

St. Augustine and St. Aidan
Tonge Moor and Hall i'th' Wood

PARISH PAPER

“Post Lockdown Edition 4” - August 2020



I rejoiced when I heard them say: “Let us go the House of the Lord”.

Alleluia! At long last the Lord’s People are gathered once more around the Lord’s table. On March 23rd earlier this year all churches were closed for public worship as part of the national effort to contain the spread of the Coronavirus, and on the evening of Saturday 25th July St Augustine’s reopened for public worship, followed by St Aidan’s the following morning.

This has been a long time coming, and we have all missed not being gathered together in church. That wing of churchmanship now dominating the Church of England proclaims that the closure of churches has shown how unnecessary church buildings are.

Those of us with a more sacramental understanding of the Christian faith will surely take the opposite view: that the closure has shown how *important* our church buildings are.

Modern technology has enabled us to remain in contact with other in ways unimaginable to people even just a generation

ago. We have been able to share in the mass from our laptops and tablets, and have made use of the provision wisely made on the 1662 Book of Common Prayer to make a Spiritual Communion. But that is not - and cannot be - the same as receiving the sacramental presence of Jesus into our bodies under the form of the consecrated host (and in more normal times, the Precious Blood too) as nourishment for eternal life.

There is also the rootedness of the Christian faith in the present. The Christian faith isn’t something that was only relevant 2,000 years, but is just as relevant today, and will continue to be so in the future. The buildings in which we worship have been worshipped in by Christians of previous generations. Their prayers and praises - as well as our own - have infused the very fabric of our churches. When entering a church, the felling that it is prayer in - or that it is not - is palpable.

Church buildings are special because what takes place within their walls is special. They are special because only by gathering together - as the Early Church most certainly did! - can we share in the Eucharistic meal which is both the foretaste and the promise of the heavenly Banquet.

It has been a privilege to be able to celebrate mass during this pandemic - firstly at home in St Augustine’s temporary Oratory, and latterly in St Augustine’s - but the real joy is in being gathered together with my brothers and sisters around the Lord’s table, sharing, together, in the sacramental Body of Our Lord.

With my love and prayers

Fr Tony

PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM

The pilgrimage to Walsingham, which was booked for the last week of August, has been cancelled, due to the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus pandemic. The Shrine is slowly reopening to pilgrims, and we had hoped to be able to take a group from the Parish to stay at the Shrine later in the year. Sadly, the Shrine has recently announced that “due to ongoing uncertainties surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, The Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham will not be opening for residential pilgrims for the rest of the 2020 pilgrimage season.” We trust and pray that restrictions will be lifted in time for our pilgrimage in August 2021.

ST AIDAN’S PATRONAL FESTIVAL

The silver lining on the cloud of the Parish Pilgrimage’s cancellation is that we will all be at home for St Aidan’s Feast of Title on Monday 31st August. On that day there will be a mass held there at 7.30pm. Sadly, at the time of writing, there will be no buffet to follow the mass, but the mass itself is ample reason to turn out and celebrate as a Parish with the good people of St Aidan’s.

As, at the time of writing, it is still likely that seating will be limited. Seats will be reserved for St Aidan’s regulars, but otherwise it would be very helpful if those wishing to attend could let Fr Tony know. Thank you.

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6th August: The Transfiguration - A glimpse of glory

The story is told in Matthew (17:1-9), Mark (9:1-9) and Luke (9:28-36).

It was a time when Jesus’ ministry was popular r, when people were seeking Him out. But on this day, He made time to take Peter, James and John, His closest disciples, up a high mountain. In the fourth century, Cyrillic of Jerusalem identified it as Mount Tabor (and there is a great church up there today), but others believe it more likely to have been one of the three spurs of Mount Hermon, which rises to about 9,000 feet, and overlooks Caesarea Philippi.

High up on the mountain, Jesus was suddenly transfigured before His friends. His face began to shine as the sun, His garments became white and dazzling. Elijah and Moses, of all people, suddenly appeared, and talked with Him. A bright cloud overshadowed the disciples.

Peter was staggered, but, enthusiast that he was - immediately suggested building three tabernacles on that holy place, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. But God’s ‘tabernacling’, God’s dwelling with mankind, does not any longer depend upon building a shrine. It depends on the presence of Jesus, instead. And so a cloud covered them, and a Voice spoke out of the cloud, saying that Jesus was His beloved Son, whom the disciple should ‘hear’. God’s dwelling with mankind depends upon our listening to Jesus.

Then, just as suddenly, it is all over. What did it mean? Why Moses and Elijah? Well, these two men represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they are handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their true and final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

Why on top of a mountain? In Exodus we read that Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the sacred covenant from Yahweh in the form of the Ten Commandments. Now Jesus goes up and is told about the 'sealing' of the New Covenant, or New Testament of God with man, which will be accomplished by His coming death in Jerusalem.

That day made a lifelong impact on the disciples. Peter mentions it in his second letter, 2 Peter 1:16 - 19 - invariably the reading for this day.

The Eastern Churches have long held the Transfiguration as a feast as important as Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension and Pentecost. But it took a long time for the West to observe the Transfiguration. The feast starts appearing from the 11th and 12th centuries, and the Prayer Book included it among the calendar dates, but there was no liturgical provision for it until the 19th century.

29th August: The beheading of John the Baptist

Spare a thought for John the Baptist: however rough your local sandwich bar may be, it probably doesn't serve you locusts with a honey dip; you won't be imprisoned for saying derogatory things about the local MP's wife, and even the boss from hell is unlikely to have a daughter who wants to hip-hop about with your head on a platter.

John the Baptist, by our standards, had a terrible life. Yet the Bible tells us that of all the people in history, no one has even been born who was as great as him. Why? Because of the unique job God gave him to do, which has to be the best PR job of all time: act as God's press officer.

This was quite literally the PR job from heaven: with God as his client, John the Baptist's job was to broadcast the news that the Messiah had come. Not even Church House Westminster has ever attempted anything like that.

It always helps if PR people recognise their own clients, and the same was true of John: he was the first person to recognise Jesus as the Messiah. PR people also help their clients prepare for their public role, and John did the same for Jesus: he baptised Him in the Jordan at the start of His ministry.

PR people also stand up in public for their client's point of view, and in John's case it led to his arrest and

imprisonment. His death was finally brought about by the scheming of Herodias and Salome, and here the similarity ends: for not even the most dedicated press officers literally lose their heads over a client.

30th August: John Bunyan - Pilgrim's Progress

After the Bible, John Bunyan's wonderful Christian allegory, the Pilgrim's Progress, is one of the most celebrated and widely-read books in the English language. It has been translated into more than one hundred languages around the world and keeps its place as a Christian classic.

Names of people and places from its pages have been commonplace wherever English is spoken. We need only recall Mr Great-Heart, Mr Valiant-for-Truth, Giant Despair, Madame Bubble, the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, the Delectable Mountains, the Hill Difficulty and the Celestial City.

Bunyan was born on 28 November 1628, at Elstow, near Bedford, England, of a poor family. He had little formal education and his father taught him to be a metal worker. His first wife died young. His second wife, Elizabeth, helped him considerably with his blossoming literary career. His conversion was the result of reading the Bible, and the witness of local Christians. From that time the Bible became the great inspiration of his life. He wrote more than fifty books on Christianity. A Baptist by conviction, he had little time for the Established Church.

Bunyan became a popular preacher, but because of his opposition to the Established Church and because he did not have a Church of England preaching licence, he was imprisoned in 1661. It was in prison that he wrote Pilgrim's Progress. It was not only Bunyan's greatest book but was destined to become one of the most popular Christian books in the world.

Pilgrim's Progress is an allegory, using the names of people and places from the Bible to teach spiritual lessons. The vivid and unforgettable imagery in the Pilgrim's Progress covers the whole Christian gospel from sin and condemnation all the way through faith, repentance, grace, justification, sanctification, and perseverance to heaven itself.

Bunyan died on 31st August 1688. His portrayal of the death of Mr Valiant For Truth is Bunyan at his allegorical best. This brave old soldier of Jesus Christ had received his summons to 'go home.' Calling his friends together he says, *'My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my pilgrimage ... My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought His battles, Who will now be my rewarder.'* ... *So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side...'*

31st August: St. Aidan - The man who brought Christianity to England

31st August is the feast of St Aidan, who brought Christianity to northern England. He is a strong contender for the title of the first English bishop. Not that honours meant a great deal to this austere but captivating character.

In 635 he came to Northumbria at the invitation of the local ruler, Oswald. Oswald had spent several years of his childhood on Iona, and when he succeeded to the throne of his northern kingdom he was shrewd enough to realise that the Christian faith would be an ideal unifying force to pacify rival tribes of warlords.

Oswald's invitation was not immediately successful. The first missionary from Iona returned in despair, claiming that the barbarity of the Northumbrians made them unconvertible. But as Aidan listened, he felt the unmistakable call of God to try again.

"Perhaps you were too harsh on them," he found himself suggesting to the travel-stained missionary. Shortly afterwards, Aidan found himself at the head of a party of brothers heading for Northumbria. He was never to see his beloved Iona again.

The monks made the long journey to Northumbria on foot, singing psalms as they went. Their need to ward off the

powers of evil with prayer was genuine, for these were dangerous times to travel through remote country unarmed. They arrived safely at Oswald's castle in Bamburgh, where he offered them lavish hospitality and assumed that they would found their community there.

However, the brothers realised that to live under the king's protection would make it difficult to avoid the world's temptations and establish a rapport with the local people. They saw the tidal island of Lindisfarne on the horizon and chose it as their base. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Aidan was much loved as a teacher and evangelist; though stern in his own self-discipline, he was prepared to travel to the most inaccessible villages, where he cared for the local people with compassion and gentleness. In time, his influence grew and noble people joined the stream of visitors to Lindisfarne.

After Oswald's death in 642, his brother Oswin succeeded him as king. Oswin was concerned about Aidan's habit of walking everywhere. The saint was ageing rapidly, his body weakened by years of harsh fasting and exposure to the elements. Oswin wondered what would happen to him one day on the road, and also he felt that such a lowly means of travel was not appropriate for a bishop. So he gave Aidan one of his finest horses, complete with a beautifully worked saddle and bridle.

Aidan did not feel able to risk offending the king by spurning his generosity, but he rode out of the palace with a heavy

heart. He knew that people would relate to him differently now that he had the trappings of affluence, and that it would be dangerous to stop and rest with such valuable belongings beside him.

The king had intended to give him comfort, but his gesture had had the opposite effect. Aidan had learnt that possessions, and the need to protect them, make it more difficult to follow God with an undivided heart. The story goes that he gave the horse, complete with saddle, to the first beggar he met outside the palace gates.

A more pragmatic Christian might have reasoned that keeping on the right side of Oswin would lead to opportunities that were too valuable to risk. Indeed, the king was angry when he heard what Aidan had done. "That horse was fit for a king, not for some vagabond," he protested. "I could have found you an old nag if you wanted to give it away." Aidan's reply was simply, "What do you think, O King? Is the son of a mare worth more in your eyes than that the Son of God?"

There was an awkward silence; then the King removed his sword, knelt at Aidan's feet and asked his forgiveness. When he returned to the banqueting table, it was with a beaming smile. Sadly, he too was to perish in battle shortly afterwards; these were violent times. Yet Oswin, whose culture demanded that he should appear all-powerful in the eyes of his followers, had been publicly humbled by the integrity of a simple monk who had challenged his values.

100 CLUB NEWS

The fourth monthly draw was via a Zoom meeting at 12 noon after the 10.30am Mass on Sunday 5th July 2020.

Pam and Fr Tony were in charge of the drum containing the numbers at the vicarage, inside again for this draw. Ruth & David had list of numbers and names, in their dining room.

First Prize Number 89 - Brenda Sherlock wins £25

Second Prize Number 77 - June Aspinall wins £15

Third Prize Number 31 - Vera Cryer wins £10

The fifth draw for this term to be drawn Sunday 2nd August 2020, probably again via Zoom, watch for details.

If you are not a member and would like to join it is just £1 a month.

Please see David or Ruth Taylor.



Churches Together in Tonge Moor

We hosted the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service on Sunday 19th January.

There was to be a joint service on the Monday in Holy Week 6th April. As we were in lockdown, Matthew Ramsden from St Andrew's prepared an act of worship for us, it was well put together and relevant and helped us to focus. There were links to bible gateway for the readings and You Tube links to the hymns.

We had a Zoom meeting on 26th June when we said goodbye to Mark Bates and Alison Dalton. As Mark was our Chairman,

Matthew has now taken over this role so this leaves the Secretary position vacant. There were discussions as to what each church was doing Church at The Centre and St Augustine's each streamed their services on YouTube, St Andrew's has their worship on their website and host Zoom prayers on Wednesday evening.

A virtual prayer walk is to be held on Wednesday 19th August at 7pm, this will be recorded on Zoom and will then be put on YouTube.

Do let us know if you want a copy of the Holy Week service, can help/join the group and act as secretary and/or want access to the Prayer Walk.

David & Ruth Taylor



News from The Shrine

On 12th July, the first weekly live-stream of a 9am Sunday Mass from the Anglican Shrine Church began. It was keenly anticipated as 772 people followed it at the time, with the number rising in the following days to over 2,000. It is wonderful to feel as though you're in the church and hear the organ playing, which adds enormously to the atmosphere. Still no hymns of course, but nevertheless a very welcome addition to the worship. This has been announced as a 'temporary measure for those still shielding' so whether or not it will continue in some form at some time remains to be seen. There have been many requests for the daily 6pm live Shrine Prayers from the Holy House to continue and replies to those indicate it will. The most recent and past streamed Masses can be accessed through the main Shrine web-site - www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk so watching them means you won't have to miss our own streamed services.

This was the last day of duty for the Shrine Priest, Fr Andreas Wenzel, as he and his family moved to St Stephen's House, Oxford the following day. It was fitting that he was the Celebrant and Preacher and later led Shrine Prayers. There have been hundreds of messages of thanks and best wishes posted on the Shrine's facebook page and I know several

readers of our *Parish Paper* felt that his final , "Night, night and God bless" seemed to be said just to them. A few tears flowed in my house as I know it did in others. Given the circumstances, it proved to be an appropriate way to say good-bye from a wonderful, talented and humble priest who has assisted Fr Kevin for the last three and a half years. During my regular visits to Walsingham in recent years I have been fortunate to hear Fr Andreas preach some thought-provoking and inspiring sermons. The Shrine's loss is Oxford's gain. I remember our much-missed Shirley Hale often bemoaning that generally there wasn't enough teaching going on in the Church of England (Tonge Moor excepted!) but this was far from the case with Fr Andreas. It is the nature of the role and ministry that Shrine Priests move on but, like Fr Graham Lunn before him, pilgrims benefit from their many talents, sense of humour and fun and love of Our Lady and England's Nazareth. As travel restrictions from the Isle of Man have now been lifted, the Shrine looks forward to welcoming Fr Ben Bradshaw and his family.

As I write this on Friday 24th July, it has just been announced that there will be no residential pilgrimages until 2021. This is not totally unexpected news but must have been a hugely difficult decision to make. They can't be dithering about from month to month so I suppose now at least everybody knows that no-one is going! The annual five day Youth Pilgrimage (which our Parish usually supports through the financial and prayer 'Be a God-Parent' Scheme) and Day Pilgrimage for Healing and Renewal, are sadly more casualties. The Youth Pilgrimage@home is on countdown to an on-line version for the first week in August. The Shrine Church, Guild of All Souls Chapel and gardens continue to be open daily for private prayer from 10am - 3pm, with current social distancing and

hygiene guidelines strictly in place. The record of us being the only Anglican parish to have continuous annual pilgrimages to the Shrine since 1947, still stands. We must look forward to 2021 and even more significantly, to 2022 when it will be the 75th Anniversary.

A visitor to the Shrine during July was the Rt Rev'd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich. As part of the national Year of Pilgrimage, he walked the 30 miles from Norwich to Walsingham over 3 days, taking in along the way some of the county's churches to pray particularly for those affected by Covid-19. Sister Carol accompanied him on the last part of his walk and then the Bishop spent some time in the Holy House. Before he left, he enjoyed a refreshing Pilgrim's Pale Ale with Fr Kevin outside Norton's Café Bar.

With regard to our own Cell of St Nicholas, I am sure we are missing our now more regular Cell meetings. We hope that we will be in a position to do something before too long, as we re-opened for public worship from the 25th July, but we need to 'feel our way' first and social events will be further down the line. As usual, the Intention at the morning Mass on the last Saturday of the month is for the Shrine and all who work there, Priests Associate and our own Cell. Please remember all at the Shrine, Sr Angela and Sr Carol at the Priory and all who visit England's Nazareth in your prayers. Thank you.

Linda Parkington

The Rectory St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

When the churches reopen for public worship (whenever that is!) I hope you will come and take Evensong one Sunday. But, thinking of your visit last August, I would prefer you used the pulpit when preaching. How could Colonel Brockle complete 'The Times' crossword and Miss Balmer her knitting with you constantly walking up and down in front of them? They found it most disconcerting, as out of politeness, they were obliged to listen to you. It was a unique experience they do not wish to repeat.

Those few who defy Anglican tradition and sit at the front of the church were also placed in the dilemma of trying to decide whether they should keep turning in their pews as you paraded down the nave and then rotating back to the front as you re-emerged up the side aisle. It did Lady Plumtree's vertigo no good at all. It also allowed people to see that you were wearing suede shoes. For many of our worshippers, the most appalling of heresies are as nothing when compared to brown shoes under a cassock.

I appreciate you made heroic efforts and got your sermon down to 30 minutes, but that is still 20 minutes longer than they anticipated and 29 minutes longer than their attention span.

No, use the pulpit in future; that is the reason why stonemasons 600 years ago put twenty tons of marble in our church in the first place and it would be a shame to disappoint them. It also means that from a distance of 100 yards and a height of 20 feet, no one can tell that the glass of water I use liberally while preaching is in fact a gin and tonic.

I concede that our pulpit has its dangers. I have known several bishops come to grief as their robes wrap themselves around the newel post as they ascend the steps. One, unable to untangle himself, was obliged to preach while half-way up the steps and with his back to the congregation, while our verger was dispatched to find a pair of scissors.

Perhaps, before your next visit, we may install a mechanical floor in the pulpit, so that after 10 minutes, it slowly lowers you into the crypt while the congregation can get on with singing the last hymn before getting home in decent time.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Sick of preaching

Our new vicar had just been prescribed bifocals. The reading portion of the glasses improved his vision considerably, but the top portion of the glasses didn't work so well. In fact, he was experiencing dizziness every time he looked through them. He tried to explain this to the congregation on Sunday: "I hope you will excuse my continually removing my glasses. You see, when I look down, I can see fine, but when I look at you all, it makes me feel sick."

**A sweater I bought was
picking up static electricity,
so I returned it to the store.**

**They gave me another one,
free of charge.**

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

MELROSE BISCUITS

(known in our family as Auntie Nellie biscuits)

114g	Margarine
86g	Sugar
86g	Plain flour
½ tspn	Bicarb of soda
9 tbsp	Rolled oats

Beat fat into a cream, then beat in sugar. Sift flour with soda, then mix with oats.

Beat dry ingredients with creamed fat and knead well. Turn out on to a lightly floured board and roll out to about 1/8" thick. Cut into rounds.

Place on lightly greased baking sheets and cook in moderate oven for about 20 minutes.

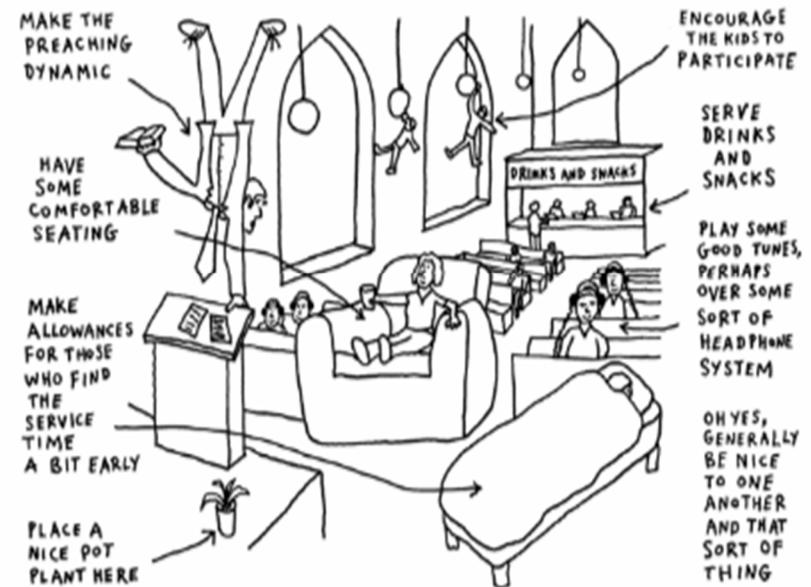
Yield - about 24 biscuits

Filling:

28g	Margarine
14g	Castor sugar
1.5 dspn	Cocoa powder

Let the biscuits go quite cold before adding filling.

HOW TO MAKE CHURCH BRILLIANT



CartoonChurch.com

I would be grateful if you could let me have your contributions for the August edition of the Parish Paper by no later than Friday, 21st August 2020. Thank you.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

There have been no Occasional Offices this month

Calendar and Intentions for August 2020

Sat	1	S Alphonsus Ligouri: the young people of this parish
SUN	2	18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	3	feria: Those who would normally receive the Blessed Sacrament in their homes this month
Tue	4	S John Vianney: All parish clergy
Wed	5	feria: Those seeking a vaccine for the Coronavirus
Thu	6	THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD: The Parish and the People of God
Fri	7	feria: Our local tradespeople
Sat	8	S Dominic: All who preach the word of God
SUN	9	19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	10	S LAURENCE: All who suffer persecution for their Christian faith
Tue	11	S Clare: All who choose to live in poverty
Wed	12	feria: The work of The Society and Forward in Faith
Thu	13	feria: The fire, police and ambulance services
Fri	14	S Maximilian Kolbe: Reconciliation between Christians and Jews
Sat	15	feria: All medical staff at Royal Bolton Hospital
SUN	16	THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BVM: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	17	feria: Religious communities and vocations to the religious life
Tue	18	feria: The Bishop of Beverley, and all the Bishops of The Society
Wed	19	feria: The Churches Together in Tonge Moor, and our Virtual Prayer Walk
Thu	20	S Bernard: Vocations to the religious life
Fri	21	S Pius X: The work of theologians
Sat	22	The Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven: The work of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
SUN	23	21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	24	S BARTHOLOMEW: Theological colleges
Tue	25	feria: The mentally ill and those who care for them
Wed	26	feria: All Care Home staff
Thu	27	S Monica: The Mothers' Union
Fri	28	S Augustine of Hippo: The Church in Africa
Sat	29	Beheading of S John the Baptist: Those persecuted for their faith
SUN	30	22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: The Parish and the People of God
Mon	31	S AIDAN: The Parish and the People of God

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