



# Around the Spire Saint James &



Saint Mary Magdalene  
Quedgeley & Kingsway

[www.quedgeleychurch.org.uk](http://www.quedgeleychurch.org.uk)



**Comfort**  
and Joy

Issue No. 64

December 2020

*Your Editor Fr. Hugh*



## **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

As I was about to write this, my monthly contribution, I was wondering what on earth I could share with you, our valued readers this month! I have to admit that I was almost lost for words! What I hear some of you saying -What? Father Hugh lost for words – that has to be a first!

My dilemma is this. How can I answer my own question posed in the title above satisfactorily? The short answer is that none of us knows what the answer is.

I write this in the middle of November in order to meet the printing deadline as December comes upon us. Unless things change dramatically, we shall, until early next month still be unable to have public acts of worship in church, with the possible exception of funerals, and then with limited attendance. This is a situation which we as Christians of all traditions find intolerable, and I am aware we share this situation very difficult to accept and I know from contacts I have that members of other Faiths share our feelings.

Our own church leaders have made strong representations on this issue to those in Government, so far with no avail. You may feel, as others have, that is worth making contact with our own M.P. To register our feelings!

The way I look at it is this – as human beings we all have MATERIAL needs – food, warmth, and so on. Surely it is true that we have SPIRITUAL needs too.

For Christians this is to be able to join in acts of worship as we wish and feel called to. This is what for us the Church is in its essence, and we have the rich tradition of worship stretching back since the time of Jesus Christ

Speaking personally, I was confirmed at the age of 17, and until earlier this year have been a regular worshipper for 66 years (yes I know that you will know how old I am) Since March of this year for over 22 Sundays have been unable to fulfil what I hold dear! I am well aware that I share this loss very dearly with many that are reading this article specially those 80 or so who are members of our church here at St James as well of course as so many elsewhere. Even if you, dear reader, are not a regular church attender, I am sure you will appreciate what I am trying to say here! As many have pointed out we are free to patronise the supermarkets and garden centres - so why not our local church.? We are just as good as observing the practice of social distancing as they can, if not more so!

As I started by saying, that as time passes, this situation may have changed, and I shall be delighted that my words are out of date!!

## **SO TO THE FUTURE!**

**ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS** – we shall hope, by then to be able to have our usual round of services and these will be well advertised! Basically our usual Sunday Eucharist at 10.30 and on Wednesday at 10.00.; Christmas itself -at very least Midnight Mass starting at 11.30p.m. And on Christmas Day itself at 10.30a.m..

AND – here is a real poser for you!! How can we have a Carol Service when we are not allowed to sing in Church? Surely this is something else about which those in charge may have a change of heart!

So – this comes from your Editor with hope and expectation!

FATHER HUGH xx

# *Saints of the Month—December*

## *By Revd. Fr. Ian Robb*



### **4<sup>th</sup> : Nicholas Ferrar, deacon; founder of the Little Gidding Community**

Nicholas was born in 1592 and after studying at Cambridge, he travelled on the continent as a businessman and then, on his return, as a politician. In 1625 he moved to Little Gidding in Huntingdon, where he was joined by his brother, sister, and their families, and his mother. They established a community life of prayer and charitable work in the locality. He was ordained deacon a year later, vowing to live a life of study and of service. After his death in 1637, the community was broken up by the Puritans who were suspicious of it, fearing a return to catholic practices; all Nicholas' manuscripts were burned.

### **6<sup>th</sup>: Nicholas, Bishop of Myra**

Myra is in southern Turkey and Nicholas was its bishop in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. He is best-known through a 9th-century biography which tells of some of the wonderful work he performed. Many stories concern his love and care for children, how he fed the hungry, healed the sick, and cared for the oppressed. He saved three sisters from lives of prostitution by providing them with dowries; and from this developed the tradition of bearing gifts to children on his feast day – a practice taken over by the Christmas celebrations. Nicholas is one of the patron saints of Russia.

### **8<sup>th</sup>: The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

This festival is celebrated on this day by both the Eastern and Western Church. It dates from the 7<sup>th</sup> century and marks the conception of she who was destined to become the mother of the Lord, acknowledging the preparation by God of his people to receive their Saviour and Lord, putting “heaven in ordinary” and showing that mortal flesh can indeed bring Christ to the world.

### **13<sup>th</sup>: Lucy of Syracuse, martyr**

Lucy lived on the island of Sicily at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when the Roman authorities were attempting to re-establish the worship of gods they approved. Lucy, as a young Christian, gave away her possessions to the poor, and was betrayed to the authorities by her angry betrothed, who felt that what was hers should have been his! She was executed in 304AD for refusing to renounce her faith. Her name in Latin means “light” and as her feast day falls in December, she became associated with the one true Light who was coming as the Redeemer of the world.

### **14<sup>th</sup>: John of the Cross, monk & mystic**

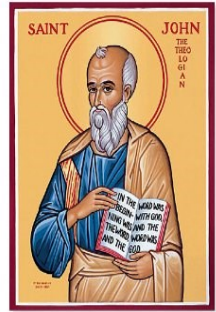
Juan de Yepes was born in Avila, Spain, in 1542. After his schooling, he worked as a nurse and received further education from the Jesuits before entering the Carmelite order when he was twenty-one. He went on to Salamanca university before being ordained in 1567. He met Teresa of Avila, who persuaded him to help her in re-forming the Carmelite order – work which brought him into conflict with the religious authorities, and even a time of imprisonment. But these times produced some of his finest poetry and mystical writing; in particular, he described “the dark night of the soul” as it is purified in its approach to God. He spent ten years as Superior to several religious houses before withdrawing to Andalusia in southern Spain, where he died in 1591.

### **26<sup>th</sup>: Stephen, deacon & first Christian Martyr**

The Acts of the Apostles describes Stephen as one of the seven deacons whose job it was to care for the widows in the early Church in Jerusalem. It also details his eloquent speech to the Jewish council in which he shows the great sweep of Jewish history as leading to the birth of Jesus the Messiah. His plea that all should hear the Good News led to his inevitable martyrdom by being stoned to death. Luke's description of Stephen draws parallels to that of Christ: for example, the passion; being filled with the Holy Spirit; seeing the Son of God at the Father's side; and asking forgiveness for his persecutors.

## **27<sup>th</sup>: John, Apostle & Evangelist**

On this day, the Church honours the one who proclaims Jesus as the Word made Flesh and who is “the disciple whom Jesus loved”. John, son of Zebedee, one of the first four fisherman-disciples. He was a witness to the Transfiguration; he was close to Jesus at the Last Supper; he was with Jesus during the agony in the garden; at the foot of the cross, he took care the mother of his Lord; as a witness to the resurrection, he “saw and believed”. He lived and died witnessing to the Word made Flesh, Jesus Christ, who loved him and whom he loved.



## **29<sup>th</sup>: Thomas Becket, Archbishop & martyr**

In 1155 Henry II appointed Thomas, an able administrator, as his Chancellor. For several years they worked harmoniously – so the king nominated him as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1161. Years of friction followed, as Thomas defended the traditions and privileges of the Church. Despite a reconciliation with Henry, Thomas was opposed by the nobility, resulting in his martyrdom at the hands of four knights in his cathedral on this day in 1170.



## **THERESA - A PEARL IN QUEDGELEY**

Theresa Fisher is one of the best known figures in and around the Quedgeley area. It is fitting that she has been awarded the B.E.M (British Empire Medal) in recognition to her services to the Community.



Based at the local Tesco, Theresa is a bundle of energy in her support of the local voluntary organisations which are so much a feature of the life in the area. Her constant cheerfulness and ideas do much to inspire others in their efforts.

As a church at the heart of the Community, we at St. James have been so fortunate to have Theresa as a source of help and inspiration. On many occasions she is to be seen at the heart of activities.

Our organisations Chatterbox and Chit Chat (sadly on hold in the present Covid state) have much to be grateful to Theresa for as they seek the way forward.

So well done, Theresa - we have so much to thank you for!

***It is sometimes said -***

***There is nothing as infectious as enthusiasm!***

***And Theresa shows how true that is!***



O come O come Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear  
Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee O Israel!

# Armistice Day 11th November 2020





# **Armistice Day 2020**

A good number of people attended the laying of wreaths at the Quedgeley memorial on Wednesday 11th November 2020.

Although social distancing measures were strictly in place, members from 'Help if you can', Royal British Legion, the Armed forces , Army cadets and pupils of Severn Vale School attended to pay their respects and lay wreaths.

After the ceremony Father Hugh dedicated a new Memorial Stone to the memory of those who have died to the Covid 19 virus.

The proceedings got brief shots on BBC 'Points West' and also appeared in local media.

# **New School for Quedgeley**



New Church of England Primary Academy in Clearwater Drive Quedgeley will be completed very soon!

# *The Faith We Sing*

*By Revd. Canon Michael  
Garland*



Just over 150 years ago, shortly after the death of the US President, Abraham Lincoln, a priest named Phillips Brooks left his home in Philadelphia to visit the Holy Land. The visit made a deep impression on him, and the peace he found during his time there moved him greatly after the horror and bloodshed of the Civil War at home. This is what he wrote about his visit to Bethlehem:

*I remember standing in the old church in Bethlehem, close to the spot where Jesus was born, when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices I knew well, telling each other of the wonderful night of the Saviour's birth ... for ever, there will be a singing in my soul.*

On his return to America, Phillips Brooks decided to record his impressions in the form of a hymn, a firm favourite with us today as we celebrate the birth of our Lord:

*O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by:  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting Light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.*

Phillips Brooks wrote his verses with the children of his Sunday School, back in Philadelphia, in mind. Some of us might recall the verse which we used to sing, but no longer appears in major hymnbooks, which has children very much at its heart:

*Where children pure and happy  
pray to the blessèd child.  
Where misery cries out to thee,  
Son of the mother mild;  
where charity stands watching  
and faith holds wide the door.  
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,  
and Christmas comes once more.*

Each verse of this fine hymn has a character of its own. In the first verse, Phillips Brooks sets the scene for us in Bethlehem. The second verse is a poetic description of the Christmas event, while the third verse is a reflection on how God's precious gift of his Son is a blessing to us and to the whole world. The final verse is a wonderful prayer that we can all make our own at Christmas time:

*O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in:  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel*

It took a while for the hymn to take root in this country and it was not until 1906, when *The English Hymnal* was published, that it became popular. This was largely thanks to the genius of Ralph Vaughan Williams, who had collected a folk tune from the village of Forest Green in Surrey.

The song was all about a ploughboy, the opening lines of which ran:

*I am a ploughboy stout and strong  
as ever drove a team.*

The tune retains the name of the village, Forest Green, where Vaughan Williams had noted it down. Listen to it, with the words of Bishop Phillips Brooks, [O Little Town of Bethlehem](#)

*Fr. Michael*



What did Adam say the day before Christmas? "It's Christmas, Eve!"

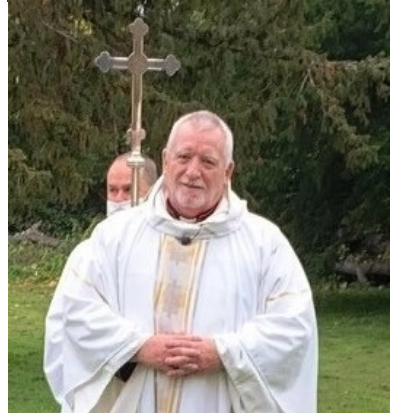
How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus' weight when he was born? They had a weigh in a manger!

What does Santa do when his elves misbehave? He gives them the sack!

What do snowmen have for breakfast? Snowflakes!

What do Santa's little helpers learn at school? The elf-abet!

**...more photo's from Fr. John's leaving service (photo's courtesy of Paul Price)**



Dear Parishioners and Friends,

I'd just like to thank you all for making my last day at Saint James' such a memorable one. I have been truly honoured and privileged to have served a community that is so loving and generous. I was deeply moved by the gifts you gave me. Also a huge thanks to all those who provided the refreshments. It is a day I will always cherish and remember. Thank you all.

With every blessing

Fr. John

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

How many different things can you spot between the two pictures?



## CHANGE TO CHURCH OPENING TIMES

Looking to arrange a wedding or a baptism?

**The church office is located in the vestry at the church.**

**From the 1st October the office will be open on Saturday morning only.**

Saturday - 9.00am –10.00am

Just pop along—no appointment needed

The Church is open every day for private prayer, to light a candle or to place requests for prayers on the prayer board



# alpha colour printers

design • pre-print • litho digital large format  
finishing • packing • storage • distribution



**BPIf**  
member



follow us on  [facebook.com/AlphaColourPrinters](https://facebook.com/AlphaColourPrinters)  [@Alpha\\_Colour](https://twitter.com/Alpha_Colour)

print green with us

on the first carbon neutral  
press in the country



CO<sub>2</sub> neutral  
Product printed on a  
Carbon Neutral Press

[www.heidelberg.com/CO2](http://www.heidelberg.com/CO2), 210524



ask us for the logo  
to add to your print



Articles /photos for the January edition of 'Around the Spire' should be with the Editor Hugh Broad, [hugh.broad@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hugh.broad@yahoo.co.uk) by **Sunday 6th December** (latest) due to Christmas holidays



# Happy Christmas to all our readers



If you wish to speak to a member of the clergy please see the contacts list below. Thank You

Assistant Priests	Land line	Mobile	Email address
Revd. Canon Hugh Broad	01452 541078	07928 455674	hugh.broad@yahoo.co.uk
Revd. Ian Robb	01452 676059	07962 469250	ia_jdr@lineone.net
Revd Jenny D'Esterre	01453 890384	07540 322 744	revdjenny@gmail.com
Revd. Gordon Ripley	01452 883399		gordon.ripley364@btinternet.com
Revd. Canon Michael Garland	01452 720872		michaelgarland368@btinternet.com
Revd Ann Morris			rev.ann@btinternet.com
<b>Churchwardens</b>			
Mr Ian Pearce	01452 725178	07867 502469	lanlu123@hotmail.com
Mr Paul Price	01452 537464	07595 264559	thepricefamily@blueyonder.co.uk
PCC Secretary- Mrs Lu Pearce	01452 725178	07867 502469	lanlu123@hotmail.com
PCC Treasurer– Mrs Lesley Franklin		07780 503378	lesleyfranklin@aol.com
Chatterbox/Chit Chat -Jackie Hall	01452 721062	07853217954	jacqueline.lhall@btinternet.com
Knit & Natter—Angie Wright		078447462416	angiewright@btinternet.com
Organist /Musicians – Chris Baldwin	01452 534105	0781 1589867	bonebaldwin@hotmail.co.uk
Baptism Ministry Team- Val Harris	01452 722223		valerieharris@hotmail.co.uk
Flower Arrangers—Val Harris	01452 722223		valerieharris@hotmail.co.uk
Bell ringers– Dave Franklin		07899907125	dfepc-qsjbells@yahoo.com
Open the Book—Liz Keenan	01452 722320		mrs.e.keenan@btinternet.com
Altar Servers—Angela Hughes	01452 722825	07984265977	angelajeanhughes@hotmail.co.uk
<b>www.quedgeleychurch.org.uk</b>			
<b>www.facebook.com/saintjameschurchquedgeley</b>			
Printed by :Alpha Colour Printers Ltd., GL2 2AA, 01452 887000			