

Green Matters

As a borough, Richmond is making laudable efforts to encourage all residents to recycle as much waste as possible, and there is no doubt that the message is finally reaching most people. As a church, we continue to set a good example, finding recycling destinations for paper, glass, mobile telephones, inkjet cartridges and spectacles. I have now discovered an organisation which will recycle the clear polythene mail wrappers that things like catalogues, magazines and newspapers come in. Provided any sticky labels or food residues have been removed, and the polythene is slightly "stretchable" and doesn't make a crinkly sound (like cellophane, or a supermarket bag), it is acceptable. I collect mine, flatten it and roll it up in an A4 envelope about once a month, and am amazed at how quickly it mounts up. The postal address is: Polyprint Mailing Films Ltd, Mackintosh Road, Rackheath Industrial Estate, Rackheath, Norwich NR13 6LJ. The envelope should be marked "For Recycling", and should have the sender's name on it. These details are available at the back of the church, should you forget or lose them, or online at www.polyprint.co.uk

Susan Jacobs 020 8943 0503

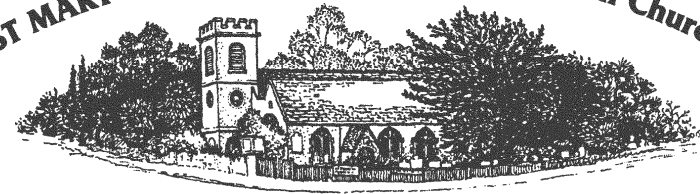
The Difference

I got up one morning and rushed right into the day.
I had so much to accomplish that I didn't have time to pray.
Problems just tumbled about me and heavier came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered.
He answered, "You didn't ask."
I wanted to see joy and beauty but the day toiled on, grey and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me. He said, "But you didn't seek."
I tried to come into God's presence; I used all my keys in the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided, "My child, you didn't knock."
I woke up early this morning and paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish that I had to take time to pray.

Anon



ST MARY with ST ALBAN Teddington Parish Church



NEWSLETTER MAY 2008

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

Science and Religion

This month sees the vote in Parliament on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill. Some of this is uncontroversial and amounts to a 'tidying-up' process, as one Minister put it. But there are contentious clauses, particularly that relating to the combination of human and animal material in genetic research. It is claimed that such research could lead to a cure for conditions such as Alzheimer's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis. However, it is also claimed that such research could result in a sort of Frankenstein's monster, will compromise the sanctity of life and could be the beginning of the slide down the slippery slope to something quite alien and unimaginable. A fully formed half-human, half-animal creation – this is despite the fact that the Bill specifically prohibits this.

The issue was made even more controversial by the slowness of the Government in granting a free vote to all of its MPs on some of the clauses (which the Opposition parties had long since done). There is a well established convention that issues of morality are never whipped.

More serious than this in my view is the division between science and religion on this matter. Shouts of 'bad faith', accusations of being luddite and both sides engaging in lurid quotes to an ever-eager media have given dignity to no-one. It almost seemed that the clock had been

turned back hundreds of years.

What is needed is a period of reflection so that light rather than heat, from both sides, can be shone on the issue. For these are very deep waters indeed. I am not qualified to give an opinion on the science or medicine involved. However, I would like to comment on the issue of the sacredness of life – something central for every Christian, for life comes from God and He is the only one who has the power to take it from us.

I have been a priest for over 40 years – in a parish except for the six years I was at the Diocesan Board for Schools. Even then I was involved in a parish in Orpington in an honorary capacity. In that time I have ministered to people and families caught up in the ravages of Alzheimer's, MS and Cystic Fibrosis. These conditions can destroy family life, and even blight communities. They are quite simply terrible.

Where I wonder is the sacredness of life here? What on earth is sacred about a husband whose memory is so destroyed that he does not even recognise those nearest and dearest to him? What is sacred about a disease that requires a child to have his back pummelled three or four times a day to get rid of fluid in his lungs? Of all people, Christians must not be too glib about this matter.

As I say these are very deep waters but let us as Christians not indulge in knee-jerk reactions and just condemn out of hand. If this research did bring a cure for these

SERVICES: **SUNDAYS:** Holy Communion (Prayer Book) at 8.00am
Family Communion (Common Worship) and Sunday School at 9.45am
WEDNESDAYS & SAINTS DAYS: Holy Communion (Prayer Book) at 9.30am
VICAR: The Revd. John Cleaver, The Vicarage, 11 Twickenham Road,
Teddington TW11 8AQ (8977 2767)
CHURCH WARDENS: David Power, 76 Field Lane, Teddington TW11 9AS (8943 5194)
Sheila Cooper, 3 Thelma Grove, Teddington TW11 9AQ (8977 7206)
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Harold Lester (8878 0021)
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR & HALL BOOKINGS: Gillian Burgess (8943 2262)
CHURCH SCHOOL: St Mary's and St Peter's, Somerset Road, Teddington
Headteacher John Logan (8943 0476)
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conditions, who would dare say that it is not of God?

I would draw you back to the Bible and the story of Gamaliel in Acts 5. When faced with the miraculous cures done by Peter and John the authorities were tempted to condemn them out of hand. But Gamaliel counselled caution.

“If this idea of Peter and John is of human origin, it will collapse; but if it is from God, you will never be able to put them down, and you risk finding yourselves at war with God” *(New English Bible Translation)*

We could do well to learn from this counsel today.

From my Scrapbook

It is Christian Aid week again this month. These words have a relevance here:

“It is well to give when asked, but it is better to give unasked, through understanding.”

The Prophet – Kahlil Gibran

With best wishes to you all

John Cleaver

Welfare

As usual, a Charity Fair will be held on Twickenham Green on Bank Holiday Monday, 26th May, and Welfare will be having a stall to raise money for the annual outing for their client families.

We plan to have a tombola, and we need prizes for this, such as bottles, chocolates, toiletries, etc. We would also be grateful for preserves, cakes and plants for the stall. The Guides have very kindly offered to provide a lucky dip for the children, so small items for this would also be very welcome. There will be a box for donations at the back of the Church for two weeks beforehand.

In addition we would be very grateful for any volunteers to help on the day, so if you can spare an hour or so please contact me on 020 8977 3362, or email fredandmargaret@blueyonder.co.uk

Margaret Squire

Christian Aid Week –

May 11th-17th

Christian Aid Week is approaching, and the commissioning service will be held on Sunday 11th May at 9.45am. Our collectors will be delivering to and collecting envelopes from every house in the parish. Over £10,000 is raised annually in Teddington, to go towards sustainable projects in developing countries. Christian Aid works with communities to improve healthcare, education and agricultural conditions for everyone, not Christians alone. Please support this important work.

Minnie Harris

The Children’s Society

Very many thanks to all Children’s Society box holders for their kind donations to the work of the Society. The money raised from the boxes this year (2007-2008) was £581.93. The Christingle Service raised £290 from the collection, and so we have sent a total of £871.93. If box holders would like to fill in the Gift Aid forms I have given them the Society can benefit from the refund of tax.

If anyone else would like a box, please do ring me on 020 8977 3055. The small change really does add up impressively.

Anthea Bryan

Hiring the Parish Hall

Our parish hall is home to a wide range of church and community activities, including handbell ringing, play groups, dance and yoga classes, special occasions and children’s parties. If you need to find somewhere to hold a meeting, a party, a display or a conference, our spacious and attractive hall could be just what you are looking for. Bookings can be on a regular weekly or monthly basis or as a one-off letting. We also have a premises licence. For further details, please contact: Gillian Burgess – The Parish Administrator, St Mary’s Parish Hall, Langham Road, Teddington TW11 9HF. Phone: 020 8943 2262.

The Lent Prayer Groups

There were two groups, one on Wednesday morning and the other on Thursday evening. Susan Jacobs and Hilary Adamson organised and planned the material for both. The theme for the series was “Prayer”. The sessions all started with a prayer, then a discussion on a special aspect of prayer, a short piece of music, silence for 15 minutes and then a closing prayer, chosen by a member of the group. We considered prayers of adoration and

reverence, confessional prayer, prayers of thanksgiving, prayers for our need, prayers for the sick, the power of prayer, silence in prayer, especially during the Holy Communion Service. How can we pray for people in emergencies, unknown to us? The contributions made by Susan, Hilary and John (our vicar) were discerning and thought-provoking. It was a new learning experience for us all.

Joyce Skerrett

Diary for May

Thursday 1st	Ascension Day. Sung Eucharist at 8.00pm. This is polling day for the London Mayoral and Assembly Elections.
Sunday 4th	The Sunday After the Ascension. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Holy Communion – for the local branch of the RNLI at 9.45am. Holy Baptism at 2.45pm. Sunday School resumes after the Easter break.
Wednesday 7th	Holy Communion at 9.30am. First Wednesday Club in Mina Hogan room at 12.30pm. Topic: Embryo Research.
Sunday 11th	WhitSunday. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Parade and Family service to mark Christian Aid Week at 9.45am. Holy Baptism at 2.45pm.
11th – 17th	Christian Aid Week.
Wednesday 14th	Holy Communion at 9.30am.
Saturday 17th	Wedding of Alex Howarth and Holly Venables at 4.00pm.
Sunday 18th	Trinity Sunday. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Family Communion at 9.45am.
Tuesday 20th	Churches Together in Teddington (Baptist Church) at 8.00pm
Wednesday 21st	Holy Communion at 9.30am.
Saturday 24th	Wedding of Paul Cowper and Vanessa Gaylor at 1.30pm.
Sunday 25th	First Sunday after Trinity. Holy Communion at 8.00am. Family Communion at 9.45am.
Wednesday 28th	Holy Communion at 9.30am.

And looking ahead

Saturday June 8th Teddington in Flower.
Sunday June 15th United Communion Service here at 4.00pm.
Sunday June 22nd Patronal Festival.