



**St. Alban's Earsdon**



**Earsdon Methodist**



# **CHURCH VIEWS**

**March  
2023**

**£1.00**



**Our Lady & St. Edmund,  
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**



**St. John's Backworth**



**Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**

# THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Dear All,

I'm fresh from one of the highlights of my year. My annual reading week is a chance to step aside for a bit, and to tank up with fresh insights. So rather than a 'thought' for the month, here are some 'thoughts' for the month, all taken from my recent week of study leave. These thoughts are unconnected, which I've tried to show by putting every other thought in italics...

*Mankind will not perish for want of information, but only for want of appreciation. The beginning of our happiness lies in the understanding that life without wonder is not worth living. What we lack is not a will to believe but a will to wonder.*

There is nothing blind about faith, but there is nothing certain about it either. It is like trusting the outstretched hand that helps you ford the stream: you see the stream, you see the hand; you do not blindly step, but step you must.

*God is the ultimate good who attracts all things to their flourishing, the possibility that is most fulfilling for them, but does not compel them to take that path: they have the freedom to respond for better or for worse.*

Christianity is, above all, the religion that speaks of vulnerability and love, in the image of God that cared for creation in such a way as to be unable not to suffer in and alongside it.

*The so-called 'Slow Movement' holds that our most profound needs, those for closeness, care, love and appreciation of the good things in life, as well as of one another, depend on slowness in human relations. In order to master changes, we have to recover slowness, reflection and togetherness. There we will find real renewal. Pressure to acquire speeds things up; living in tune with the world moves things at the world's pace once again.*

The more we hurry, the more time hurries too. The more we try to do things at once, the less they mean, the less pleasurable they are, the less time we have, and the less we are alive. Running away from mortality, we speed its arrival.

*Ecologist Suzanne Simard discovered that two tree species she was studying, the Douglas-fir and the paper birch, shared complex underground networks of fungi and are capable of transferring water, carbon, nitrogen and other nutrients and minerals. The species were engaged 'in a lively two-way conversation'. In the summer months, when the Douglas-fir needed more carbon, the birch sent more carbon to the fir; and at other times when the fir was still growing but the paper birch needed more carbon because it was leafless, the fir sent more carbon to the birch. The two species were in fact interdependent.*

Typical emotions reported during near-death experience include an overwhelming sense of peace and well-being, a sense of cosmic unity or being one with everything, a feeling of complete joy and a sense of being loved unconditionally.

*Each of our lives is a part of the lengthy process of the universe gradually waking up and becoming aware of itself.*

There will be truth when we are no longer around to see it, but there will be no falsehood: the lie shall rot. It takes a human to lie.

*Instead of saying, when speaking of human things, that one must know them before one can love them, the saints say on the contrary, speaking of divine things, that one must love them in order to know them, and that no-one attains the truth except by means of love.*

The aim of art is to prepare a person for death, to plough and harrow the soul, rendering it capable of turning to good.

...and I've left it to the end to tell you which book I was reading. It's called 'The Matter with Things' by Iain McGilchrist. I've left it to the end to tell you this because I don't recommend you buy a copy. It's very expensive, very long, and very repetitive. But I'm glad I've read it, and will be gladder still if some of these 'thoughts for the month' have spoken to you.

With all good wishes for your journey through Lent towards the glories of Easter.

Tim Mayfield.

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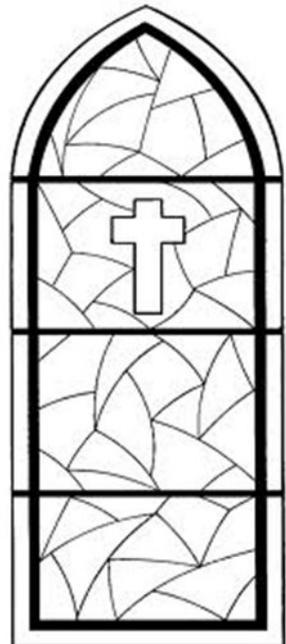


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Burns night was a great success. Lots of tartan to be spotted!

Thanks to Jill for these pictures from the very popular Burns Night Supper. Here is Paul with his impressive “addressing the haggis”.



The clocks go *forward* by one hour on  
Sunday 26th March 2023 at 1am.

(It might be better to change your clocks before  
you go to bed  
on the evening of Saturday 25th March. )



Remember



to put your

clocks forward one hour

BST begins Sunday 26th March



# Smile-lines

## Carry on

The vicar was making an appeal for more help with the Sunday School:  
“At the moment I’m just carrying on with a couple of single ladies!”

\*\*\*\*

## The Bible according to children

*Children’s version of biblical stories and events have a charm all their own. The following efforts have not been retouched or corrected (i.e. bad spelling has been left in).*

- ~ Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree.
- ~ Noah built an ark, which the animals came on to in pears.
- ~ Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day, but a ball of fire by night.
- ~ The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten amendments.
- ~ Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostles.

\*\*\*\*

## Musings on daily life

A day without sunshine is like, well, night.

I am in shape. Round is a shape.

What's the leading cause of dry skin? Towels.

A gesticulation is any movement made by a foreigner.

What's a perfect gift for a person who has everything? Storage space.

\*\*\*\*

# BITS 'N' PIECES

It was...

300 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1723 that Sir Christopher Wren, English architect, died. Best known for designing St Paul's Cathedral.

80 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1943 that the final liquidation of Krakow Ghetto in Poland took place. 8,000 Jews were transported to Plaszow labour camp, 2000 more were simply killed in the streets, and the rest were sent to Auschwitz.

70 years ago, on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1953 that Dr Jonas Salk announced that he had completed the first small-scale test of a polio vaccine. Larger tests began in February 1954, and mass vaccinations began in April 1955.

60 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1963 that the British Secretary of State for War,

John Profumo, made a statement in the House of Commons in which he denied there was any impropriety in his relationship with Christine Keeler, a model who was also in a sexual relationship with a drug dealer and a Soviet naval attaché. (In June he admitted he had lied, and resigned.)

50 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1973 that the citizens of Northern Ireland voted in a referendum to remain within the United Kingdom. That same day the IRA carried out its first bombing in Britain since WWII, planting car bombs in London. One person died, 200 were injured.

40 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1983 that Donald Maclean, British-born Soviet spy died. He was a member of the Cambridge Spy Ring.

Also 40 years ago, on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1983, that

Anthony Blunt, British art historian and Soviet spy, died.

25 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1998 that Rwanda began mass trials for the country's 1994 genocide. There were 125,000 suspects for 500,000 murders.

20 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2003 that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the al-Qaeda terrorist who masterminded the 9/11 attacks on the USA, was captured in Pakistan.

Also 20 years ago, on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2003 that the World Health Organisation issued a global alert about a severe form of pneumonia (now known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome – SARS) that was affecting people in China, Hong Kong and Vietnam.

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## The St Alban's 'Wednesday Walkers'

Recently a number of people have shown interest in The Wednesday Walkers' Group. So we thought you might like to know how it all began. In the Autumn of 2020 just before the second Lockdown Covid restrictions began to tighten and people were told to stay in and churches closed. As some were unable to get out and see people and were not online, Pat suggested to us ... myself, Sylvia, Liz, Ali and later Sandy... a 'Walk Around' visiting homebound people on a weekly basis. Calling at their doors for a chat. Those who were mobile joined us which meant they could all chat to their friends and see happy faces rather than just phone each other. Ali as a VODA (Voluntary Organisations Development Agency) rep advised us on rules - so many feet apart and walking single file. And so the Walking Group was formed.

On Wednesday 28 October 2020 at 1.30 pm with extra helpers all wrapped up and face masks on we set off for the first visit. 6 November was Lockdown. Ali had strict rules. About 6 houses were visited in Wellfield. This went on every week until Christmas 2020 and helped by Sandy who baked shortbread biscuits we gave everyone Christmas cards and gifts.

After a few months, later in 2021 when the cafes opened, we took everyone to Sainsbury's cafe and it became the weekly norm. The staff were wonderful every week and at Christmas 2021 they gave us a lovely Christmas party. Sadly the cafe closed and we started going to Herbs coffee shop who agreed to save us four big tables every week. As time went by more people wanted to join us. So for people able to get around without assistance we decided we could have a bigger meeting once per month and luckily Morrison's at North Shields let us use their Meeting Room which holds 25 people. This is organised by wonderful Gaynor who even gives us free teas, coffees and biscuits. They also organised a Christmas Party too.

Last year, 2022, Pat, Sylvia, Liz and Ali worked very hard to organise a Christmas Party in the Eccles Hall (with Santa) to which everyone was invited. This was catered for and tickets were £5.

And so, a New Year begins. We look forward to many more happy meetings with friends both in Herbs and Morrison's. Best wishes for 2023 from The Wednesday Walkers.

*Ella Heaney*



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# CHURCH VIEWS FOR MARCH 2023 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA



## National Youth Festival

Flame is the largest gathering of Catholic young people in the country. On Saturday 4 March, some 10,000 young people gathered in the OVO Arena, Wembley, for this festival of prayer, reflection, and praise. This was the first post-pandemic celebration, helping to show our youngsters that they are members of a great world faith as well as part of their own parish communities.

One of the earliest pioneers of this event in our Diocese was the late Father Dermott Donnelly, who with the help of the Youth Ministry Team first encouraged our young people to attend. Flame 2023 - which was held exactly 150 days before World Youth Day in Lisbon - took as its theme the WYD Scripture choice 'Mary arose and went in haste' and crystallised it into 'Rise Up!' The Lisbon Youth 'Day' is something of a misnomer, because it will last throughout the first week in August.



850 young people from schools and other organisations in the Diocese, including 48 from Years 12 and 13 at St Thomas More Academy in North Shields, travelled together by train from Newcastle to join in this great celebration of their faith.

One of the speakers was Cardinal Luis Tagle of the Philippines, and the event was also supported by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

To assist with fundraising, St Thomas More Academy students in our parish were invited to speak at Masses in February and retiring collections were taken to offset the expenses of their attendance.

Their enthusiasm in celebrating their faith shows a welcome commitment.

## Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal

CAFOD, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, appealed for financial support for the Turkey-Syria Earthquake Fund as part of the Disaster Emergency Committee. The response of the parish was outstandingly generous, and a donation of £1650 was sent to alleviate the distress of the survivors. Thank you to everyone who contributed in these straitened times.



## Luncheon Club



The Food Standards Agency made an unannounced visit to the Luncheon Club as preparations were being made to serve the usual full-house of diners. The organisers are delighted to say that the inspection awarded them the highest grade possible.

## Lent

Stations of the Cross will be celebrated weekly in both parish churches at 7.00pm throughout Lent, on Tuesday evenings in St Edward's and on Thursdays at Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Study sessions will also be held every Wednesday after 9.30am Mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary, using Henri Nowen's *The Return of the Prodigal Son - A Story of Homecoming* as a base for discussion. Invitations to attend will be issued to other churches in the area.



## School Visit

Thank you to everyone who helped with the February visit of the children of Marine Park First School to St Edward's Church.

## Walking Group

The next walks will be on 1 and 15 of March - let's hope the unexpectedly beautiful sunshine enjoyed during the February walks continues.

*Gerry Latimer*

**Roman Catholic Parish Mass Times:**

*St Edward's: Sunday 10.00am, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 9.30am  
Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday 6.00pm,  
Wednesday, Friday 9.30am*

Do you ever ask yourself.....

Does anyone else have a plastic bag full of plastic bags or is it just me?

When you get a headache, should you take two aspirin and keep away from children like the bottle says?

Instead of constantly rejecting my password, why can't my laptop just once say That's close enough ?

Why is the gym car park full of people driving around trying to park as close as they can to the entrance so they can go in to walk miles on a treadmill?

Maybe my anger management is fine; is it just my tolerance for idiots that needs work?

Why do some visitors think 'on time' is when they can be bothered to turn up?

*(Thanks, Gerry, for these ponderings. )*



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St Alban's and St John's Pancake & Quiz Night, with loads of raffle prizes, on 21st February was a huge success, as ever. Here is just a selection of pictures from the event.





Pictures courtesy of Jill Armstrong. Jill's table (Martí's Marauders) won the quiz. Well, they did have an official Brain of Britain contestant on their team! Jo also wound up the evening with thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the event another brilliant night.



And the winners ...



# Earsdon Methodist Church

## *Diary for March 2023*

Sunday	5th	Mr J Bedigan
Sunday	12th	Rev W Blakey ~ Holy Communion
Sunday	19th	Rev E Gordon
Sunday	26th	Rev E Walker



## TEMPTATION

There was a Methodist Minister who decided to go on a diet for Lent. It was hard work, but for a whole week he had managed magnificently. Then one day he walked into the house with a huge chocolate gateau. "I thought you were going to diet," said his wife.

He replied, "Well I prayed about it, and I am sure that God gave me a sign that it was alright to eat this cake."

"How do you make that out?" asked his wife

"Well," he replied, I was driving past the shop when I saw the cake in the window. Then I prayed to the Lord that if he wanted me to have the cake there would be a parking space right outside of the shop. And do you know, the ninth time I went around the block, there it was!"

A silly story perhaps, but when we think about it no one is ever free from temptation, whether it is about chocolate cake or something more serious. On this subject, I was once accosted by someone who told me that the Lord's Prayer does not work because it contains the words "lead us not into temptation" and everyone is tempted at some point or another.

We can only take our example from Jesus who the gospels tell us that before his ministry began was also seriously tempted. So, can anyone expect to be exempt? The traditional version of the Lord's Prayer - much used and so loved by us - is perhaps not the best translation of the original words. I much prefer the version that I heard once in a Primary School ~ "Keep us from the bad stuff."

Personally I am not giving up chocolate cake this Lent, but my prayer is that I will be kept from the temptation from yielding to the bad stuff. It's a lot to ask but we can at least try.

*Wes Blakey*

# St. Alban's and St. John's



## Diary Page for March 2023

Thursday	2nd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	5th		<b><u>Second Sunday of Lent</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	8th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	12th		<b><u>Third Sunday of Lent</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	16th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	19th		<b><u>Fourth Sunday of Lent</u></b>	
			<b>( Mothering Sunday)</b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	22nd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	26th		<b><u>Fifth Sunday of Lent</u></b>	
			<b>(Passion Sunday)</b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	30th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	2nd April		<b><u>Palm Sunday</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's

# St. Alban's and St. John's

## Sunday Gospel Readings for March 2023 :

**5th**

John 3. 1-17

**12th**

John 4.5-42

**19th**

Colossians 3.12-17

**26th**

John 11.1-45

**2nd April**

Matthew 21.1-11

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* If you have any suggestions, comments or requests \*  
\* regarding the magazine, or for anyone thinking of \*  
\* sending in their contribution for publication, please \*  
\* email it to **magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk** \*  
\* or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

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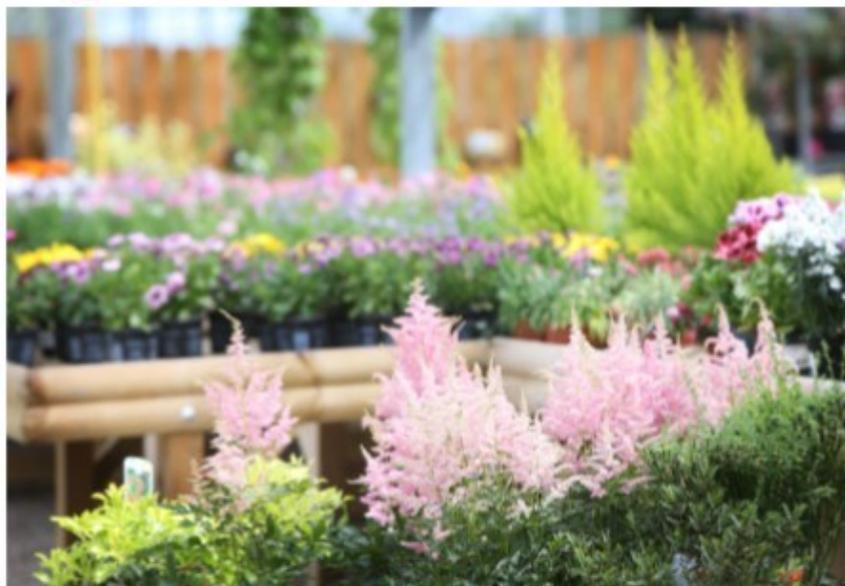
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	2	4	3	8				
					6			7
	5	8				4		
4				1				
			7		5			
				2				8
		1				6	7	
3			5					
				4	9	2	1	

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (April 2023) will need to be in before Wednesday 22nd March. Thank you, *Jean*.

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## Marti's Musings 108

February has flown by! I can't believe it's nearly March already, but you can tell by the lovely snowdrops and crocus' appearing. I'm impressed that they pushed their way up from the frozen ground. I had fun at the Burns night, everyone looked so good in their tartan outfits. I don't know how Paul manages to remember the entire address to the haggis.

It was great to see you all at the quiz night and my team Marti's Marauders won! Craig was an excellent quiz master and the pancakes were delicious as ever. I was very pleased there was a dog round and of course I got every answer correct in that section! I was a bit annoyed I didn't get a sample of the pancakes. Mum said it's not good for dogs, but I think she's just mean.

Lots of huffs, Marti xxx



# WORDSEARCH

**St Patrick's Day \* Mothering Sunday \* Annunciation \* Lent**

Leeks for St David's day, daffodils for the rest of the month: March brings us Spring. St Patrick, who brought Christianity to Ireland, is remembered with parades. Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day are celebrated with more daffodils and Sunday lunch 'out'. March brings us the Annunciation, when the angel first appeared to Mary to tell her of her coming pregnancy. March is the month of Lent, of prayer and preparation for Easter.

Leeks  
Daffodils  
Spring  
Patrick  
Day

Mum  
Mother  
Angel  
Ireland  
Wales

Sunday  
Lunch  
Pregnancy  
preparation  
prayer

parades  
Mary  
Magnificat  
Fasting  
Lent



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