

## The Good Samaritan today

In Luke's gospel a lawyer, who has been trying to test Jesus, asks him; 'who is my neighbour?' (Luke 10: 25-37). Jesus responds by telling the story of how a Samaritan, a despised outsider, came to the aid of a man who had been attacked by robbers and left half dead.

The Samaritan administered first aid and paid for the man to be looked after while he recovered at a nearby inn. By contrast, two representatives of the religious establishment of the day had crossed over to the other side of the road to avoid the man as he lay injured.

Last month in SPAN, Rev. Morag pointed out that Jesus and his parents had been refugees, escaping to Egypt under threat of death. She challenged us to think about how we respond to those in need who have fled from war, violence or famine.

We have been discussing these issues at St Mary's in our pathfinder group (for young people aged 11-18). We looked at the story of the Good Samaritan, acted it out and discussed what it would have felt like to be the lawyer, the robbers and the innkeeper as well as the better known characters in the story. It was all too easy to see the perspectives of the different characters: the familiar story made very uncomfortable reading when looked at in the context of our lives today.

This month, when we remember with gratitude and respect those who sacrificed their lives for others, we may also be wrestling with difficult questions about present day conflicts. There are no easy answers.

In the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus, who gave his life for us, challenges us, as he did his listeners in first century Palestine. We are challenged to show our love for those in need and danger regardless of race or creed and by actions as well as words, without counting the cost to ourselves.

*Catherine Bingham*



**Harvest Home:** We recently celebrated Harvest and our harvest gifts have been donated to Bromley Women's Aid. Children from Little Cherubs and Sunnyfields Nurseries came to St Mary's and brought harvest gifts, sang harvest songs and heard a bible story. Our flower arrangers created some much admired displays.

### Stay in touch!

To keep up with news from St. Mary's in between editions of SPAN, you can like our page on Facebook or follow us on Twitter – search for 'St Mary's Shortlands'.

Don't forget our website  
www.stmarysshortlands.org.uk



### Special Events and Services

**Sunday 8 November - Remembrance Sunday**  
**10.15am Family Communion and Parade Service**

*Including the traditional outdoor Act of Remembrance, the Two Minutes Silence and the Laying of Wreaths at the War Memorial*

**Sunday 22 November**  
**5.00pm Songs of Praise**

*Following an afternoon of events to celebrate the diamond anniversary of the consecration of the church (see page 3)*

**Sunday 29 November - Advent Sunday**  
**6.30pm Advent Carol Service**

**Sunday 6 December**  
**10.30am Family toy service**

*You are invited to bring a new, unwrapped toy or voucher suitable for children aged 8-13 years, which will become a gift for a local child in need of support through Welcare in Bromley. Please, no soft toys. Wrapping paper also welcome.*

**Sunday 13 December**  
**4.00pm Christingle service**

*Come and see the children's faces glowing in the light of candles*

**Sunday 20 December**  
**6.30pm The Traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols**



## From the Registers

### Holy Baptism

We welcome into God's family:

4 October           Eva Frankham  
18 October         Poppy Spence

### Holy Matrimony

We congratulate:

10 Oct               Tom Nickalls and  
                          Kelly Davis

### At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

Michael Bellamy  1 Oct  aged 81  
Lilian Peacock   15 Oct aged 94

### Interment of Ashes

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

9 Oct                Peter Austen

## Where have all the flowers gone?

Elsewhere in SPAN this month you can see an example of the many floral displays that we enjoy throughout the year at St Mary's.

However, we don't see flowers in church during the periods of Advent and Lent. As we enter the period of Advent, it's timely to ask – why is this?

The season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas: that's 29th November this year. The word 'Advent' consists of two Latin words: ad — venire, 'to come to'. Advent's message is that God, in the form of Jesus Christ, is coming to the world.

It's a season of expectation and preparation. We inevitably think about the shopping we'll do in preparation for Christmas - as Christians we also reflect on what preparations we need to make to welcome Christ into the world. It's a time to watch and wait, to reflect on our own lives, and to think about our priorities and what we might do differently.

This sounds solemn – and 'penitential'. The absence of flowers and the purple hangings in church are some of the ways in which we reflect this solemnity.

There is also great joy in this season, as we anticipate Christmas – his first coming, to a manger in Bethlehem – and as we anticipate the day when he will come again.

When at the end of Advent we enjoy Christmas, the return of flowers to our church is one of the ways in which we express that joy.

The church isn't completely bare of decoration during Advent however – look out for the ring of Advent candles with which we mark progress, week by week, through the season. The ring is mounted on an Advent wreath, made from a circle of evergreen plants which symbolise God's everlasting presence in our lives.

The Roman Catholic church of St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham was packed for Mass on Saturday 3rd October as Canon Jack Madden retired after serving as parish priest since 1988.

Bishop Patrick Lynch from the Archdiocese of Southwark preached and presided. Thanks were given to Canon Jack for all that he had done over so many years.

We at St Mary's send our prayers for his retirement.

## More wartime memories

We were pleased to receive the memories of a previous resident of Shortlands, who revisited the parish recently:

I was born at 24 St Mary's Avenue in 1936 and still remember the demise of the church building during the Second World War. The first bomb damage, I recall, was from a land mine dropped in Kingswood Road. About 4 houses were demolished and more were damaged; the church suffered broken glass, but continued in use.

Next was a 'doodle-bug' that hit the oak tree in the front of the church. This caused major damage to the building, not to mention the tree (although the church spire remained standing) and activities were moved to the hall next to Shortlands railway station.

The final 'hit' was from another doodle-bug that did a vertical dive and blew up the Vicar's tennis court!

After this the church was deemed unsafe (although remarkably the spire still survived) and Sid Bishop, the demolition man famed for his 'watch it come down' slogan, was called in and reduced the whole church to rubble.

By this time I was about 6 years old and, with my childhood friend, scrambled around as boys do. We collected all the shrapnel, pots and pans (to help build a Spitfire!) and put them in the front garden of 16 St Mary's Avenue - the house of Mr Sampson, one time Mayor of Beckenham. Sticking out of the ground amongst the ruins of the church was the gilded cockerel weather vane. It had been visible for some days so was duly wheeled away. How the church elders tut-tutted, and no reward was offered for saving this article from the tip - we were labelled as thieves! I wonder where it is now and whether we were ever credited with rescuing it.

**Nigel Woodham**  
Alresford, Hampshire

Join us for an evening of beautiful Christmas music on

**Tuesday 15th December, 7pm at St Mary's church, Shortlands**

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Tickets £5 each (children go free but still need a ticket), from [highfieldchoirs@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:highfieldchoirs@yahoo.co.uk) or apply in writing to either school office



**BIG BAND:** The Friends of St Mary's organised a very successful afternoon with the Big Band of Greenwich University playing Jazz and Big Band music to a packed church.

The theme of the concert was the 1940's and the World War II era. Everyone enjoyed the music and much hand clapping and foot tapping was noted.

## Legal Eagle retires

Readers of The Times in Shortlands may have spotted an article paying tribute to a member of St Mary's congregation, who has recently retired from a highly distinguished career.

Jenny Ellis (known as Jenny Rowe in her professional life) was until October the Chief Executive of the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land.

Among her achievements in the role was oversight of the move of the court from the House of Lords to its new home in Parliament Square.

During her career she held a variety of jobs related to the legal profession and government, including supporting the process to appoint new judges.

As Principal Private Secretary to Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Conservative Lord Chancellor, she was the first woman to hold the post. In this role she was also Assistant Sergeant at Arms – this required her to wear a special uniform and to carry the mace during the State Opening of Parliament – again, a first for a woman. She later held the same role for Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Labour Lord Chancellor, where she oversaw a major programme of reform.

Following her retirement, Jenny is moving with her husband to Devon, but is already planning to continue to do voluntary work there as well as serving as a Non-Executive Director. We in Shortlands will miss her and send every good wish for their new life.

# Mission of the month

## The National Brain Appeal

One in six people in the UK are affected by a neurological disorder. This can be from birth, through a slowly developing illness or from a brain injury.

The National Brain Appeal raises funds for The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Queen Square, London – one of the world's leading centres for the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with neurological and neuromuscular conditions. These include Dementia, Migraine, Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Brain Cancer and other brain tumours, Epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, Prion disease and Head Injury.

Their latest appeal is to raise a further £2 million of the £3 million appeal to upgrade the operating theatres and create a specialist complex spinal theatre at the National Hospital which is now the largest neurosurgery unit in the UK. The number of patients requiring complex spinal surgery is rising by 20% each year partly due to new surgical techniques and research resulting in more effective treatments. The new theatres will reduce waiting times for surgery, improve patient care and outcomes and spearhead research into new treatments.

More information can be found on the board at the back of church during November, or at [www.nationalbrainappeal.org](http://www.nationalbrainappeal.org)

## St Mary's Annual Dinner

Our Annual Dinner will be held at The Langley Park Golf Club on Saturday 30th January 2016. Tickets are £39 each and can be purchased from the Parish Office.

We have booked Aiden Kent to entertain us after dinner. Aiden, a local singer, does a very good impression of Frank Sinatra and other singers of that era.

So if you like good food, convivial company, a little foxtrot or disco dancing, or prefer just to sit and enjoy the sounds of Frank Sinatra then St Mary's Annual Dinner is for you!



St Mary's choir recently sang Choral Evensong in the chapel of Bromley and Sheppard's Colleges

# CHRISTMAS FAIR

**CHRISTMAS IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK  
WHICH MEANS IT'S TIME TO GET READY FOR THE  
ST. MARY'S CHURCH FAIR**

**THIS YEAR THE FAIR WILL BE HELD ON  
SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER**

**FROM 2-4PM IN THE CHURCH HALL**

**PREPARATIONS ARE UNDER WAY  
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**MONDAY TO FRIDAY FROM 9.30AM TO 12.30PM**

# Our Diamond Event

On 22nd November 2015, we will be celebrating the consecration of the rebuilt St. Mary's church, following damage during the last war. The original church, built between 1867-8, was destroyed by a flying bomb in 1944.

A rebuilding fund was established, and initially services were held outside the ruined church, weather permitting! Services later moved to a large marquee and then to a church hall in Shortlands before work on the new St. Mary's church was completed in 1955. Consecration is an important moment in the life of any church when it is set apart for the worship and service of God: the Service of Consecration for the new St. Mary's church was held on 20 November 1955.

At 2pm on 22nd November all will be welcome at St. Mary's for an afternoon of commemorative events: films and photographs from years gone by, entertainment, workshops, a presentation by the children and afternoon tea. There will be a short period of reflection at the War Memorial at 4.15pm leading into a Songs of Praise Service at 5pm. If you would like register your children for the Home Front Experience, an afternoon of games and stories culminating in their own war time story, please contact the Parish Office on 020 8460 5682.

We hope you will be able to join us for this very special event.

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- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion, except when notified. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 0-18.
- 18.30 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday in the month)

**Every Monday**

- 17.00 Evening Prayers

**Every Wednesday**

- 10.00 Holy Communion

Further information about all services can be obtained from the Parish Office.

**PARISH DIRECTORY**

Vicar	Rev. M. Finch	8464 8065
(Sat - Thu)	revfinch@btinternet.com	
Associate Vicar	Rev. R. Finch	8464 8065
Associate Vicar	Rev. J. Peters	8460 5682
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**PARISH OFFICE Tel: 8460 5682**

e-mail: office@stmaryshortlands.plus.com  
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Information regarding Baptisms and Weddings can be obtained during these hours.

**ST. MARY'S ORGANISATIONS**

Mothers & Toddlers	Mrs. J. Runicles	8650 4553
Mothers' Union Fellowship Group		
Friends of St. Mary's	Mrs. P. White	8460 9357

Miss J. Rambridge 8650 0947

For admissions to Beavers, Cubs & Scouts please contact email: 7bromleyadmissions@gmail.com

Scouts (Fri)	Mr. R. Howe	8462 7132
Cubs (Mon)	Mrs. P. Braithwaite	8460 4152
Cubs (Tues)	Mr. J. Griffiths	07954 437658
Beavers	Mrs H. Ashford	07979 504079

For admissions to Rainbows, Brownies & Guides please tel: 08001695901, or go to www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested

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Guides (Fri.)	Mrs. G. Dawson	8460 5884
Brownies (Mon.)	Miss. K. Higgs	8462 3285
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		8249 0984
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**LOCAL CONTACTS**

Clr. M. Cooke	020 3665 0357
(Email: Mary.Cooke@bromley.gov.uk)	
Clr D. Jefferys	020 8460 6030
(Email: david.jefferys@bromley.gov.uk)	
Residents' Association	8460 4060
Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood	8721 2614

**SPAN INFORMATION**

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