

LEADER

A magazine for the people, by the people

The Spire has changed a great deal over the years, but as vicars come and go it remains a reflection of the people of St James' and what they value and believe in. Help us to continue to do that.

The Spire's Editorial Committee

The interregnum is coming to its end, and we will soon welcome Peter Vannozzi as the new vicar of St James'.

For many of us the interregnum has been, with all its difficulties, an educative period. Some of us, particularly our churchwardens, have had to take new responsibilities and spend much more time on church matters.

It has given us a useful reminder of how hard our vicar works for us, and perhaps how we might lighten his load in future.

Since last July this magazine has been steadily changing and we, the magazine committee, hope that it is evolving into something new and with greater appeal to the parish as a whole. By 'the parish' we mean the whole parish area, regular churchgoers, occasional churchgoers and non-churchgoers who perhaps do not share our faith, but respect it.

We believe the magazine is still evolving, and want to enlist the help of our readers to keep it so. The change of the magazine to its present size was one of Brian's last legacies to the parish. He gently insisted that we should change the size, stop the advertising and produce it by our own duplicating machine. These changes were not welcomed by everyone at first, even committee members, but now we believe that the overwhelming opinion is that the new magazine is a great success.

Since the beginning of the interregnum last September, the magazine committee realised how much Brian, as leader of the committee, contributed to the content and running of the

magazine. New responsibilities were forced upon us.

What should be included? What should we give prominence? Who would write the leaders? Who could tell us of personal sadnesses, successes and celebrations in the parish with the knowledge and insight of the vicar? How should it be structured? What was the timetable of production? We have been very fortunate in having a group of people, including new members of the committee, whose combined skills and enthusiasm enabled us not only to take on the responsibility, but to consider seriously that elusive word 'outreach'.

The magazine should show anyone who reads it the church services and activities linked to the church, and also the priest and parishioners who hold positions of responsibility within it.

We would like to feel that a newcomer to the parish, or perhaps someone who just newly sees and admires the brightly-lit interior through our glass doors, can get an immediate idea of the

many groups and activities and how to access them from the magazine. If they are interested the parish website can give them a wealth of further information. We want anyone, of any belief, who respects our church, to feel welcome within it and to understand what we are trying to do.

Beyond the facts about groups and people, we hope our articles and features say something about how our faith influences our lives. We hope that they show also that we are a broad church with room for everyone who is seeking new or further understanding of themselves and the world around us.

To do this we need your help. We welcome letters, possibly articles, even if we have not room to print them all. This month we are also including a questionnaire to give readers who do not wish to write a letter an opportunity to give us their opinions.

We believe the magazine is evolving, help us make it reach more people and be of more value to us all.



Our two post-operative friends, **Jack Gostling** and **David Taylor**, are both at home now, progressing well.

Sue Blay has recently celebrated her 50th birthday. She wants to thank everyone for support and prayers.

Kate O'Sullivan's mother, Jean, has died at the age of 93. Our sympathy and best wishes to Kate.

The **Nunn family** appears twice this month! John and Debbie's daughter, **Suzanne**, has become engaged to David O'Connor. Congratulations from us all. You can read son **Geoffrey's** *Yours Faithfully* on page 7

Prill and Martin Hinckley are celebrating the arrival of Prill's first grandchild - Oliver Eden Smith, born on 7 February to son Dan and Lisa.

Alessandra Wilson, formerly head of Hampton Community College (then Rectory School), died last month. When she became a headteacher in Clapham, at the age of 35, she was the youngest head in London and at HCC she was much admired and respected. Her home was in Chelsea and Brian took her funeral at St Luke's, where there was a very large congregation.

Our talented **musicians** once again delighted us with a varied programme of music. A detailed report and photographs can be seen on the website at Past Events>2007.

REGISTERS

For January:

BAPTISMS

- 21 Emma Jane Scanlan, Hanworth
- Eleanor Eve Hewer, Teddington

Good Friday 6 April

- 10.30 Service for All Ages
- 12.00-15.00 Three Hours of Meditation - 'John and the Cross of Christ'

Easter Eve 7 April

- 20.00 Easter Vigil and Lighting of New Fire
- Easter Day 8 April**
- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 09.30 Parish Communion
- More about Easter online in **Worship/Services** section.



- Sundays in Lent, 4, 11, 18, 25 March**
- Normal Sunday Services, plus 21.00 Compline (Night Prayer)
- Sunday 18 March**
- Mothers' Sunday

Tuesday 20 March

- 20.00 Institution and Induction of Peter Vannozzi
- Lent Housegroups**
- Meet weekly - details in church
- Palm Sunday 1 April**
- 09.30 All-Age Communion and Procession of Palms
- 20.00 Compline
- Monday in Holy Week**
- 09.15 Morning Prayer
- 20.00 Compline and Communion

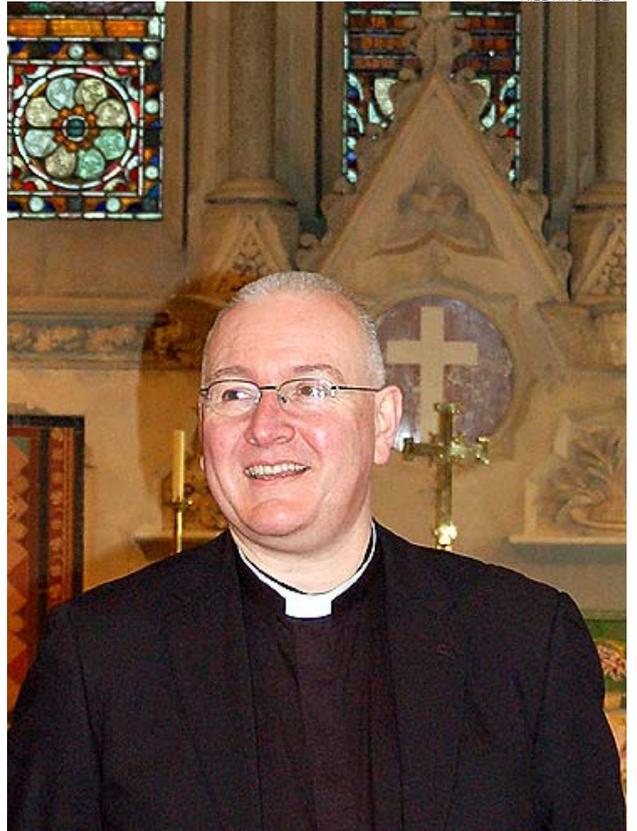
Tuesday in Holy Week

- 09.30 Communion
- 20.00 Compline
- Wednesday in Holy Week**
- 07.00 Commuters' Communion
- 09.15 Morning Prayer
- 20.00 Compline
- Maunder Thursday 5 April**
- 09.15 Morning Prayer
- 20.00 Commemoration of Last Supper and Washing of Feet

More about Easter online in **Worship/Services** section.

I'm ready to walk with you in faith and share your vision

On 20 March, Peter Vannoizzi will become only the ninth Vicar of Hampton Hill since 1863. In his first interview he tells **Nick Bagge** why he can't wait to get started and of the challenges ahead



PRILL HINCKLEY

I met Peter on a cold, bleak winter's day during London's worst snowfall for many years. But the man from Wakefield Cathedral took it all in his stride. Not surprising, perhaps, for the great grandson of an immigrant, whose family has experienced more changes than most. His one constancy throughout has been his faith, and a sense of belonging in the church.

Peter was born in Hanwell, west London, in 1962, but owes his surname to his Italian great grandfather who came over to Britain from Florence in the late 19th century.

'The story was that he was a courier for Thomas Cook and that he was based here for Italians who came over, but when I looked it up on the 1901 census I discovered he was actually a waiter! So I don't know what the truth is.'

A life in the Church of England seems an unlikely outcome from such Roman Catholic beginnings, but he owes that to his family. 'My parents were not churchgoers, but they sent me to Sunday School when I was about four and I stayed with it.'

'In the early years I think it was just part of the package of life, but there was never a time when I can't remember having had some sort of Christian belief.'

Feeling at home in the church, Peter was 18 when he realised he wanted to take it one step further. He was a student not far from Hampton Hill at the West London Institute of Higher Education, in Osterley, now part of Brunel

University. 'As often happens when someone ends up being ordained, there's a priest who's particularly influential. In my case it was the local vicar, who was also the college chaplain. He conveyed the importance of the scriptures in a way that I hadn't heard before.'

In 1983, Peter went to Ripon College, Cuddesdon, to train for ordination, which then happened at the age of 24.

His first posting was as curate in Kenton, Middlesex. 'It was a little strange when I started wearing black and people's perceptions of me changed immediately. I think that was the greatest challenge for me - being identified.'

Peter moved to Fleet, Hampshire, in 1990, before becoming vicar in Northwood Hills in 1993, and four years later at South Dulwich, before becoming Vice Dean and



Canon Pastor at Wakefield Cathedral in 2005.

It might then seem surprising that he would want to replace the pomp and circumstance of a cathedral with parish life once again.

'I do not believe that the church should be seen as a career. There is a proper place for ambition, but

I'm not sure that the ordained ministry is the right place for it.'

'I had 18 years in parish ministry and decided it was time to move from Dulwich after eight and was looking to do something different for a time.'

'What I think I discovered was the things I enjoyed doing most are things about the parish, and part of my Canon Pastor's role was a lot of that, but at the same time not being in a position to lead a Christian community, to walk with it in faith, to grow with it, to help it to develop, to enter into visions already there and to see where they take us - and actually I miss that greatly.'

'One of the things about cathedrals that you do get are occasions like memorial services where the cathedral becomes the focal point for the whole community. But this is just the icing and not the cake and one can't just live on the icing!'

Peter was attracted to Hampton Hill by the challenges. The parish profile explains that theologically and spiritually St James' is within the liberal catholic tradition and the PCC was seeking an approachable priest with a happy disposition - someone who is a good listener and is able to relate to all sorts of people and their problems, whatever their age. Young people and children especially were identified as important for the future growth of the church.

Peter agrees. 'I believe a parish communion is about bringing everybody together, right across the age range. It can be a celebration of all those different people and we should just be grateful that

churches still have children in them. I want to do all I can to support them.'

'The parish profile gave a sense of there being practical tasks that people wanted to carry out, but also the PCC was concerned about having a wider vision and those two together are very appealing.'

'Being familiar with the area helped too. I was brought up in Hanwell, so there is a little bit of it that will feel like coming home. My aunt and uncle live in Hampton. My father was brought up in Fulwell Park Avenue, just across Fulwell golf course, so there are bits of familiarity. When I walked down the road from Fulwell Station to come to St James' for the first time, I thought I can live and work in this kind of area. There are connections.' Hopefully Peter's beloved fox terrier Paddy will like the area too.

And having arrived, what are his priorities? 'The important thing for me in the first few months is to get to know as many people as possible and to find out what's going on here and not to presume. I remember a bishop once saying to me, "When you go somewhere new see what God has already put in people's hearts before you get there", which I think is very good.'

'This isn't to say that there won't be things that I'll want to ask questions about, to challenge and change - but the greatest challenge for everyone is the change of personality - it's not so much about what I do, it's about who I am. So I want to adopt an approach that is very much about

listening to people. In these months I will welcome comments and observations and I hope people will always feel that I'm there for them to talk to.'

Much of Peter's philosophy stems from his experiences as a teenager. 'I think for the whole of my life I've seen the church decline and when I was ordained I was determined that any church I was involved with would not decline.'

'The church I went to as a child until I was 18, where I was baptised and my parents were married, closed. Having seen a community die I know it can happen and I don't want to see that.'

'There's that image in the book of Ezekiel (37:1) about *The Valley of Dry Bones*, about making dry bones live and flesh and sinew grow, and I've always wanted to say, "Well how can dry bones live and does it have to be like this?"'

'I'm concerned about the future and I wonder what we can do to make sure there are some churches in a few years time. I would be sorry if there was no longer a place for churches which offered an ordered liturgy, formal thoughtful preaching and a range of music, both traditional and contemporary. I believe we need all of this because people are different. It's about looking for the points of connection with people's personal spirituality, so I guess it's taking the old and looking at what there is now and asking how they connect.'

'If Christ is all in all then there must be a connection and it's a question of looking at what that is and asking if the only way to do it is the kind of contemporary Evangelical way, or is there actually something more? I think there is something more.'

Evangelical churches, such as St Stephen's in Twickenham, attract larger numbers of young people. Should St James' follow suit?

'I've learnt a great deal from evangelical churches and they obviously seem to be in the ascendancy at the moment, but I don't think it is the only answer.'

'I come from people who want a

'Once ordained, I was determined that any church I was involved with wouldn't decline'



different sort of spirituality, that's perhaps more contemplative, more reflective, and is as much rooted in silence as in speech.

'If one looks at the church in Western Europe (the only place in which it's in decline) it's much broader than just what's happening

in our own backyard. I think we need to have a wider vision and not to get too despondent.'

The congregation at St James' still represents a minority of residents in the parish, but Peter plans to help the church to reach out to more people.

'I think schools in the parish are the natural centres for the community - indeed I have already been asked to do an Easter service at the junior school. If the church is seen to be visible in the community at least people may feel it is something for them as opposed to people who keep it as a kind of private chapel for themselves.'

'Many are drawn to the church at certain times in their lives, whether it be Christmas, or in time of war or after a disaster, and my hope is that the church will try to connect better with these people and inspire them to become regular worshippers. A warm welcome to newcomers always helps, as do friendly service papers and sermons that don't try to be too clever, but at the same time offer some sort of challenge. I always try to think what there is for people to take away so that they will want to come back again. We need to look at what sort of literature we have; offering people who are new to the church some way in and explaining who we are.'

'The good news is that worldwide religion is not declining. A lot of people blame religion for the world's problems. Religious

terrorism is certainly not justified. But it's a big mistake to blame religion for all the world's wars. Unfortunately faiths can be distorted and people can believe their point of view is an absolute truth. They may even consider worthless those who disagree with them. For Christianity, this is a corruption of what we are supposed to be about.'

'I don't see in Christ someone who is intent on castigating and rejecting in that way. Rather, he wants to see people's lives lived fully and to be transformed, which is very different from wanting to see those lives ended. It's about being life-enhancing rather than life-denying.'

'I think an effort has to be made to connect with everyone and Christ always offers the possibility of new life and new beginnings. An example is further marriage after divorce.'

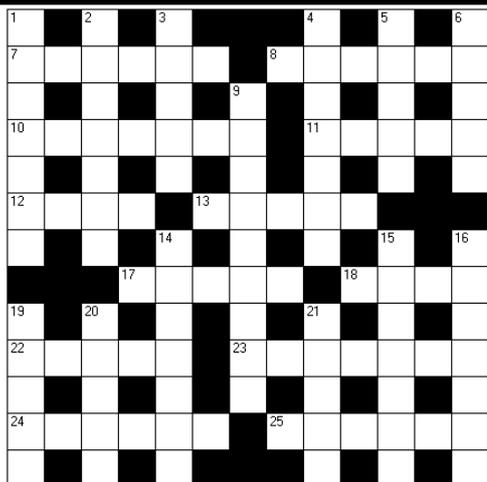
'I know some would argue that the fact that in the Church of England divorcees can now remarry is a watering down. But I wouldn't see it as such, because are we saying that divorce is the only thing you can never forgive? New beginnings can be expressed sometimes through a further marriage, rather than by saying "You can't", which means we shut the door on people.'

'Some people would see this as very liberal, but to me it's just applying the fundamental principle of how Christ is, in new circumstances. If you forgive and allow people to find their own new life in each circumstance it's not always easy, but I think that's the challenge.'

Peter joins St James' at the most important time of the year for the church. Does he think the message of Easter has been lost on some people in the 21st century?

'Yes, I think so. More people come to church at Christmas than Easter. Perhaps people connect more easily because of the carols and the image of the baby in the manger. It's more difficult when you're talking about death and resurrection, but there is still the common theme of new life, new hope and new possibilities as we grow and change.'

Welcome 'home', Peter.



Crossword No 200703

Across

- 7 West African country (6)
- 8 Monastic hair style (7)
- 10 Language used to write parts of the Old Testament (6)
- 11 Colour of the great throne in Revelation ch. 20 (5)
- 12 ..where moth and ___ destroy (Mat 6.19) (4)
- 13 Missile used against Paul in Acts ch. 14 (5)
- 17 ..hard labour in ___ and mortar (Ex 1.13) (5)
- 18 ..the beams of the woodwork will ___ it (Hab 2.11) (4)
- 22 Symbol of the Christian religion (5)
- 23 Priest's salary (7)

- 24 Tree mentioned in Ezekiel ch. 17 (6)
- 25 Adhesive (6)

Down

- 1 Clergymen (7)
- 2 Worry intensely
- 3 ..a handful of ___ in a jar (1 Kings 17.12) (5)
- 4 River upon which Derby stands (7)
- 5 A cart crushes when loaded with this, says Amos ch. 2 (5)
- 6 Description of calamus in Jeremiah ch. 6 (5)
- 9 Whitsuntide (9)
- 14 English city (7)
- 15 One of the owls mentioned in Zephaniah ch. 2 (7)

- 16 Days following the Christian sabbath (7)
- 19 Glower (5)
- 20 Pious (5)
- 21 Unclean (5)

February's answers (200702) Across 1 Stick 4 Stamp 10 Parsnip 11 Islam 12 Lance 13 Illness 15 Solo 17 Balti 19 Ashes 22 Elevator 25 Protest 27 Acsah 29 Catch 30 Lateran 31 Penny 32 Weeps Down 2 Turin 3 Contest 5 Trial 6 Maltese 7 Apple 8 Spoil 9 Smash 14 Loaf 16 Oils 18 Apostle 20 Startle 21 Spice 23 Italy 24 Chant 26 Ethan 28 Scrip

THE JAYS

A day for putting mum first

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. It was originally a day when children who had gone to work as domestic servants were given time off to visit their mother.

Today, it is a day when children give presents, flowers, and cards to their mothers.

'Daughter' church

Most Sundays we churchgoers worship at their nearest parish or 'daughter church'. But centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year.

So each year in the middle of Lent, everyone would visit their 'mother' church - the main church or cathedral of the area.

This became an occasion for family reunions when children who

were working away returned home. Remember, it was quite normal for children as young as ten to leave home for work.

Many historians think that it was this return to the 'mother' church that led to the tradition of working children being given the day off. As they walked along the lanes to church, children would pick wild flowers to their mother.

Fasting relaxed

Mothering Sunday was also once known as 'Refreshment Sunday' as the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day.

Lessons on this mid-Lent Sunday made a point of food. The Gospel reading from the New Testament told the story of how Jesus fed 5000 people with only five small loaves and two small fish.

Simnel cake

The Simnel cake is especially associated with Mothering Sunday. It's a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made with 11 balls of marzipan on top, representing the 11 disciples - Judas is excluded. Sugar violets are also often added.

The name Simnel probably comes from the Latin word *simila*, which means a fine wheat flour usually used for baking a cake.

According to one legend, a man called Simon and his wife Nell argued over whether the cake for Mothering Sunday should be baked or boiled.

In the end they did both, so the cake was named after both of them: Sim-Nel.

Jays set for bed and breakfast fund-raiser to support autism

The older children in the Jays are going to have a sponsored sleepover, probably on 17 March in aid of Daisy Chain.

They will also be 'selling' breakfasts to the congregation the following day, 18 March, from 08.30 onwards, to increase the sponsorship.

Daisy Chain is a charity that provides a haven for children with autism and associated special needs - a place where they can go and find something in life to give them pleasure.

Look out for confirmation of the date in the weekly pew sheets.

Picture Proverbs

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS IS A COLLECTION OF 'WISE' SAYINGS FROM THE HEART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING PROVERBS MEAN? THEY COME FROM CHAPTER 17...



God fulfils promises, but not always in ways that we will find easy

We continue our series looking at key Old Testament Bible characters, with **Rebekah**

Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren like her mother-in-law Sarah (Genesis 25:21), and also lived with the pain of contradiction. Although God promised her children (Genesis 24:60), Rebekah lived with the truth that she couldn't have any. Her example is one that can encourage us when we face contradictions in our own lives.

A Family's Blessing

Abraham sent his servant to find Isaac a wife from among his own family. He found Rebekah (Abraham's niece), who willingly left her home to marry Isaac. She went with her family's blessing: 'our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands' (60), and a willingness to be identified with God's promise of offspring to Abraham (7).

What promises do we feel God has given to us?

A Father's Prayer

The couple find to their surprise that Rebekah is barren (23). Therefore, Isaac prays to the Lord 'on behalf of his wife' (6). He wasn't just praying for his own domestic situation, but also for the fulfilment of God's promises through his family. We can also pray with this double focus, as we 'seek first God's kingdom' for our circumstances (Matt 6:33).

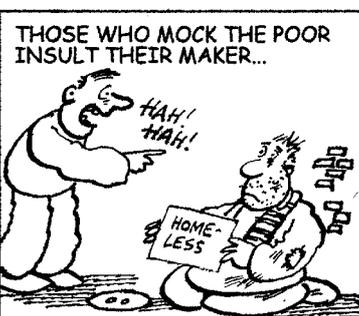
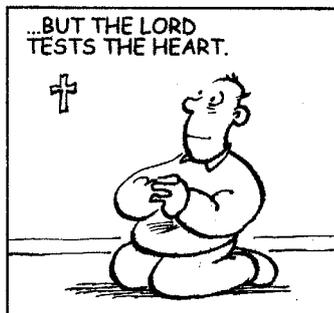
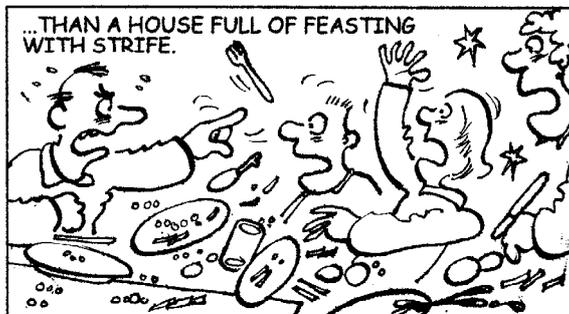
What does this say about how we should pray for our families?

A Mother's Concern

Rebekah should have been overjoyed when she found herself pregnant as a result of Isaac's prayer. However, she was anxious and questioned what was going on (22). God assured her that she bore twins, however this joyful news also brought the warning of trouble between her offspring: 'two nations are in your womb' (23). The ways in which God fulfils his promises in our lives are not always easy!

Have we seen God work in ways that we did not expect?

God sends contradictions to test our responses. Will we react with trust or bitterness?



CHARITIES & LINKS COMMITTEE

Victims of people-traffickers

Diocese of London Lent Appeal 2007

Take the shackles off my feet so I can dance

Please help mark the 200th anniversary of the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade by donating to this Appeal. Your gifts will support projects working with trafficked people and forced labourers in some of the poorest parts of the world.

Take a look at the church display for information on the projects in northern Argentina, northern Uganda, Bangla-



LAYTON THOMPSON

desh, India and Cambodia.

Please use a *Lent Appeal envelope* for your cash or cheque donation and put it in the plate collection when next in church. Fill in the Gift Aid

declaration if you are a taxpayer. Cheques should be made payable to *St James's PCC*. We are helping the diocese by processing appeal donations in-house. We will let you know how much St James raises.

For online giving go to: www.london.anglican.org/LentAppeal



Fairtrade fortnight continues until 11 March and a range of products is available in the foyer of the United Reformed Church, Hampton Hill High Street, every Saturday from 10.30-12.00.

Look out for some familiar faces at the Fairtrade stall in Sainsbury's on Saturday 3 March. www.fairtrade.org.uk

Join the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for a *Walk of Witness* to mark the 200th anniversary of the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade on Saturday 24 March. Gather at 11.30am at Whitehall Place. Go to www.makingourmark.org.uk for a route map and to register.

YOURS FAITHFULLY

DEBBIE NUNN



Geoffrey Nunn

Geoff currently works for the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall.

When and why did you come to St James'?

I was first brought to St James' as a young toddler by my parents. As a result, Church has come to feel like an extension of home and family.

What have you valued most throughout your life at St James'?

As a youngster, I was involved in the Sunday School and then an embryonic Youth Group. But being recruited as a server by Lesley Mortimer has also been key to my involvement in Church. I have particularly enjoyed serving at Christmas, and during services with a full choir - the Vestry comes alive and the choir pews are full to bursting!

How did you become a Christian?

I suppose it began as a child. The continued love and support from my family has been essential. Life at St James' - and also at the Christian Union at my university - has also been a huge influence on my life.

What part of life at St James' has particularly inspired you?

During my time at St James', I have witnessed the support and activities for children and young adults go from strength to strength, reflected in the involvement of many young families in Church - something that all at St James' can be rightly proud of. I certainly feel blessed to be part of such a welcoming and family-friendly Church.

What difference does being a Christian makes to your life?

It has allowed me to better appreciate how blessed we are.

What is the most useful lesson you have learned in life so far?

To be happy.

A wedding to remember!



There was mayhem in the church during a star-studded wedding last month - but all was not as it seemed. The cause of it was Mr Bean, alias Rowan Atkinson, and his antics were captured by the BBC for this year's *Comic Relief* day on Friday on 16 March. The church was filled with 150 extras and masses of beautiful flowers for the shoot. Don't forget to look out for the episode during the marathon BBC One show.

For more pictures go online to: [Past Events>2007>Mr. Bean at St James](#)



MARTIN HINCKLEY

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Prill Hinckley dusts off another page from the *Hampton Hill Parish Magazine* - from April 1885



This is a question, to which if you have a suitable garden, you should certainly answer, 'Yes!' For in the first place there is no more interesting a pastime than bee-keeping.

The habits of this industrious little insect and the internal economy of its habitation, which under the present improved system is open to investigations, are full of interest.

The honey produced, at little or no cost, contributes a most pleasing addition to the luxuries of the table. Nor is this all, a properly managed apiary would pay the poor man's rent, and thus materially add to his means of livelihood.

There is one little hindrance to uninterrupted enjoyment, and it is the

bee's sting. But the bee is not naturally savage, and never stings except it is in defence of itself or hive.

If properly handled bees are most docile, and hive after hive may be opened, and completely examined without a single sting.

In connection with this subject it may be well to state that an effort is now being made to thoroughly establish in every part of the county the Middlesex Beekeepers Association, which is affiliated to the British Beekeepers Association.

Working men may become members, and receive instructions from the expert, from time to time, at their own homes, for a subscription of 2s. 6d. per annum.

Prill writes: You may be interested to know that the British Beekeepers' Association was founded in 1874 and the current Twickenham and Thames Valley Beekeepers' Association was founded in 1919.

HISTORY GROUP/ HISTORY OF ST JAMES' CHURCH

The History Group are supplementing and continuing the story of St James' Church, recorded by Margery Orton in her book, *The Birth and Growth of Hampton Hill*. They are building up archival evidence and using extracts from this, including past magazine articles, PCC minutes, photographs and information provided by local people. If you would like to be involved in, or contribute to, this long-term project please contact Prill Hinckley or Coryn Robinson.

