kind support - which is greatly appreciated.

## **Choir Dinner - 10 May**

This annual event is open to everyone, not just choir members! It's always a brilliant evening of food, company and dancing, so please get your tickets early to avoid disappointment!

**Richard Mander, Director of Music**



## Mothers' Union

In March we met as usual in the Lady Chapel and were delighted that Barbara Skilton could attend our meeting to lead us in a Lenten reflection. The theme of the reflection was based on the story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well and Living Water. We read the passage John 4 v1-15 and then Barbara gave us four reflections based on questions she had posed for us, each one ending with a suggestion on how we could develop our relationship with God. Barbara then went on to tell us the story of **The Two Seas:**

"There are two seas in Palestine. One is fresh, and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it and stretch out their thirsty roots to sip of its healing waters.

"The River Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. So it laughs in the sunshine. And men build their houses near to it, and birds their nests; and every kind of life is happier because it is there.

"The River Jordan flows on out into another sea. Here there is no splash of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, no children's laughter. Travellers choose another route, unless on urgent business. The air hangs heavy above its water, and neither man nor beast nor fowl will drink.

"What makes this mighty difference in these neighbour seas? Not the River Jordan. It empties the same good water into both. Not the soil in which they lie; not in the country round about.

"This is the difference. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it another drop flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure. The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. Every drop it gets, it keeps.

"The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. This other sea gives nothing. It is named Dead.

"There are two kinds of people in this world. There are two seas in Palestine."

We were then encouraged to think about these two kinds of people and reflect on their different characteristics. Barbara then used her skills to teach us a new refrain which we were asked to perform in the round.

*"As the deer longs for a running stream, So I thirst for you my God."*

We also listened to a hymn based on psalm 139 and "O living water", as well as singing "Oh Lord hear my prayer" as a response during the prayers.

Thank you Barbara for an inspirational reflection.

### **Dates**

26 March	Council Meeting at Trinity House
31 March 10am	Mothering Sunday service and enrolment of new members
4 April 8pm	Lenten/Spring Anthology (in church)
2 May 10.45am	Jocelyn Wright - "The view from Mary Sumner House"

**Jackie Bartley - Branch Secretary**

---