

A photograph of two lit candles. On the left is a shorter, pink candle, and on the right is a taller, white candle. Both are lit, with bright yellow and orange flames. The background is dark with numerous out-of-focus, circular light spots in warm tones, creating a bokeh effect. The candles are in the foreground, and the background lights are scattered throughout the upper and middle portions of the frame.

November - December 2017

All Saints' - Houghton Regis
Parish Magazine

Armistice Day 2107



‘Maranatha’ – ‘Our Lord, come!’

Recapturing the meaning of Advent

As December begins, the Church enters the liturgical season which precedes Christmas; Advent. This is a season of expectation, as we prepare for four Sundays to celebrate the coming (Latin “adventus”) of Christ in his Incarnation. Much unlike the Advent calendar we buy in the shops, Advent varies from one year to another in its length – only very rarely beginning on 1 December and lasting 24 days. This year, for example, Advent starts on Sunday 3 December, and it is rather shorter than usual as Christmas Day falls on a Monday.

Advent ushers in a new Christian (or liturgical year), which means that from its first Sunday Christians everywhere will begin once again the yearly rehearsal of key moments in the life of Jesus, and the saints, leading them to enter once again into the mysteries of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, the Assumption, and so on...

As we move through Advent the sense of expectation for the birth of the Lord grows, fuelled by readings from the prophets who foretold both his coming and the redemption of God’s people, and reaffirmed by traditional practices such as the lighting of the Advent Wreath and church services conducted by candlelight. Indeed, the last few days of Advent are marked by recitation of the “O Antiphons”, short verses each recalling one of the titles the prophets attributed to the Messiah. These antiphons are at the centre of one of this season’s most loved hymn; O Come, o come, Emmanuel.

But Advent also looks ahead to the Lord’s final advent as judge at the end of time. Our Lord Jesus Christ ‘will come again in glory to judge both the living at the dead’ (as the Creed says) thus the readings, hymns, and liturgies of this season not only direct us towards the celebration of Christ’s birth, but they also challenge our modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement, for ourselves and for the world.

The overarching theme of Advent is therefore expectation; expectation as we prepare to recall and celebrate the Lord’s birth as our Redeemer, and expectation as we ‘await in joyful hope for the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ’ as our merciful judge. Because of this deep sense of expectation the fundamental Advent prayer remains ‘*Maranatha*’ – ‘*Our Lord, come!*’ (1 Corinthians 16:22).

The anticipation of Christmas under social and commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of prayerful and alert watchfulness in our homes and within ourselves – Christmas trees, carols, questionable adverts

start to feature in shops and on the media earlier and earlier each year, well before Advent even begins. Indeed, our very local “Celebration of Christmas” at the Grove is on 21 November (technically, still in Ordinary Time)! But in her liturgy, the Church recalls our attentions to the fundamental aspects of expectation, prayerfulness, and penitence in preparation of Christmas.

The set readings from the Bible make us look forward to the coming of Jesus as “God-with-us”. Church decorations are simple and spare, no flowers are used, and violet is the liturgical colour (or the very English dark blue of the Middle Ages), while the Third Sunday of Advent (‘Gaudete Sunday’) is observed with a splash of colour; rose. The lighting of candles on the Advent Wreath, at Christingle services, and during “Carols by Candlelight” helps to focus on the coming of Jesus as the light of the World.

The Collect for Advent

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



Sing Christingle!

Saturday 16 December

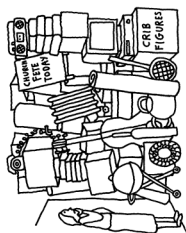
4:00pm at St Thomas' on Lowry Drive

Christmas Eve

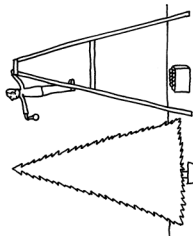
4:00pm at All Saints'

THE CHRISTMAS CHECKLIST

FOR CHURCHES



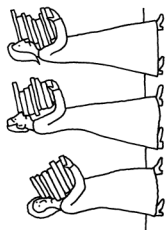
DIG OUT THE CRIB FIGURES ☐



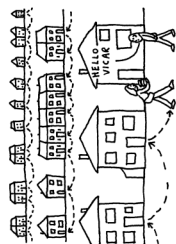
DECORATE THE TREE AND CHURCH ☐



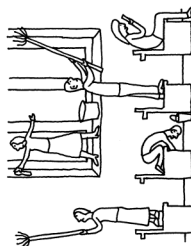
CHOOSE PEOPLE TO READ THE LESSONS ☐



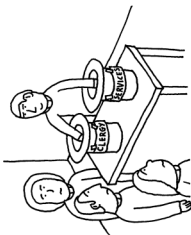
MAKE SURE THE CHOIR IS READY ☐



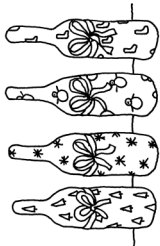
DELIVER THE CHRISTMAS PUBLICITY LEAFLETS ☐



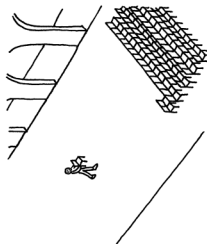
CLEAN EVERYWHERE ☐



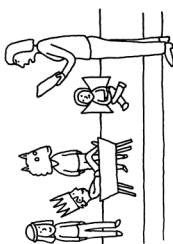
DECIDE WHICH CLERGY DO WHICH SERVICES ☐



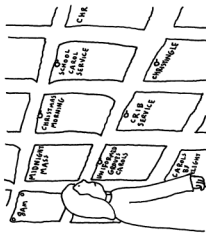
BUY PRESENTS FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE WORKED HARD ☐



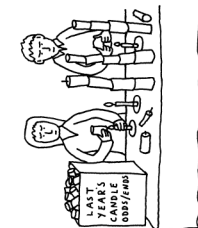
CARRY IN EXTRA CHAIRS ☐



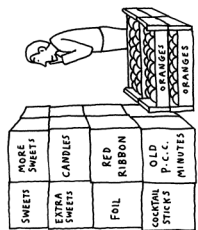
REHEARSE THE NATIVITY PLAY ☐



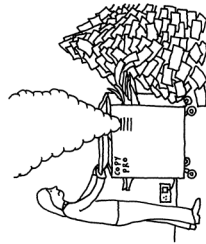
WRITE ALL OF THE SERMONS ☐



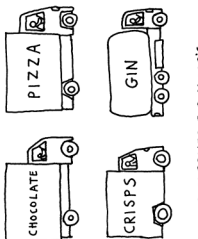
PREPARE THE CANDLES ☐



MAKE THE CHRISTINGLES ☐



COPY THE ORDERS OF SERVICE ☐



ORDER SUPPLIES FOR VICARS' POST-CHRISTMAS BREAK ☐

‘We will remember them’

Tricia Humber’s homily for the Solemn Requiem Mass on Remembrance Sunday

“What is Passchendaele? As I saw it this morning, through the smoke of gunfire and a wet mist, it was less than I had seen before – a week or so ago – with just one ruin there – the ruin of its church – a black mass of slaughtered masonry and nothing else; not a house left standing, not a huddle of brick on that shell swept height.”

These words were written by Phillip Gibbs, a war correspondent for the Daily Telegraph and reported in that paper on the 7th November 1917.

This vivid account gives us just a tiny glimpse of what it must’ve been like as the battle of Passchendaele finally came to an end. Thousands of lives were lost just on this one battle front, including many from our local regiment, the Bedfordshire. Whilst most that died were identified and buried in military graves, many couldn’t be identified or couldn’t be found – as a result, their families received telegrams or letters saying that they were simply ‘missing’ or ‘missing presumed dead’ – there was no way of knowing how their loved ones died, no known grave or marked resting place to show where they fell. All they could do was to remember them.

We can’t smell, hear, see or feel the often unbearable conditions these men fought and died in. We can’t really know the suffering and challenges they faced because of the incessant wet and the quagmires of the trenches and the battlefields, nor the life-changing wounds many sustained.

What we do know from the many records of that time, is that as well as the countless brothers and friends who signed up together, unlikely friendships and bonds developed, as men were thrown together by fate and circumstances – quarry workers, horse keepers and labourers came together alongside teachers, tailors and bank clerks – men from all walks of life and different classes, as well as numerous different nationalities, faiths and creeds, who shared the difficulties and the few times of joy, watched the backs of their friends and comrades and who as our gospel reading reminds us, often gave the greatest gift they could as they laid down their lives for their friends and comrades.

And we shouldn’t forget the women of that time; those who served and died on the front lines as nurses and ambulance drivers, and also those here at home who gave their lives – as I found when researching 100 year remembrance

anniversaries for my own parish magazine. We have one such rare example included on the war memorial in Heath and Reach – Nora Tompkins aged just 17 – who died of wounds sustained in an explosion at the Chaul End munitions factory. We remember them all – men and women alike – with great gratitude.

Those same bonds and friendships have continued to be formed in the wars and battles since, as new generations of men and women have faced the challenges and dangers of combat on the ground and the sea and in the air – in well remembered and sometimes overlooked times and places.

There have been deaths in almost every year since 1945 as civilians and military personnel alike have continued to give or risk their lives willingly to defend our right to freedom, justice and peace. They have been ready to go out of their way for others, to save those in danger or coming to the aid of those in need - even at their own personal expense, and they are still willing and ready to do so today.



Heath and Reach War Memorial recording Nora Tompkins

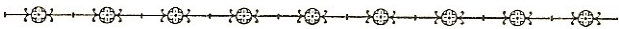
Love for others means being willing to die for others – it is the greatest gift and Jesus showed his love for us by dying on the cross for us. If Jesus could lay down his own life for us, what part of our lives can we give up for others – prejudice, unwillingness to help or forgive, hatred, or even something else? It can be so difficult to face, but unless we try, we will never know.

As time moves on, memories fade and those who have witnessed many of the significant conflicts of the last century first hand are no longer with us.

Sadly, despite the terrible losses of the past, we have to acknowledge that global peace is seemingly an impossible goal as we consider the many conflicts in the world today; the millions of victims and the many thousands who have and will be prepared to give their lives for others.

May we truly appreciate the importance of peace and forever remember the ultimate sacrifice of those who have fought and died in both the past and in the present day, so that we can have the freedoms we have so often take for granted. And if we want to see peace in our lives and in our world, we need to take seriously, Jesus’ instruction to love one another – and pray that solutions can be sought so that confrontation can be reduced or even eliminated.

May we therefore, stand united, setting an example today by striving for peace, working to heal the wounds of division and by fighting for a just future for all humanity, loving one another as Jesus loves us because we want our future generations still to be able to say – we will remember those who have given their lives for us in the past and those who continue to do so, so that we can now truly enjoy freedom and harmony. Amen.



How many words can you find?

A	B	Y	M	E	L	C	H	I	O	R	R	E
B	D	E	L	B	A	T	S	L	A	A	E	S
S	I	V	D	L	E	O	N	Z	T	R	H	N
A	S	R	E	J	O	S	A	S	T	E	R	E
N	G	G	C	N	O	H	O	S	P	E	T	C
T	N	Y	O	M	T	S	A	H	G	I	J	N
A	I	B	R	L	Y	M	E	N	T	E	R	I
C	K	A	A	S	T	R	A	P	S	A	C	K
L	A	B	T	S	D	M	R	U	H	T	O	N
A	B	R	I	G	H	O	S	H	O	L	Y	A
U	M	R	O	O	R	E	E	D	N	I	E	R
S	H	E	N	L	E	S	N	I	T	A	R	F
C	R	I	S	D	S	Y	R	A	M	I	N	G

CHRISTMAS TREE
DECORATIONS
HOLLY
REINDEER
TINSEL
MANGER
BABY
JOSEPH
JESUS
SHEPHERD
KINGS
STAR
STABLE
SANTA CLAUS

ADVENT
CAROLS
ANGEL
CRIB
HOLY
NOEL
MARY
BALTHAZAR
MELCHIOR
CASPAR
GOLD
FRANKINCENSE
MYRRH



Christmas Fayre

Saturday 9 December

Christmas trees displays
Seasonal refreshments
Bric-à-brac, books,
and second hand stalls.

Join us!

The Birth of Christ

Across:

- 2—The baby born in a manger in Bethlehem.
- 5—An _____ told the shepherds to fear not.
- 7—The heavenly host sang, "... good will toward _____."
- 10—The Wise-men saw the _____ in the east.
- 11—The mother of Jesus.
- 12—The new baby's first visitors.

Down:

- 1—The city where Jesus was born.
- 3—The shepherds were keeping watch over their _____.
- 4—There was no room for Mary and Joseph in the _____.
- 6—The _____ of the Lord shone round about the shepherds.
- 8—The _____ men came to worship the Christ child.
- 9—The king who asked the Wise-men where he could find Jesus.



(Read Luke 2:1-20
and Matthew 2:1-12)

The art of bell-ringing

By Celia Pymont, bell-ringer at All Saints'

Learning to ring is an art which has been developed and passed on from one generation to another in Britain for hundreds of years. Bell-ringing is a wonderful blend of sport, music, exercise, friendship; a challenge to your wits and skill; very satisfying when you get it right; and a service to the church.

At All Saints' we have a dedicated team who are more than willing to get you started, and anyone who is interested, or even just wants to see our historic bells, are welcome to **visit us for bell-ringing practice between 7.00 – 9.00pm on Thursdays**. It takes approximately six weekly sessions before you are able to ring on your own. We also have hand bells for younger members who would like join in.

Bells are the loud voice of the church, speaking out over the surrounding community. When we ring, for practice or for a service, we should never forget the reason for ringing.

A Belfry Prayer

Gracious Lord, the source of all skill and beauty,
who has entrusted to us thy servants
the sounding of thy praise and call to worship,
grant us strength, skill and perseverance,
that we may faithfully perform this work to thy honour and glory.
May these bells awaken in the hearts of those who hear them,
the desire to worship thee, with thy church,
that faith and devotion may be increased in all people,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Generous Giving

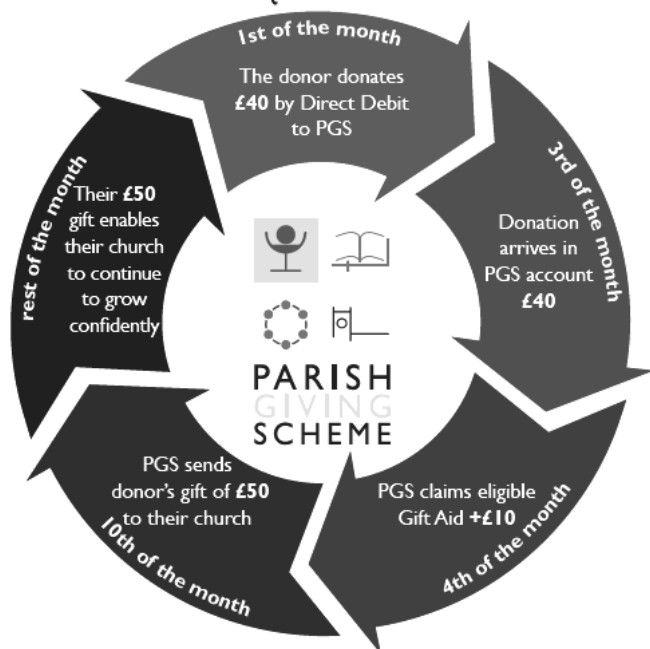
Regular, generous, and tax-efficient giving to ensure All Saints' future.

All Saints', like the vast majority of parish churches across the country, does not receive money from the Church of England or from the Government. We rely entirely on the generosity of parishioners and on the kindness of the wider public to further our Christian ministry in the town, to stay open, and meet our financial obligations.

We are raising money for different projects – such as the restoration of the Parish Church, the Memorial Path, and school ministry – and it currently takes about £245 each day to keep the church open. Therefore, every financial contribution is greatly appreciated. Every pound donated is spent on All Saints Parish, and our ministry, making a huge difference.

Christmas is a time when people traditionally give to charity or pledge to donate regular amounts through the coming New Year. So, we would be very grateful if you'd like to consider donating to All Saints' Parish Church this Christmas.

*How does it work -
based on an example of £40 a month*



Donating through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is a very popular Direct-Debit system. With this scheme you choose the amount you wish to donate, and how often you wish to do so – on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. Your gift is then collected by the PGS team who will pass it on to All Saints' Parish after collecting from HMRC any Gift Aid that can be claimed on your gift. To find out more please see the example pictured here.

The Parish Giving Scheme also gives you the option to commit, in principle, to increase your gift every 12 months in line with the rise of inflation. Whilst this is a voluntary decision, it is one that could potentially have a huge impact on the life and future of All Saints'.

Your donations – and any additional Gift Aid claimed on it – will always be restricted to All Saints' Houghton Regis and it will not be used elsewhere.

If you would like to join the Parish Giving Scheme you can fill in the form overleaf and return it to

Parish Giving Scheme
Church House,
College Green,
Gloucester, GL1 2LY

For more information visit,

www.parishgivingscheme.org.uk
www.allsaintshr.co.uk/giving

In summary the scheme:

- Collects your regular donations for your parish
- Claims the Gift Aid entitlement on your behalf
- Pays the gross amount into your PCC account within ten days
- Undertakes a basic level of donor care
- Provides the (popular) option for donors to increase donations annually with inflation.

Generous, planned and tax-efficient giving can help us create a sound financial base for All Saint'.

These questions may help you reflect on how you give

- *Is your giving regular?*
- *Is your giving generous?*
- *Is your giving sacrificial? (If the church returned all that you had given during a year, would it make a real difference to you?)*



PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Title: Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Other

First name(s):

Surname(s):

Full home address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

I wish to donate

Please tick one per month ☐ quarter ☐ year ☐

to the Parish Giving Scheme

Registered Charity Number: 1156606

Starting on the 1st* of (month) (year)

*Please allow one month from today

NB: Only you can cancel your existing Standing Order

I wish to remain anonymous to my parish's
Planned Giving Representative (Please carefully read
'How will our parish be notified of my donation?' on the left) ☐

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Name and full postal address of your Bank/Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address:	
Postcode:	

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

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Branch Sort Code

--	--	--	--	--	--

Bank / Building Society account number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Please complete this page and send it to: **Parish Giving Scheme, Church House, College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LY**

CUT HERE

This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- ✓ This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- ✓ If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit PGS will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request PGS to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- ✓ If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by PGS or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- ✓ If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when PGS asks you to.
- ✓ You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

YES

I wish to give a regular donation for my church

I wish my donation to be used solely for the benefit of:

Church / Parish name **All Saints** ..

PGS Parish code **Houghton Regis** ..

In the village / town / city of **Parish Code 320632320** ..

In the Diocese of **Houghton Regis** ..

In the Diocese of **Diocese of ST ALBANS** ..

I wish to support my parish in the future by agreeing to an annual inflationary increase on my gift.

Please tick Yes ☐

I understand that the new amount will be communicated to me by letter 30 days prior to the gift donation date. I have the right to opt out of this arrangement at any point in the future by communicating my wishes by letter, email or phone to the Parish Giving Scheme.

I wish to Gift Aid my donation

Gift Aid makes every £1 worth £1.25 *giftaid it*

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made from the date of my first gift on this declaration and in the future.

I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less income Tax and/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

I understand the charity will reclaim 25p for every £1 that I give.

Signature

Title:



Service User Number

4	2	1	4	0	2
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Donor reference number (to be completed by PGS office)

P	G	S		T	H	A	N	K		Y	O	U				
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Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Parish Giving Scheme Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Parish Giving Scheme and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank / Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



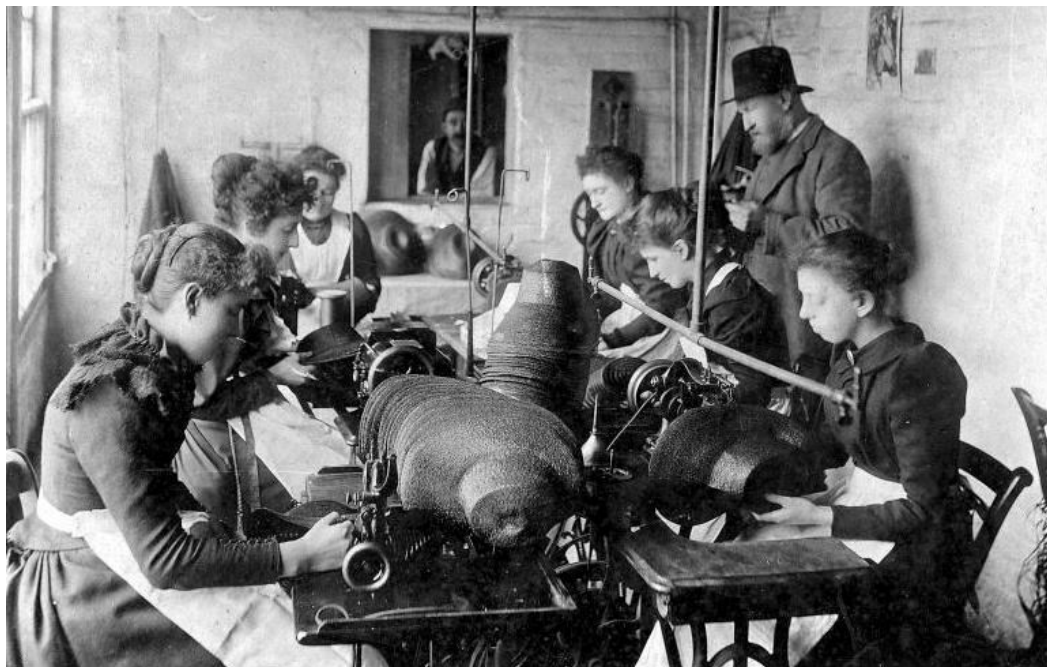
The hat trade in Houghton Regis

The straw for hat making was particularly good in the fields around Houghton Regis. In the village there were two small hat factories, Cumberland's was in King Street near the Primitive Methodist Chapel and Goosey's factory was opposite the Church in Bedford Road. The Goosey's were a well-liked local family.

In 1871 the total population was 2,412 (This included parts of Luton and Dunstable.) Out of 632 men, 41 were engaged in the straw plaiting trade, and 20 men in the hat trade. This left 330 in agriculture (mostly farm labouring) and 196 men in other trades and professions like cobbling, shop keeping and tailoring. This left just 45 men unable to work through being disabled.

Out of the total of 806 women, 354 women were working in the straw plaiting trade, and 24 were making hats. 97 women were working in other trades and professions. That left only 141 women in the parish not actually working.

Houghton Regis Heritage Society www.hrhs.org.uk



Picture Copyright © Pat Lovering / HRHS Archive

‘...hear the angels sing!’

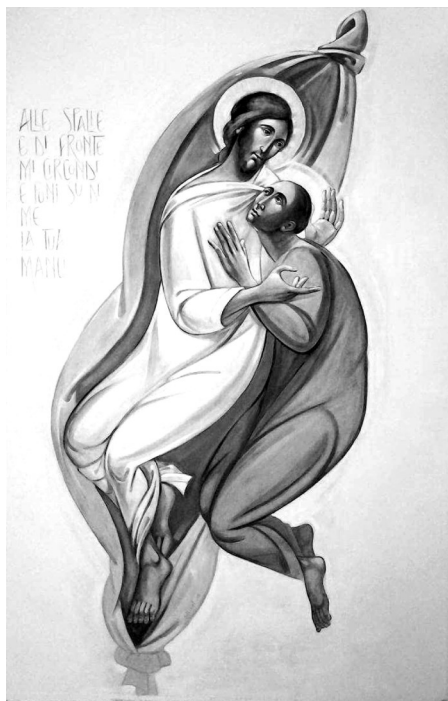
Father Diego's reflects on his two favourite Christmas Carols

Carols are part of the fabric of the way we celebrate Christmas; you can hear them played over and over again even in shops or on the radio, nestled among 80s hits and the Christmas Number One. And each one of us – churchgoer or not – will probably be able to think of a carol they really like and of one they loathe. I am no different. So, I thought I would share with you two of my favourites – leaving the ones I truly cannot stomach maybe for another time.

The first is ‘*Of the Father's heart begotten*’, which is a little known but beautiful carol that takes us right at the centre of the mystery we celebrate at Christmas disregarding all the Victorian frills about “bleak mid-winters” and the like. Its lyrics were composed in the 4th century by a Christian poet named Aurelius Prudentius; making this one of the oldest pieces of Christians poetry still in use today. The lyrics were translated into English and adapted for singing twice, first in the mid-19th century and then again in 1906. However, its traditional tune is also an ancient one. Called ‘*Divinum mysterium*’ (Divine Mystery), the tune has been sung across Europe since the Middle Ages, as far back as 10th century.

As the choir quickly found out during my first Christmas in Houghton Regis, I am rather fond of the 1906 translation – even though it is a little more complicated to understand. But perhaps, I never quite explained the reasons behind my preference. It all stems from the first line of the carol. The carol says, ‘*Of the Father's heart*’ and if you look up John 1:18 in your Bibles (NIV) you will see these words about Jesus,

*‘No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is **near to the Father's heart**. He has revealed God to us.’* The other translation says ‘*Of the Father's love begotten*’



St John resting his head at Jesus' heart, by Nathanael Theuma

Now, we may think that heart and love may be interchangeable concepts, especially as emojis, but they are not one and the same thing for theology. The Lord, the Son living ‘near to the Father’s heart’ (**at** the Father’s heart!), comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ so that we too could be led by him to have fullness of life in that same place at the heart of God. Later in the same gospel, there is a beautiful image of the beloved disciple leaning on Jesus’ breast, close to his heart, at the Last Supper, and it is an invitation for all Christians to approach with confidence the heart of Jesus, because by being close to it, we come close to the Father’s heart, where everything stems from.

*Of the Father's heart begotten,
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha; from that Fountain
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega; of all things
Yet to come the mystic Close,
Evermore and evermore.*

Admittedly, ‘Of the Father’s heart begotten’ is a rather long carol and it can be a tricky to understand because of its old-fashioned English, but the sheer number of Biblical reference and rich imagery makes it all worthwhile; it is one of the best meditations for the Christmas season.

My second favourite carol is ‘*It came upon a midnight clear*’, composed in 1849 by an American Pastor named Edmund Sears, and set, in the UK, to the tune ‘Noel’ by A. Sullivan. This carol beautifully pictures the scene of the angels appearing in the dead of night to announce the birth of Jesus. After this is goes on singing how the angels’ song about ‘*Peace on the earth, goodwill to men*’ has never stopped resounding over the whole world since that night, to comfort those who suffer and to hush the tragedies of war. But, since that night ‘*the world has suffered long*’ and the angels’ song seems to be destined to go unheard and unheeded by most people. That is, until the time when God will restore his creation to its original beauty and glory. Enough to bring tears to your eyes! and make you recognise how little we appreciate the gift that God gives us in the birth of his Son, the Prince of Peace.

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.*

A few years ago the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, mentioned this carol as one of the two he really dreaded singing because, as he saw it, it sings about inevitable optimism in progress. This may be true, the world at times does make you question whether things are actually getting better all the time. But I think this carol expresses a faith in the future beyond our means. The 'age of gold' mentioned in the last verse is not a future of man-made progress, but a useful reminder that God will eventually restore all things in Christ, in the beauty and peace of Jesus.



'The Wheat Free Kitchen's' sticky gingerbread muffins



This gluten free recipe makes 8/9 tasty gingerbread muffins.

Ingredients

100grams butter
100grams dark brown sugar
175grams black treacle
175grams golden syrup
225grams gluten free plain flour
1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tsp cinnamon
3 tsp ginger
1 1/2 tsp ground mixed spice
3 eggs

Method

1. Heat the oven to 160 degrees celsius.
2. Melt the butter, sugar, treacle and golden syrup together until the consistency is smooth and looks like a syrup.
3. Mix together the dry ingredients, flour, spices and bicarbonate of soda.
4. Add the sugar syrup, dry ingredients and eggs together and whisk until fully combined.
5. Pour into your muffin cases.
6. Bake for 25/30 minutes.
7. Once cooled, decorate with stem ginger and drizzle with ginger syrup.



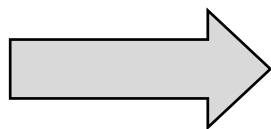
Memorial Path – An update

Plans to reinstating the path leading from Bedford Square to the south door of the All Saints' Church begun last year with a call for sponsorship of Memorial Plaques. The new path would provide much needed access to the churchyard and to the parish church for wheelchair and mobility aid users, as well as for young children in push-chairs. During the last year we have faced a number of serious difficulties, but we are now aiming to complete the project in time for the Remembrance celebrations of 2018 - with the formal opening of the Path perhaps taking place on All Saints' Sunday next year.

So far we have raised about £5000 through the sponsoring of Memorial Plaques, whilst Houghton Regis Town Council have pledged to contribute £3000 under the Large Grant Scheme they run this year. However, we still need to raise more funds and it is important that anyone wanting to sponsor plaques should do it as soon as possible, so that we can secure all the funds we need to start the works.

Order a Memorial Plaque

If you'd like your loved ones to be remembered on the Memorial Path, please fill in the form overleaf.



Parish Contacts

Parish Office: 01582 867246

Father Diego Galanzino SMMS (Parish Priest)
The Clergy House, Houghton Regis. LU5 5SJ

Janet Steele (Parish Administrator)

For enquiries about Baptisms, Blessings, Weddings and/or Banns please visit us at All Saints' for "Vestry Hour"; every Saturday morning, 10:00 to 11:30.

allsaintshr.co.uk



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

ALL SAINTS CHURCH HOUGHTON REGIS

MEMORY SLAB ORDER FORM



Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Details of Inscription:

IN MEMORY OF

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

(Please enter name. Maximum 16 characters including spaces)

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(Year of Birth) to (Year Deceased)

The cost of each individual slab is £60

I require _____ Memorial Slabs and I enclose a cheque/cash for £ _____

All cheques to be made payable to 'ALL SAINTS PCC'
(Please complete a separate Order Form for extra slabs)

I fully understand that the Memorial Slab will be installed in conjunction with the new pathway.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Please send completed form/s to:

Memorial Path FAO: Father Diego Galanzino SMMS, The Clergy House, Houghton Regis, LU5 5SJ

All Saints Academy

By Elaine Boyd, Vice Principal (Behaviour & Safeguarding)

Father Diego is one of three local clergy who have been working with All Saints Academy this Autumn Term. Thursday mornings have been our opportunity to explore questions related to the RS curriculum, write prayers for our collective worship and services and develop our new Christian Union. Fr Diego has worked mostly with groups of Year 7 students as they write prayers for the Academy and for Harvest Festival and he is helping us to plan visits to local churches.



During his visits, it has been a pleasure for our staff to meet Fr Diego and they have introduced him to the work we do to support our families. Our Children and Family Support Worker, Anita Pullen, explained to Fr Diego that we have an extensive support network for our families which includes help with filling in complicated forms, access to foodbank vouchers and support with providing uniform. We recognise that money can be extremely tight for families and we will always help where we can. We also use as many opportunities as possible to encourage our students to be socially aware, as they collect donations for the Dunstable Foodbank or raise money for Macmillan Cancer Care.

Our Student Services team provide access to a range of external agencies including Brook (Health), Sorted (counselling), 4YP (Careers Guidance), CAMHS (mental health) and a range of other important support. We also work with families to make sure that they feel welcome within the Academy and Jo Ojulah, our Parental Engagement and Careers Co-ordinator, supports parents and carers in making appointments to meet with staff and is often a first, friendly face on arrival at the Academy. Our recent parents/carers evenings have embraced the concept of "generous hospitality" and a snack or even a hot meal awaits families as they come into the Academy to meet with staff. Assistant Principals, Rachel Caldbeck and Andy O'Rourke have co-ordinated this new initiative which has been warmly welcomed by our families.

It has been a busy term at the Academy and we have really welcomed Fr Diego's support. We look forward to working with him further as we move through the year.

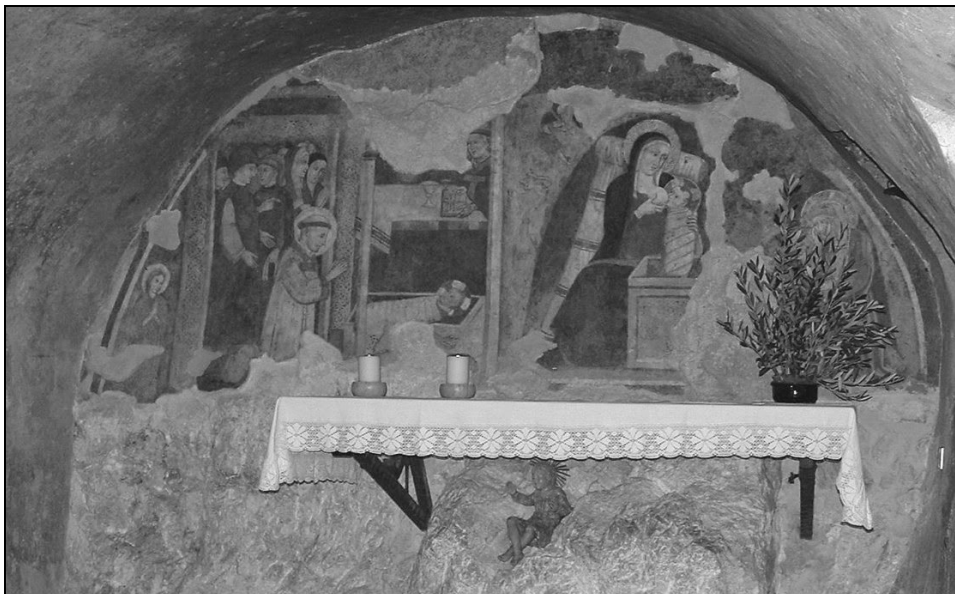
The Christmas Crib

Origins of the much-loved Christmas decoration

The Christmas Crib (or Nativity Scene) as we know it today dates back to St Francis of Assisi who organised a tableau of Jesus' birth on Christmas Eve of 1223. However, the oldest known image of the Nativity dates from about 380 – a wall decoration in a Christian family's burial chamber, discovered in the Catacombs of St. Sebastian (Rome) in 1877.

The only historical account we have of Francis' Christmas Crib comes from *The Life of St. Francis of Assisi* by St. Bonaventure. According to this text, Francis set up a manger with hay and two live animals – an ox and a donkey – in a cave in the Italian village of Greccio, near Assisi. He then invited the villagers to come and gaze upon the scene while he preached about the Lord's birth at Midnight Mass – which was also celebrated outdoors near the Crib. It's unclear from Bonaventure's account whether Francis used people or figures to stand in for the Lord Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, or if the spectators just used their imagination, but as the custom of making nativity scenes spread these became *tableaux vivants*, and the cast of characters gradually expanded to include not only the Holy Family, but sometimes entire villages!

During this time “mystery” or “miracle plays” were a popular form of entertainment and education for European Christians – these were popular in



The crypt in Greccio where the first Nativity was displayed

England as well, and a number of them have survived to this day. Miracle plays, performed in churches as well as town squares, re-enacted Bible stories in languages of the people; and since church services were celebrated only in Latin, these plays were important ways for laypeople to learn about the Scriptures. Francis' nativity scene, then, fits in this wider movement which used visual displays and plays to help Christians understand and emotionally engage with the faith.

So, what about those nativity plays that children often perform around Christmastime? They are descendants of the miracle plays of the Middle Ages and of St Francis first Crib at Greccio, but the reason children (rather than adults) perform in them isn't clear. It is possible adults were replaced by children in the Victorian Era, when Christmas was recast in both the UK and North America as a child-friendly, tinsel-wrapped, family-centred festival we know today. Likewise, Cribs made up with figurines also stems from the Nativity scene of Greccio. In England these may have been a common feature before the Reformation, but with the abolition of all Christmas celebrations under the Puritan Commonwealth of Cromwell, Cribs would have been completely out of place. They were restored in the Church of England with the Catholic revival, so much so that they are now a key element of Christmas celebrations up and down the country. Indeed, we are invited to decorate our homes with a Crib, not just Churches, and to take some time to pray before them during the Christmas season.

Francis' idea of bringing the miracle Bethlehem into one's own town spread quickly all over the Christian world. To this day, the Crib – both in our churches and in our homes – should remind us of the centrality of Jesus in the Christmas celebrations. And at All Saints' we will bless our Crib at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.



We'd love to hear from you!

If you would like to share comments, a story about your community group, local charity, or events, then get in touch!

allsaintsparishmagazine@gmail.com



Remembrance Sunday 2017

Advent & Christmas

3 December

6:00pm Advent Carol Service

*A service carols and readings for the Season of Advent.
Seasonal refreshments after the service.*

9 December

Christmas Fayre from 9:00am

*Stalls, crafts, Christmas trees display, seasonal refreshments, and
entertainment throughout the day.*

16 December

4:00pm Christingle (at St Thomas' Lowry Drive)

*A service, especially aimed to families and children. Christingles
will be crafted during the service. Seasonal refreshments available.*

17 December

6:00pm Carols by Candlelight

*A very popular service of Christmas carols and readings conducted
by candlelight. Seasonal refreshments after the service.*

Christmas Eve

4:00pm Christingle

*A service, especially aimed to families and children. Christingles
will be crafted during the service. Seasonal refreshments available.*

11:00pm "Midnight" Mass

*A very popular, traditional "Midnight Mass" with carols and the
Blessing of the Crib.*

Christmas Day

8:30am Said Mass (at St Thomas' Lowry Drive)

10:00am Parish Mass

Bring your Christmas gifts to the Parish Mass to be blessed!

