

Malvern Priory Magazine

MAY 2020 ISSUE

The Parish Church of St. Mary & St. Michael

£1.00



DO YOU NEED A PAL?

In times of lockdown, we all need a PAL; someone who is there for us, someone to talk to, to ask for help or even to offer help to others.

The Priory has over 30 Priory Area Links (PALs) who are doing their best to keep in touch with members of the congregation who live near them. Since lockdown began, and even before that, the role of our Priory PALs has been invaluable, enabling us to keep in touch and help and encourage one another in times of isolation. It helps Vicar Rod to know when he is needed in situations. Communication at times like these is important and, indeed, invaluable.

If you haven't heard from your PAL, it could be that there is not one in your area or we haven't got your contact details on our Priory database. Please let me know if this is so and we can try to remedy the situation. If we don't have your email, please can you let Anne Rich (church.manager@greatmalvernpriory.org.uk) know so that she can add it to your church record.

So a BIG *thank you* to all our Priory PALs who are working hard to help our Priory congregation stay well and safe in these challenging times. Rita and I have heard of so many acts of kindness. People are shopping for one another, making phone calls, sending cards and letters to keep in touch with isolated friends, praying for one another and keeping in touch via emails or Zoom. It is obvious that God's light is shining brightly during these lockdown days.

May He bless you all.

Anne Eglington and Rita Corke—
PALs Coordinators
anne_eglington@hotmail.com
or 01684 567640



Anne Eglington



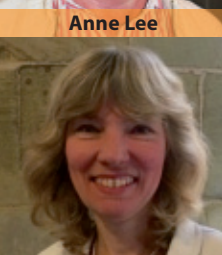
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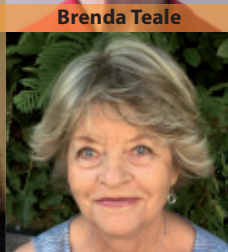
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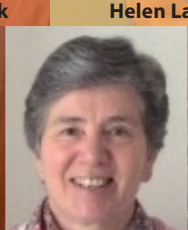
Glenda Pocock



Helen Ladd



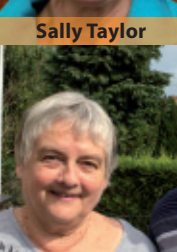
Sally Taylor



Diana LaFontaine



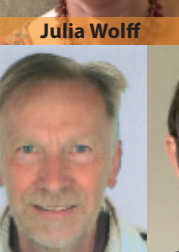
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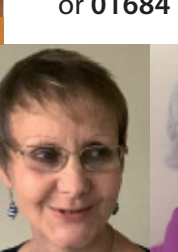
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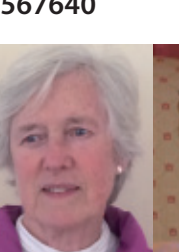
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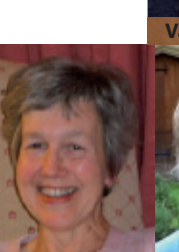
Rita Corke



Trish Robinson



Sally Hodge



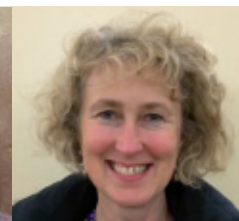
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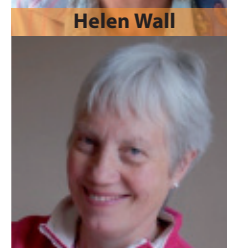
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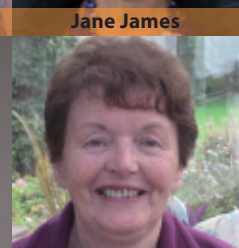
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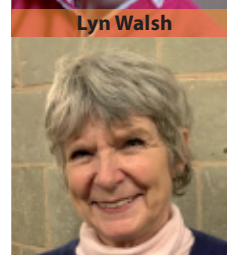
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Lyn Walsh



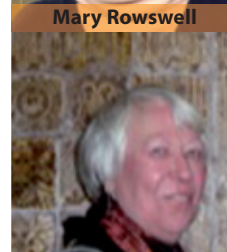
Mary Campbell



Mary Rowsell



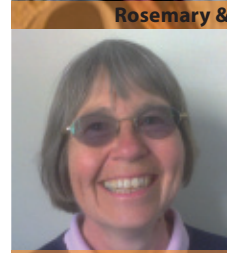
Ollie Marks



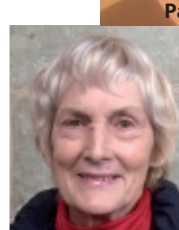
Rosemary & Tony Whalley



Pam Hope



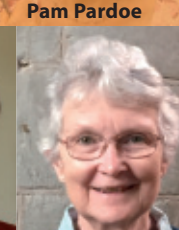
Pam Pardoe



Val Greenwood



Liesel Lavers



Val Tweedier

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

IN A TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

It is Holy Week and we are two weeks into 'Lockdown'; and it seems unlikely that there will have been any huge change by the time the magazine appears: there is talk of three months as a minimum. For many years, we have not been so tested. We have got out of the habit of throwing ourselves on God's mercy, have we not.

'Good Lord, deliver us' were the words intoned in the Litany, when people prayed for deliverance from war or plague, in a kind of ritual chant. People were closer to death, and clung more closely to life. Recent warnings about the planet's viability have been scorned. Greta Thunberg must be thinking, 'Well, this is not the way I'd have done it, but...'

We are, as one notice put it, 'in unprecedented times'. Times which invite us to have a look at who we are and how we live: which give us a chance to think, as well, about our faith as our lifestyle. So here are a few thoughts that I've had in recent days and weeks.

First: fear is the opposite of trust; that peace and worry cannot co-exist. If 'perfect love casts out fear' then we should be confident in the hands of our God. Here's a chance to test this one out.

Second: that being thrown back on our own resources, all stripped away, is a gift: it is a matter of 'all I once held dear' being taken away, and the life we relied on disappearing. It enables us to take stock.

Third, I am aware of so many blessings: I may be holed up, but I'm with someone I love, and it is precious time with him. The social media which I always affected to hate, is a lifeline and offers peace, prayers, community. There is a peacefulness around: a stillness, a lot of stress gone. There are (still at the time of writing) walks to be gone on and gardens to be kempt. Spring is coming, not winter.

And yet: for those who have probably lost their livelihood, or a loved one, it is a time of terrible and scary loss. Let us not minimise what this crisis is doing to them, and let us be aware of the chance it gives us to be loving and giving neighbours.

Maybe it is also a chance to look more deeply at what we are doing on the planet. Richard Rohr offers life lessons in his recent meditations, and suggests that we need to look hard at the rather tough ideas our present culture refuses to discuss with us. We are reminded that – A. Life is hard. B. you are not important. C. Your life is not about you. D. You are not in control. E. You are going to die. Scary stuff: and you may want to look at this in more detail. (Daily meditations at www.cac.org).

In spite of the Resurrection, I imagine many of us are frightened of death, whatever we profess. We all want a bit more life and don't feel ready to go yet. This virus asks us to confront the fact that we will all die: so do we really believe that we will be totally safe with God, and 'the best is yet to come'? When there are moments of doubt, that's when our faith in a God who really IS in control is tested: and as Christians we should be able to communicate our trust and our certainty. If not now, then when?

Chris Shepherd

Fw

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FROM THE VICARAGE

Dear friends,

A parable. In an ancient village, all the people were blind. One day, while walking down a road, six men from that village came upon a man riding an elephant. The six men, who had heard about elephants but had never been close to one, asked the rider to allow them to touch the great beast. They wanted to go back to their village to tell the other villagers what an elephant looked like. The rider agreed and led each one of the six men to a different part of the elephant. All the blind men touched and stroked the elephant until they were sure they knew what the animal looked like.

In great anticipation, they returned to their village to report their experience. The villagers gathered round to hear about the elephant. The first man, who had felt the animal's side, said: 'An elephant is like a great thick wall.' 'Nonsense,' said the second man, who had felt the elephant's tusk, 'he is rather short, round, and smooth but very sharp. I would compare an elephant not with a wall but with a spear.'

The third man, who had touched the ear, took exception. 'It is nothing like a wall or a spear,' he said. 'It is like a gigantic leaf made of a thick wool carpet. It moves when you touch it.' 'I disagree,' said the fourth man, who handled the trunk. 'I can tell you that an elephant is like a giant snake.'

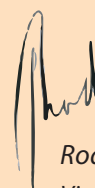
The fifth man shouted his disapproval. He had felt one of the elephant's legs and concluded, 'An elephant is round and thick, like a tree.' The sixth man

had been allowed to ride on the elephant's back, and he protested, 'Can't any of you accurately describe an elephant. He's like a gigantic moving mountain!' To this day, the men continue to argue, and no one in the village has any idea what an elephant looks like.

The Bible describes God in many different ways: because he's experienced in many different ways. He is the creator of the universe, but He is also our faithful friend. He is the righteous judge but is also the forgiving Father. For us, to understand God, we must study the Bible in its entirety. Whenever we perceive only one view of God or one view of the truth, we are likely to be misled.

During these challenging last few months, the ministers in Malvern, all representing different churches with different theological positions and practices, have grown closer together. We have met weekly, via Zoom, to support one another and to pray for our town. On Easter Sunday morning, only Fr Naz was able to celebrate the Mass. He agreed to remember all our churches and lift us up in the worship he offered. All the ministers felt a real sense of unity together, when we heard this.

Jesus prayed that all of us may be one: '*May they be brought into complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*' [John 17 23.b]



Rod Corke,
Vicar

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK (10–16 MAY)



Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, the CEO of Christian Aid, has written to all those involved in helping with Christian Aid Week this month: "Many of you will have been planning house-to-house collections and events. Under the current

circumstances, sadly, house-to-house collections and delivery-only collections should not go ahead. In particular, along with many churches, events such as Big Brekkies or Lent lunches, where food is shared, cannot go ahead.

"We are working on alternative plans that will allow people to take part in Christian Aid Week in different, creative ways—by post, by text and online—that strengthen our communities during this challenging

time. Christian Aid Week is our single-most important fundraiser, so we would welcome your ideas on how we can creatively show love for our neighbours at home and abroad, as a community."

As for the work of Christian Aid around the world, "Christian Aid and our partners already have experience of limiting the spread of infection during the Ebola crisis, and we will build on this experience. People in poorer countries are already living with reduced health resilience because of extreme poverty, or in overcrowded humanitarian camps. They also do not have good healthcare infrastructures. We will be working on the ground to help prepare communities to limit the impact of Covid-19."

For more information, go to:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

2020—WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION'S YEAR OF THE NURSE

When the WHO (World Health Organisation)

decided to make 2020 the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, they based it on the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth on 12th May 1820. But with the arrival of the coronavirus, it is a remarkably apt year to celebrate all that nurses do for us.

As the ICN (International Council of Nurses) says: "All around the world, nurses are working tirelessly to provide the care and attention people need, whenever and wherever they may it. Nurses are central to the delivery of health care; nurses are making an invaluable contribution to the health of people globally."

Nursing as a vocation goes back to the Early Church. When plague struck the Roman world in the third century, it was Christians who tended the sick and dying, often at great personal cost. Their self-sacrifice made a huge impression on Roman society. Centuries later, in medieval Europe, it was the monastic orders that provided health care.

Still centuries later, during the Crimean War (1853-56) Florence Nightingale saved thousands of lives when she transformed the field hospitals, hugely improving the standards of care for wounded and dying soldiers. In fact, Florence Nightingale deserves the credit for establishing the modern profession of nursing and its structures of training. Although, of course, medical science has advanced since her time, the basic ethos of nursing care remains today close to Nightingale's vision.

Nursing is frequently described as a vocation, and

it is one to which many Christians are called.

Nightingale wrote of being 'called' by God, after having had a vivid religious conversion as a teenager. Writing in February 1837, she stated: "God has spoken to me and called me to His Service." Four years before going to Crimea, she studied at a Lutheran religious community in Germany which trained deaconesses in medical skills, nursing, and theology. Many of the ideas that Nightingale adopted for her nurses came from that religious community. Thus, Nightingale's training

programme was not solely devoted to secular medical sciences. Her student nurses were required to attend chapel, and her nurses read prayers on the wards.

Nightingale wrote many letters of spiritual encouragement to her students. To one, she wrote that Christ considered it an "honour to serve the poorest and the meanest... He will not give His crown except to those who have borne His cross... Enduring hardship is what He

encourages and rewards."

The Bishop of London, the Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, trained and worked as a nurse before being appointed to senior positions in the Health Service. She was Chief Nursing Officer for England from 1999 to 2004. She says: "I became a Christian as a teenager and wanted to follow Christ with my whole life. Rather than having two careers, I have had one vocation: to follow Jesus Christ, to know Him, and to make Him known."

Certainly, of all the professions, nursing has one of the strongest claims to being rooted in the Gospel. Christian nurses implicitly witness to Christ in caring for others.



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LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF DUDLEY



STRANGE TIMES...

These are strange times. I'm the new Bishop of Dudley, and should be living in that area, but I'm writing this letter from under 'lockdown' in our old house in Oxford, unable to move.

It feels as though everything is disrupted and where nothing can be taken for granted. Our church buildings have been closed, and just when we want to gather together and encourage one another, we cannot. We live in a world filled with fear, attacked by a virus we cannot cure. We can fear death and disease, poverty and unemployment; we can fear for loved ones isolated and far away. We can feel powerless and alone.

When Jesus was taken to be crucified most of his friends ran away, fearing for their lives, afraid that they would be next. But others stayed, mostly women like Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome. And then at the foot of the cross, James, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and Mary, Jesus' own mother. They must have been filled with grief and fear, but their love for Jesus was stronger still. Their love was stronger than their fear. They just had to be present with him.

I thank God for shop workers, health workers, cleaners, carers, foodbank drivers and everyone else who set out to be present for others during this crisis; all those whose love for humanity proves stronger than their fear.

This is the Easter season when we celebrate Jesus risen from the dead. The fear and isolation of Holy Week is past and a new age has begun. In these days between Easter and Pentecost we stand confidently in the warm sunlight of the resurrection, knowing that suffering and death will never have the last word; that God's love is real and unshakeable and in the end will prevail. The bible says, *'Underneath are the Everlasting Arms'* and that is true for us as Christians, both in this life and, I believe, when we die.

As we move towards Pentecost, we pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to bless and inspire us for the road ahead. We pray *'Thy Kingdom Come'* not with big gatherings and events this year, but online, in prayer, alone or in family groups. We pray for God's kingdom to come on earth as it already is in heaven—a kingdom of love, compassion, justice and freedom. Where the people we all depend on in these days—health and care workers, shop staff, drivers and crop pickers, cleaners and refuse collectors, and all the rest—will no longer be seen as menial or unskilled, but celebrated members of our society on whom we all depend. We need to find a new way of living in tune with the earth and creation, where global riches can be shared and where all can be fed.

I am living through the only global pandemic I have ever known. Its effects are tragic for some, and far-reaching for us all. When all this is over we will need to build a better future. And that is something we can all be part of.

Bishop Martin

WHO'S WHO IN THE PRIORY



My name is Sue Williams. I was a licenced Lay Reader in the Hereford Diocese and licenced to the Bredenbury Benefice of seven churches, which lay between Bromyard and Leominster. My Parish was Edwyn Ralph but I also served the Parishes of

Collington, Edwyn Ralph, Thornbury, Bredenbury, Pencombe, Little Cowarne and Ullingswick.

I have two daughters who live in Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire respectively; and three grown up grandchildren. My husband died ten years ago; we had met in the Shrewsbury Rambling Club when I was sixteen! I still enjoy walking—and cooking and reading. I also took part in contemporary dance for many years, and love all types of music.

Last July I moved to Malvern, to a retirement village. I really enjoy the community and friendliness of the other residents, and local people when I walk into the town. I chose the Priory as I have friends who worship there and I find it very welcoming. Also, I can walk to it!

During the past years, I have been involved in Rural Chaplaincy. I visit Hereford Livestock Market every other week as their Chaplain. I am passionate about caring for the environment and its farmers. I am also a

farmer's daughter and farming is in my blood! I run the telephone helpline for Borderlands, the area covering Herefordshire, Shropshire and East Powys. Since moving to Worcestershire, I have become a volunteer for the F.C.N. (Farm Community Network) and have previously been a bereavement volunteer for St. Michael's Hospice.

I have a very personal relationship with God as I see him at work as I travel to visit farmers and their families through the beauty of His creation. This is highlighted by my favourite Psalm 121, and my favourite piece of scripture which is taken from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians 3, 14-21. The hymn that I love the most is *I, the Lord of Sea and Sky*.

My role in the Priory at the moment is to await my licencing as a Reader in this Diocese and to enjoy all the services when they return. I tend to go to the eight o'clock service on a Sunday morning as I enjoy my quiet times with God.

This is a strange time to be writing this as my hopes and desires are at the forefront of everyone's mind—that we keep safe from this virus, that we stop and think about our Lord's Creation and all His people, and try to listen for His still small voice and rejoice in His being. I hope to live in His likeness the best way I can and that one day the world will recognise Him.

Sue Williams

LEAVE YOUR DANDELIONS ALONE

When mowing your lawn, avoid cutting your dandelions. That is the advice of the president of the British Ecological Society, Prof Jane Memmott. It will help to save the bees.

She explains: "Dandelions are a fantastic source of pollen and nectar for the early pollinators in particular. If they were rare, people would be fighting over them, but because they're common, people pull them out and spray them with all sorts of horrible things when they should just let them flower. If you leave the lawn to three or four inches, then dandelions, clover and daisies can flower and then you end with something like a tapestry, and it's much nicer to sit there and watch the insects buzzing about."

Prof Memmott encourages everyone to get a bee hotel for their garden. "There's nothing nicer than being sat in a chair with a glass of wine and watching the bees going in and out of your own personal little beehive. Even just a potted plant on a doorstep will provide lunch for a bee or a fly or a butterfly."

THE PRIORY EARLY MUSIC CONCERTS



Those of you who are missing the Priory Early Music concerts performed throughout the year by students from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire will be pleased to learn that all is not lost. You can pick them up on YouTube.

Their director Elizabeth Pallett started the concerts in what she calls 'your beautiful building' in order to establish links between the Conservatoire and Malvern. They have been a great success with a regular and very appreciative audience.

In her YouTube video Elizabeth says that she felt, because of the loyalty of the Malvern music lovers, she wanted to give them an alternative during this difficult time. 'We want to stay connected,' she says. For that reason she has started recording some of the student's work, beginning with a piece from The King's Music, performed by Sam, Tim, Teddy and Eleanor with voices and the recorder.

She hopes to build on this first piece and to include photographs of the Malverns and the Priory, etc. so if you have anything to offer please send it to this email address: Elizabeth.pallett@luteweb.com. 'Please let me know what you want the picture to be called and, if you have a special message to go with it, I will be happy to read it out,' says Elizabeth. She added that the first few episodes would be existing recordings. 'In time I hope to set up video links with the students and expand the repertoire.' The link to the YouTube site is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9H1m_-RW-Q but I simply went onto YouTube and searched Priory Early Music. It went straight there and was a joy to listen to.

Mary Rowswell

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PULLING TOGETHER AT THE PRIORY

There’s no doubt that the current crisis is bringing out the best in the people of Malvern. Many groups are joining together to support their neighbours and loved ones, none more so than at Great Malvern Priory.

As we know, services in churches have sadly had to stop and even the St Giles Chapel, which had been kept open for those who wanted to go and pray for loved one, has had to close. A large cross had been set up in the chapel and those calling in were invited to write down the names of people

for whom they have special concerns. ‘I put my mother’s name, Margaret, on the cross so that she could be included in our prayers,’ said the Rev Rod Corke, Rural Dean and Vicar of the Priory. ‘And a number of people came in to do the same. So many of us are unable to see members of our family so asking others to join in prayers for them was some consolation.

‘We are doing our very best to make sure we are helping people get through this as much as we possibly can. These are difficult times but there is a great deal

we can do to help. The Malvern churches are all working together, especially to help keep the Food Bank going, and also Christians Against Poverty.

‘We have the mechanism in place to find out how our members are coping and who needs help,’ said Rod. ‘Each part of Malvern has a PALs liaison representative and they are all contacting those in their area to see whether they are alright and what we can do for them. If anyone needs help with shopping, phone calls, etc. one of our team of volunteers will take over.

‘And of course we saw hundreds of candles in the windows of Christian homes in Malvern as we all took part in the National day of prayer. This is a time for working together to ensure people feel cared for and safe, and it is heartening to see how much love and consideration the people of Malvern are showing.’

Like many churches in Malvern, the Priory is recording services and talks on our website, and thanks go to the many who are helping to keep these going.

Mary Rowswell



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VE DAY—THE END OF WORLD WAR II IN EUROPE

VE Day (Victory in Europe) was celebrated 75 years ago this month, on 8th May 1945, marking the end of World War II in Europe. It was marked with a public holiday.

The previous day the formal act of military surrender had been signed by Germany, and celebrations broke out when the news was released. Big crowds gathered in London, impromptu parties were held throughout the country, and people danced and sang in the streets. King George VI and his family appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, and Churchill made a speech to huge applause. The two princesses, Elizabeth and Margaret, mingled with the crowds outside.

Many went into churches to give thanks—and to pray for those still involved in the war in the Far East, because the real end of the war, Victory over Japan, would not happen until 15th August. At St Paul's Cathedral, there were ten consecutive services giving thanks for peace, each attended by thousands of people.

The celebrations masked the fact that so many had lost family and friends, as well as possessions and homes. But for the moment normal social conventions broke down, strangers embraced, and love was in the air.



PRIORY FRIENDS' TRIP TO WELLS POSTPONED!



It'll come as no surprise that our Friends' trip to Wells this year has been cancelled. BUT... we will be going there next year—on Thursday, 13th May 2021—so please make a note of this date somewhere/anywhere so that you won't double-book yourself!

Meryn Nance

ROD ON THE RADIO!

Many of you will already know that our vicar recently appeared on BBC Hereford & Worcester. He was asked to go on Sunday Breakfast (commonly known within the Beeb as the God Slot) with presenter Kate Justice.

The station, together with other local BBC stations, is running a *Make a Difference* campaign, highlighting the many good and helpful things taking place within the two counties. On Sunday, 29th March they took a look at local churches and their congregations and invited Rod to join them and talk about the work of PALs (Priory Area Links) and online services.

Kate first asked about the online worship and Rod referred to the sterling work done behind the scenes to ensure we can still worship together, albeit within our own homes. 'I'm on a steep learning curve technically,' he said, 'getting used to Zoom, videos, etc. I need about 50 takes for a six minute video!'

Rod explained that the membership of the Priory amounts to around 600 people so a link service, PALs, had been in place for sometime to keep the church in touch with its congregation. 'Certain members take responsibility to look after about ten members, so we already had this system in place and it has been invaluable.' PALs representatives were making regular phone calls to check everyone was alright and to pass on any individual's particular needs if they required extra help.

He added that, in addition, he, Jonny and Rita had been contacting members themselves. 'It is all hands to the pump,' he said. 'We keep in touch, particularly with those who need more support. It is not as slick as we might like it but we do the very best we can'

If you would like to listen to the broadcast, click on the link below and it will take you straight to it: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p087lmlq>. It is a three hour programme and Rod's contribution takes place during the last ten minutes.

Mary Rowswell

FAITH IN A CRISIS

If a crisis is coming to stay
Getting worse, with each passing day
It's ever so easy
To get somewhat queasy
When normality passes away!

If the shelves are devoid of all rolls
And the internet's peopled by trolls
Don't tremble and fear,
Shed no frightened tear,
For God the Almighty controls!

If your eyesight with tears is blurred
It may not quite yet have occurred
That God through the years
Has dried up our tears:
So see what it says in His Word:

The people, surrounded by sand
En route to that old Promised Land
No food did they lack
For God had their back
He had their nutrition well planned!

Jesus cared, as the family cried
For the daughter of Jairus had died
He entered her room
Said '*Talitha koum*'
And she rose and stood there by His side!

Just two of the Bible's great tales
That show us that God never fails
To come to our aid
If we've sought Him and prayed
When the devil with evil assails.

So do not be scared, but be smart –
No virus can tear us apart
From God up above
Who shows us such love
So be of good courage and heart!

Nigel Beeton

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AN EASTER SERMON

It is a very different Easter this year. No 'going home', no visitors, and no Church services. Whatever you think of the Biblical story, we can see the whole of the Easter story being played out in our Nation. The clapping and clashing of pans for those who are demonstrating the way to help others. The 'washing of the feet' by the caring community and NHS staff. The giving of the lives of medical staff that others might live. Those sitting alone and isolated. Those trapped at home looking forward to the light at the end of the tunnel—and Easter Day, a new start, a new beginning, whenever and whatever that might mean for each and every one of us.

Marion James, Secretary, Club for Retired Employees at the British Gas Research Station, Newcastle—submitted by Geoffrey Fearnheough



Chernobyl Children's Lifeline

Supporting children affected by the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster

The good news is that every Monday, Olga, in David Gorodok, Belarus, and I can skype and exchange words of encouragement. Some of the Malvern hosts from previous years are also in touch with the children. The sad news is that we have withdrawn the invitation for ten children to come to Malvern in June. We hope and plan that they will come next year.

Olga, who has brought a different group of boys and girls from her town for eleven years, will visit the selected families. Meanwhile, as a teacher, Olga is going to school. Pupils are still attending. The official instructions are that children should go to school and adults must go to work! Fortunately, many parents are keeping their children at home. They know that Covid19 has reached their small town.

We know that when it was the Chernobyl catastrophe, in 1986, it was years before their population knew about the radiation contamination. This year, there have been early, extensive forest fires both in the immediate vicinity of Chernobyl and around. As radiation is released, it is a reminder that the people will be affected for generations!

Dorothy Knights

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GOD IN ART: 'HE GAVE US EYES TO SEE THEM'

MURILLO'S *ST JOHN THE BAPTIST WITH THE LAMB*

The nursery rhymes we learnt as children often focused on lambs: Mary had a little lamb, Baa baa black sheep, Little Bo-Peep and Little Boy Blue. They come to mind in springtime when we see lambs in the field jumping for joy or bleating as they run to the ewes for warmth and safety.

Murillo, a 17th century artist from Seville, had that world of childhood in mind when he painted *St John the Baptist with the Lamb*. He looks back to the little child of Isaiah 11 leading the animals, but also we are called to think of the adult John the Baptist, who sees Jesus walking by and exclaims, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God.' In the painting, St John is a child with his arms around the lamb. He stands on rocky ground with a reed cross at his feet that has the words *Behold the Lamb of God* on the ribbon.

The painting hangs in the



National Gallery, and it certainly lacks the strength and brilliance of other Spanish artists. But Murillo is telling us how the drama of salvation is played out by children and lambs. He is inviting us to look from that world of childhood to another part of Isaiah's prophecy, where he talks of the Messiah led like a lamb to the slaughter. We entered that drama of salvation

in Holy Week. On Good Friday, Jesus was led to His crucifixion, just as the lambs were being killed for the Passover. We think of the world of Old Testament sacrifice, where the high priest on the day of Atonement would enter the Holy of Holies and sacrifice a ram. And we focus on Jesus who is for us both priest and sacrifice, and realise that there is a divine chemistry at work that leads us from Good Friday to Easter Day.

The writer of Hebrews meditates on this theme and proclaims that in Jesus we have a high priest of the good things that have come—eternal redemption. We were invited to appropriate that great gift for ourselves in Holy Week of our salvation. So, we journeyed from the childhood days of Murillo's painting to Calvary and the Easter garden. And we also journeyed beyond to the heavenly city, where Revelation tells us that all the nations walk by the light of that Lamb—the Lamb of God.

'APRIL IS THE CRUELLEST MONTH...'

With these words, T.S. Eliot opened his modernist masterpiece, *The Waste Land*, in 1921. It was the aftermath of World War I and the Spanish flu pandemic. Millions had died. His poem brims with the pain, the trauma, the disillusionment and the death of that time.

Now it is April 2020. Eliot could never have imagined that nearly 100 years on, April might well become our 'cruellest month', when trauma and death stalk our land as the coronavirus pandemic takes its toll. These are times unparalleled in any of our life experiences. In the words of the Psalmist, the '*foundations are being shaken*'.

And yet—as Christians we can lift our eyes from the turmoil and look up. We'd like to share some verses from Psalm 46 with you:

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.


*'Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea...'*

'Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts.

'The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

'He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God...'

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NEW MENTAL HEALTH REFLECTIONS

A series of reflections on how to cope with anxiety and loneliness in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, including simple Christian meditation techniques and some tips, has been published by the Church of England.

A number of actions that could help people feeling isolated or worried, as well as those who grieve, are put forward in a new guide ***Supporting Good Mental Health***, written by Durham University academic, Revd Professor Chris Cook with Ruth Rice, Director of the Christian Mental Health charity, 'Renew Wellbeing'.

The booklet gives advice ranging from putting aside time to rest and eating and sleeping well, to using the phone and the internet to reach those who may be struggling on their own. Making a list of all the good things—and people—that you miss when you are on your own and thanking God for them, can be a way of helping cope with loneliness, the guide says. Also, simple prayers can be said repeatedly as a means of helping to deal with stress, and lighting a candle, where safe, can be a helpful form of prayer for some people, as can quotations from the Bible which can be a useful aide to meditation and calming fears, including writing down and repeating short passages.

A phrase such as Psalm 18:1, 'The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer' could be chosen for each week and used as background for a mobile phone as a 'go to' thought when someone is anxious.

It also suggests repeating a simple phrase from the Psalms such as Psalm 4:8, 'I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety,' to help calm the mind before sleeping.

The Rt Revd James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle and the

Church of England's lead bishop on Health and Social Care, said: "I welcome publication of these further resources. For some time now the issues of loneliness and isolation have been identified as major problems within our society. The coronavirus pandemic will only create further challenges in this respect. So it is vital that we do all we can as a church to protect people's mental wellbeing.

"The reflections are beautifully presented and scripturally based, with the 'Have A Go' sections intentionally focussing on how people should be kind to themselves. That is so important at this time. My prayer is that as many people as possible are able to draw upon these new resources over the coming weeks and months."

And finally, those tips:

Talk about how you feel. This may be difficult if you are self-isolating, but do use the telephone, internet, and social media. If you need to contact a counsellor this can be arranged by your GP, or via local agencies, or privately. Samaritans are there, 24 hours a day, every day, and it's free to call them on 116 123.

Focus on the things that you can change, not on the things you can't.

Look after yourself—physically, emotionally, spiritually. Plan in things that you enjoy at regular intervals during the day—a TV programme, a phone call, a book, a favourite dish, a game.

Look after others. Even if only in small ways, but do what you can: a smile, a kind word, writing a letter or an email.

Go to: <https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/mental-health-resources/dealing-loneliness-and-isolation-five-top-tips>



The twins had been doing Messy Church at home.



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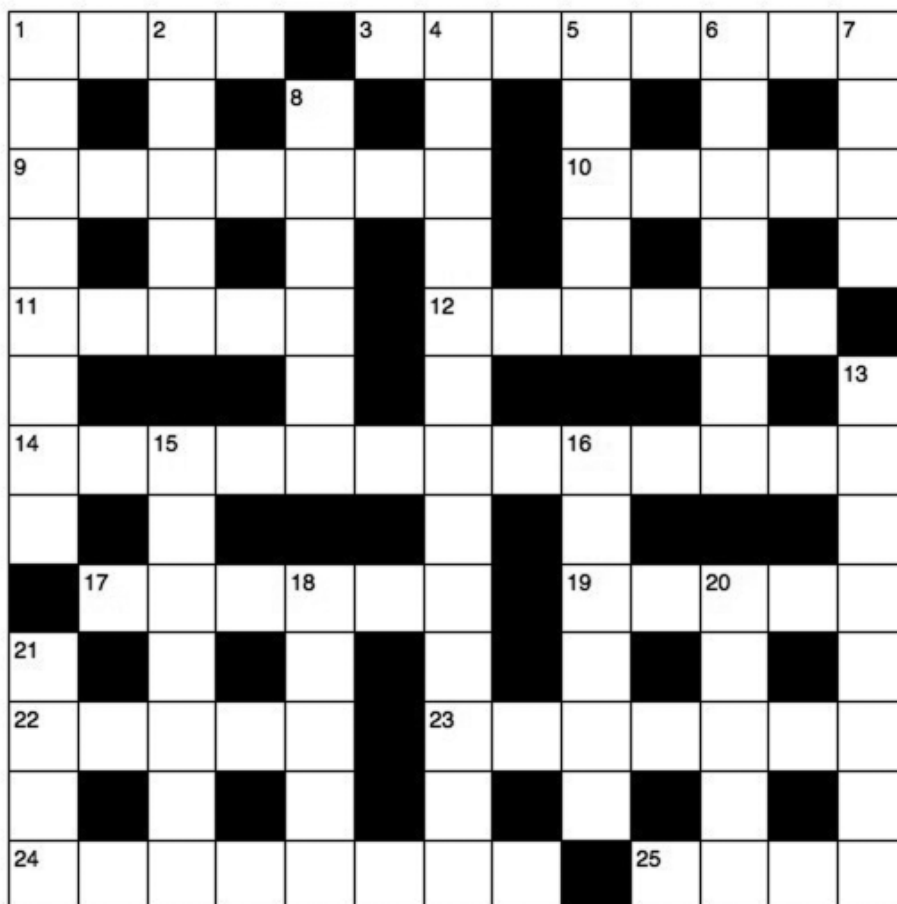
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Please send all contributions for the magazine by email whenever possible to **mag@greatmalvernpriory.org.uk** with the deadline of the 10th of the previous month at the latest. Written articles should be clearly marked "Magazine" and placed in the "M" pigeonhole at the back of the Priory. The deadline for these is the 8th of the previous month. Contributions should be limited to a maximum of 500 words and, where accompanied by relevant photographs, reduced accordingly. Where photographs of young people are provided, please confirm that parental permission has been obtained to publish in this magazine. Articles will also be considered for inclusion on the Priory web site - if for any reason this is not acceptable, please mention when submitting articles. Some photographs, especially of young people, may not be published on the web pages.

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ACROSS:

- 1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)
- 3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
- 9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
- 10 Group of eight (5)
- 11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)
- 12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
- 14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)
- 17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize' (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)
- 19 Attend to (3,2)
- 22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)
- 23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)
- 24 Rule of sovereign (8)
- 25 Test (anag.) (4)

DOWN:

- 1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
- 2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)
- 4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous' (Romans 4:9) (8,5)
- 5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)
- 6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)
- 7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
- 8 Minister of religion (6)
- 13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24) (8)
- 15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends' (John 15:13) (3,4)
- 16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)
- 18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5) (5)
- 20 Establish by law (5)
- 21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)



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