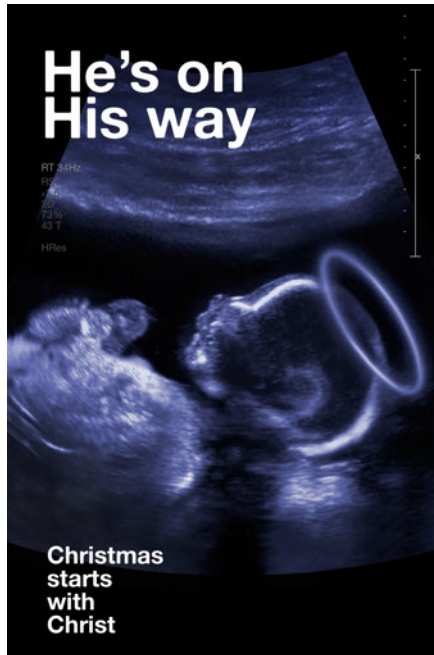


St Francis Anglican Chaplaincy Tenerife South

Worshipping in
San Eugenio, Playa de las Americas,
Espiritu Santo, Los Gigantes,
San Blas, Golf del Sur,
Callao Salvaje.



**Diocese of
Gibraltar in
Europe**



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Continued on inside of back cover

From the Editor

Our front cover picture this month, an ultrasound scan of Jesus in the womb – complete with the suggestion of a halo – is taken from the this year’s new poster image for the Churches Christmas campaign by ChurchAds.net .

The designers say that proud parents-to-be are always pleased to pass round a photo of an ultrasound scan for their baby and Christians should be equally pleased to spread the news about the nativity of Christ.

This month’s issue is a little later than usual because I wanted to include details of yesterday’s Christmas Bazaar in Los Gigantes. You will find details on page 19.

Our thanks to all who helped by manning a stall or attended and made a purchase.

Finally may I offer all our readers, here and in the UK

*A Very Happy
and
Blessed Christmas*

The Editor

**Deadline for January contributions
13th December**

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From Our Chaplain

My dear friends in Christ Jesus,

A very happy and holy Christmas to you all.

This may seem premature for those of you who read this at the beginning of December, (even more writing this in mid November!) but nonetheless it's heartfelt and holds true for the whole season including Advent as it helps us to remember and focus on the meaning of Christmas in this increasingly secular and material world where Christmas is just another excuse for over-indulgence..

The Christmas story is very beautiful in its humility – Mary and Joseph, the stable and crib and the shepherds, but it's also very powerful because it's the story of how heaven came down to earth to give each one of us the power to get to heaven!

Who needs tinsel and trees?

So, this year I urge you all to put CHRIST back at the centre of CHRISTmas. Take the time, alone or with your friends and family, to re-read the Christmas story and then to meditate on the message it contains – Jesus came to save the world – yet what a mess it's still in – and then pray for the world and all its problems – war, poverty, starvation, injustice, cruelty and all kinds of suffering.

Join one of our three Advent courses which we are running this year – all at different times and on Wednesdays and Thursdays – so no excuses. Come and join these informal sessions and learn more of our faith.

Enjoy Christmas to the full, celebrate it in style, but never forget the baby in the manger – the Son of God, the Saviour of the world – our Lord.

We have a very full programme this Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you to our services and carol singing.

May God Bless you and all those whom you love this Christmas,

Your Chaplain and friend,

Fr. Keith

Christmas Services

Nine Lessons and Carols

San Blas	Friday 17 th	7.00 pm
San Eugenio	Saturday 18 th	6.00 pm
Los Gigantes	Sunday 19 th	6.00 pm (With Eucharist)

Christmas Eve

Los Gigantes	6.00 pm	Eucharist with Carols
San Eugenio	11.30 pm	Midnight Mass and Blessing the Crib

Christmas Day

San Eugenio	10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung
San Blas	11.30 am	Holy Eucharist Sung

Boxing Day. Sunday 26th December

Swedish Church Los Cristianos	5.00 pm	Carol Service
<i>(Casa Sueca on the sea front walk)</i>		

Diary for December

1 st	Wed	10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Said	– San Eugenio
		11.00 am	Advent Course led by Marisha Carter	– Shirley Beard's
2 th	Thur	10.30 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
		10.30 am	Advent Course,	– Christine Gaunt's
3 th	Fri		St Francis Xavier, priest	
4 th	Sat		Afternoon Teas at Shirley Beard's	
5th	Sunday		2nd Sunday of Advent	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– San Eugenio
			Chaplaincy Lunch,	– San Eugenio
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist by Extension	– San Blas
6 th	Mon			
7 th	Tues	10.00 am	Guild of St Clare - Angels	– Caroline Homer's
8 th	Wed		Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Said	– San Eugenio
		11.00 am	Advent Course led by Marisha Carter	– Shirley Beard's
9 th	Thur	10.30 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
			Chaplaincy Lunch	– Espiritu Santo
		10.30 am	Advent Course,	– Christine Gaunt's
		4.00 pm	Advent Course	– Res Sonia
10 th	Fri	7.00 pm	Advent Supper	– Salytien Centre
11 th	Sat	10.00 am	Book Sale	– Charlesworth's.
12th	Sunday		3rd Sunday of Advent	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– San Eugenio
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist by Extension	– San Blas
13 th	Mon	3.00 pm	Council Meeting	– Res Sonia
			followed by Christmas Party	
14 th	Tues			
15 th	Wed	10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Said	– San Eugenio
		11.00 am	Advent Course led by Marisha Carter	– Shirley Beard's

16 th	Thur	10.30 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
		10.30 am	Advent Course,	– Christine Gaunt's
		4.00 pm	Advent Course	– Res Sonia
17 th	Fri	7.00 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols	– San Blas
18 th	Sat	6.00 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols	– San Eugenio
19 th	Sunday		4th Sunday of Advent	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– San Eugenio
		6.00 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols with Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist by Extension	– San Blas
20 th	Mon			
21 st	Tues		St Thomas, Apostle and Martyr	
22 nd	Wed	10.15 am	No Service	– San Eugenio
23 rd	Thur	10.30 am	No Service	– Espiritu Santo
24 ^h	Fri		Christmas Eve	
		6.00 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols	– Espiritu Santo
		11.30 pm	Midnight Mass	– San Eugenio
25 th	Sat		Christmas Day	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– San Eugenio
		11.30 am	Holy Eucharist	– San Blas
26 th	Sunday		The Holy Family (1st Sunday of Christmas)	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– San Eugenio
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist	– Espiritu Santo
		6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist by Extension	– San Blas
27 th	Mon			
28 th	Tues			
29 th	Wed		Thomas Becket, Martyr	
		10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Said	– San Eugenio
30 th	Thur	10.30 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
31 st	Fri			

January 2011

1st Sat

2nd **Sunday**

Epiphany

10.15 am	Holy Eucharist Sung	– San Eugenio
	Chaplaincy Lunch,	– San Eugenio
6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist Sung	– Espiritu Santo
6.00 pm	Holy Eucharist by Extension	– San Blas



Intercessions

The Power of Prayer

THE SICK FOR WHOM WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO PRAY:

Baby Jamie – Eileen Baldwin – Cian & Joan Barry
Bronwen Battye – John Bosley – Laura Brown – Robert Brumpton
Keith Burke – Kath Challinor – Trish Chapman – Samuel Coker
Lenna Cole – Emanuel Cole – Gladys Cole – Lydia Cook –
Corina Cormack – Andrew Crowther – Doris Dendy – Jeanette Dick
Ann Dobson – Mary Dudfield – Nicki Duval – Revd. Jeff Engel
Victoria Ford – Gordon & Pearl French – Lauren Gaunt – Betty Gilroy
David & Betty Gledhill – Peter Goldsmith – Liz Govan – Kathy Greenhall
David Grove – Paul Hazelby – Ian Hubbard – Mick & Wendy Hulley
Helen Hutt – Revd Malcom Jackson – Jason – Daniel – Fr. Philip Lamb
Audrey Lancaster – John Mcgee – Mary Mansell – Peter Mulloch
Hazel Noble – Simon Norman-Ballantyne – Brian Norris – Jacquie Parks
Jill Pratt – Alan Price – Maureen Pritchett – Rita Selbie – Sinead
Joe Slater 7yrs – Ewen Smith – Peter Spence – Amanda Stead
Revd Robert Sterman – Susan Stratton – Dudley Thomas – Hilda Thomas
Stephen Thomas – Rose Tomlinson – John & Anne Vaughn
Harry Wilkinson

The Recently Departed

Jim Springall – Andrew

Years Mind – Anniversary of Passing

December 4 th	James Boreham
11 th	Ann Wood
16 th	Ray Eagles
22 nd	Annelise Bolt
24 th	Bent Pedersen

The Bishop's Christmas Letter, 2010

Not long ago I came across a Christmas meditation by Michael Stancliffe, a fine preacher whose ministry encompassed time as Speaker's Chaplain in the House of Commons, and later as Dean of Winchester. In this meditation he points out that the Christmas story is concerned with small things.

'At the heart of it is a human being at its smallest, and that newborn child is surrounded by no greatness – no palace, no pomp, no grand people. Nor had the first to join that little group anything impressive about them – shepherds on night duty don't look princely – and it was only later that more imposing personages put in an appearance. Christians believe that what happened in that small setting was of cosmic significance.'

The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem which we celebrate at Christmas is the burning glass which concentrates in the vulnerable fragility of a new-born child the immensity of the Divine Love by which all things were made and which holds the vastness of the universe in being. What is God like? God is like – indeed God is – this totally dependent, tiny bundle of life. That bundle of life grew unseen in Mary's womb, and that unseen growth to birth was also where God was. In 'Once in royal David's City' we sing of the child of Bethlehem that 'day by day like us he grew' – but like us that growth was from the moment of conception, from before being born as well as the child growing to maturity. The real Feast of the Incarnation, of God emptying himself and coming down to the lowest part of our need, is not Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity, but the Feast of the Annunciation, of God taking our human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. When Christians hail Mary as the Theotokos, 'the God-bearer', it was because it was her unique vocation to be the one in whose body God chose to dwell, to be one with us. As an ancient hymn puts it:

*How blest that Mother in whose shrine,
The great Artificer divine,
Whose hands did frame the earth and sky,
Vouchsafed as in an ark to lie.*

It is because God is with us as unborn life before he is with us as the child of Bethlehem, that we rightly are concerned to reverence unborn life, and to protest at the attitudes so prevalent in our society which regards such life as disposable.

William Blake saw eternity in a grain of sand. Julian of Norwich saw all that was made as a small hazelnut. We see the love of God in this vulnerable child, and, as a wonderful prayer puts it, 'knowing the love of God made visible, we are caught up into the love of the God we cannot see.' In our human experience of love we at one and the same time know most fully the person whom we love and who loves us, and at the same time know that this is a mystery which can never be fully known, never fully expressed in words. Charles Williams, the friend of C.S.Lewis and J.R.R.Tolkien liked to say that we ought to pause over how we so easily speak of 'being in love' and remember that in saying this we are saying no less that we are held in love. At Christmas as we come to adore the God who reaches out to us in the weakness and humility of a child, we are in an even greater way held in love, the love which came down at Christmas and which is far greater than anything that we can imagine or express. As so often the poets point us to the heart of the matter, as Richard Crawshaw does in his Hymn of the Nativity:

*Welcome all wonders in our sight
Eternity shut in a span,
Summer in winter, day in night,
Heaven in earth, and God in Man;
Great little one! Whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.*

And what is this about? Christopher Smart asks 'where is this stupendous stranger?' and finds his Lord and Saviour in a manger.

*O most Mighty! O MOST HOLY!
Far beyond the seraph's thought,
Art thou then so mean and lowly
As unheeded prophets taught?*

He comes at last to the truth and the mystery of Bethlehem.

*God all-bounteous, all-creative,
Whom no ills from good dissuade,
Is incarnate, and a native
Of the very world he made.*

As God gives himself into the world in love, so he gives himself in love into our lives, sharing his life with us in the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist, that we may be transformed into his likeness and be the bearers of his love into the world he created and sustains. A more recent Christian poet, R.S.Thomas, writes of communion at a Hill Christmas in Wales.

*They came over the snow to the bread's
Purer snow, fumbled it in their huge
hands, put their lips to it
like beasts, stared into the dark chalice
where the wine shone, felt it sharp
on their tongue, shivered as at a sin
remembered, and heard love cry
momentarily in their hearts' manger.*

This Christmas, as we come to worship and adore the Child who is Emmanuel, God-with-us, and receive him in the Eucharist may his love cry in the manger of our hearts, transform our lives and strength us to live and pray for the peace of the world and the unity of the holy churches of God.

May God bless you, and may you, and all for whom you love and care, have a holy and a joyful Christmas.

+ Geoffrey Gibraltar

The Reverend Elise Harding

As one of you said earlier this year when I was agonising over yet more theological assignments still to be completed, “Well it’s inevitable that you *will* be ordained!” which was just what Michael said when I offered myself for selection – and in both cases I didn’t quite believe it at the time, but it has come about and I have been ordained deacon and am now a Reverend.



The service at Salisbury Cathedral was a very moving and profound experience, as was the retreat which was held at Hilfield Friary – part of the Franciscan Order. I counted that as a ‘God-incidence’ as this Chaplaincy is dedicated to St Francis!

My journey has not been easy – but then I didn’t expect it to be. The Bible shows that discerning and following God’s call is likely to be difficult (Matt 16:24), but spiritually there have been more highs than lows, thankfully. I have loved studying theology but found the formal mode of academic study challenging, because, as I discovered quite late on in the course, I am dyslexic. Overall the experience has been amazing, and I praise God for all aspects of it and for his provision. One unexpected treat was an invitation from the

Archbishop of Canterbury to tea at Lambeth Palace!

So at this point, life is exciting. I am Assistant Curate at St Cuthberga’s Wimborne Minster, Dorset and thoroughly enjoying being part of their team. Michael and I still feel called to help the Chaplaincy in ‘spreading the Good News’ in Tenerife, and with permission from my bishop, we are privileged in being able to continue to do that. It delights us to see that our investment into developing an Anglican presence at San Blas has come to fruition independently from us. 2004-2007 were exciting years but when we had to stay in England for the first year of my training Christine took over the responsibility for that worship centre and has done a remarkable job.

So what shall I be doing while I'm here? I have already joined the Hospital Visiting Team. I know from my working life as a Ward Sister, and also from spending time as a patient in a foreign land, hospitalisation can be a lonely and frightening experience. Our prayer is that through time spent with them, patients may experience something of the grace and mercy of God.



The biggest project however, is another Church Plant. Under the authority of the Chaplain and building on our experience from our work in San Blas, Michael and I hope to develop a Church in a different area in South Tenerife. It will be based, at least initially, in an 'every-day' setting – such as a house or a cafe and have an informal, evangelistic focus. But to start with, we are organising a Christmas Carol Service which will be held at 5pm in the Swedish Church, overlooking the sea in Los Cristianos on Sunday 26th December – Boxing Day.



I thank you for your prayers and encouragement over the last three years and I pray that you will continue in that support in the future. My training is not completed - I have a Training Minister for at least another three years! By the time you read this my Training Minister – who is the Rector of Wimborne Minster, the Reverend Canon John Holbrook, will have already visited us here in order to catch a glimpse of the life we share with you, so he can report back to Salisbury Diocese

The role of a deacon is to love and serve, and during my months in Tenerife each year I pray that I may fulfil that calling whilst being of use within the Chaplaincy.

Elise Harding

Sermon for Remembrance Sunday

Some five hundred years before Christ was born there was a war between the great city state of Babylon and the new empire of Persia. As a result of that war, which was won by the Persians, the people of Israel, who had been slaves in Babylon for seventy years, were set free and allowed to return to their country and start life all over again.

As is the case after all periods of war and suffering, it took a while for things to get back to normal. The city of Jerusalem was still pretty much a wreck. The temple which had been destroyed 70 years earlier was only half rebuilt, and times were tough. People didn't really know what to do - especially when it came to their religion.

Today, we observe Remembrance Day here in the Sanctuary of God.

We remember today - the sacrifice, the pain, the loss, the comradeship, the closeness, the hopes and fears, the evil that threatened - the victory that came.

We remember too the deeper things of God and of this world - of the things in this world that divide families, groups, peoples, and nations one from the other - and of the need not only for peace - but for the justice that upon which true peace is built - the justice and the love that shows mercy to those who seek it - and even those who don't.

There are many people who would suggest to us that Remembrance Day is outmoded, that it is a religious observation that should no longer be practised, that the time for remembering the sacrifices made in wars long since past is no more - and that we should instead get on with other things.

Some even suggest that Remembrance Day glorifies war and encourages people to think that it is acceptable, and that to die fighting for one's country is a good thing; and so they say - don't do this - don't remember - instead - do something else, speak about the horror of war, and proclaim that God is against all violence, against all forms of man's inhumanity against man.

This my friends misses the whole point of Remembrance Day - it is misguided thinking because it equates the act of remembering the sacrifices made in the past by soldiers of our countries with a glorification of war and suffering.

Misguided because it considers honouring the memory of those who have died with honouring the kind of actions they found themselves having to make in the midst of a struggle that – in the end - none of them really wanted to be part of - but believed that they must be part of if others were to dwell in the freedom and in the peace that God wants us all to have.

The spirit that underlies Remembrance day is probably best found in that beautiful poem that is most associated with it: "In Flanders Field"

In Flanders Field, the poppies blow
between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow.
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up Our Quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch: be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields....

Remembrance Day isn't just a time to remember those who died.
Still less is it a time to say that war is good or honourable.

Rather it's a time when we - as we recall those who gave themselves for us, - to remember just why it is they did what they did, - a time to remember the horror of war and vow - never again, - a time to take up the torch once more and to dedicate ourselves anew to living in such a way that we don't break faith with those who died to bring peace to the world, - a time to commit ourselves once again to the struggle against evil - the struggle against the very things that lead to war in the first place.

Live in the way that God meant you to live - in freedom and with the intention of preserving that freedom, by doing all that makes for perpetual freedom - and for perpetual peace; by doing justice, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.

Then those who died in Flanders Fields will sleep as the poppies grow, between the crosses row on row. AMEN

Sermon preached by our chaplain Fr Keith Gordon on Remembrance Sunday.



John: “Judy you see that elderly couple at the other end of the bar? That’s probably what you and I will look like in 10 years time.”

Judy: “You do realize that’s a mirror at the end of the bar don’t you.”

A Meditation on the Franciscan Coat of Arms

by Friar Jack Wintz, O.F.M.

If you go to any of our Franciscan friaries, churches or convents, you will almost always find the Franciscan Coat of Arms, painted somewhere, hanging on a wall or visible over a doorway. This holds true around the world as well as through the centuries.

The Franciscan coat of arms often consists of a cross with two arms crossing each other and nailed to a cross—or at least with a cross in the background. One arm is that of Christ; the other is that of St. Francis of Assisi. This image is a key identification badge for those who consider themselves followers of St. Francis.



This Franciscan coat of arms is an image worthy of our contemplation. The image is a true expression of both Jesus' and Francis' fervent style of love. We see in Jesus' crucified hand, first of all, God's incredible overflowing love for us. In Francis' wounded hand, in turn, we see the incredibly loving response of St. Francis to the burning love of God, who first loved us.

This is indeed something to ponder. All in all, the Franciscan coat of arms is a wonderful expression of the Franciscan (or Seraphic) style of love. Though few of us live up to this ideal, it calls us to something rare and splendid!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you said, "No one has greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." Help us to contemplate the amazing intensity of your love, as symbolized by your crucified hand. Help us also to imitate you more fully, who first loved us, and to imitate St. Francis, who responded so fervently to the love so lavishly pour out upon him. Amen.

Prayer Still Upsets Some People.

When Minister Joe Wright was asked to open the new session of the Kansas Senate, everyone was expecting the usual generalities, but this is what they heard:

Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance.. We know Your Word says, 'Woe to those who call evil good,' but that is exactly what we have done.

We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values.

We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery.

We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.

We have killed our unborn and called it choice.

We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable.

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self esteem

We have abused power and called it politics.

We have coveted our neighbour's possessions and called it ambition.

We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.

We have ridiculed the time-honoured values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, Oh, God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

Amen!

The response was immediate. A number of legislators walked out during the prayer in protest. In 6 short weeks, Central Christian Church, where Rev. Wright is pastor, logged more than 5,000 phone calls with only 47 of those calls responding negatively. The church is now receiving international requests for copies of this prayer from India, Africa and Korea

Commentator Paul Harvey aired this prayer on his radio program, 'The Rest of the Story,' and received a larger response to this program than any other he has ever aired.

With the Lord's help, may this prayer sweep over our nation and wholeheartedly become our desire so that we again can be called 'one nation under God'.

Magazine Subscription Rates

Do you only get a copy of our magazine when you are on holiday in Tenerife?

Would you like to receive it on a regular basis?

It now costs 40p to post a copy to you, including packing, This means that, with a minimum donation of 1€ per issue, we can get a copy of the magazine to you for a minimum subscription of 1.50 € or £1.30 per copy. Of course we are always happy to receive a donation of more than the minimum 1€. Please fill in the form on the back of this page and indicate how many issues you would like your donation to cover.

I know that some of you like to pick up your copy while you are out here on holiday so if you would like us NOT to post certain issues to you this can be arranged; simply circle the relevant months on the subscription form and we will make the appropriate arrangements.

Finally, remember, I am always glad to hear from you with comments, suggestions or articles for inclusion.

Alan Charlesworth

Editor

Magazine by Post



Every issue we post over 40 copies to our friends in Spain & the UK.

If you wish to receive the magazine, please complete the slip below with the name and address to which you would like it to be sent. With a minimum donation of 1€ per issue, we can get a copy of the magazine to you for only 1.50 € or £1.30 per copy.

We plan nine issues per year.

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Please hand this form to any of the Church Sidespeople or send to:

Mrs Jean Bates, 278 Calle Abona, Urb. Sueno Azul, Callao Salvaje, 38678 Adeje, Tenerife

Christmas Bazaar

What a day! It started for many of us at about 6.00 am. By 8.00 with daylight fully broken the Plaza at Los Gigantes was heaving with nearly 40 members of the Chaplaincy setting up tables and transporting goods some from backs of cars others from two nearby garages just round the corner.



The weather did not look too promising, black clouds were in evidence causing some to prepare lengths of polythene to cover the tables 'just in case'. By 10.00 we were ready to do business; this was ahead of the advertised opening time of 10.30, such was the efficiency of the 'staff', but customers were already arriving and the sun was just

starting to appear from behind the dispersing clouds so we opened for business while the Fender Boys entertained us with their musical renditions of the old favourites.

It was 1 o'clock that the draw was made and 2 o'clock before numbers started to fall off. At 2.30 we called it a day and the bustle of the early morning was reversed with unsold goods being returned to boots of cars or garages.

By 3.15 the plaza was clear and 40 weary but invigorated workers sat and took a well earned rest over a cup of tea while Gwen, our treasurer, totted up the takings.

The provisional result was a splendid 3,300€.

The Chaplaincy would like to thank all who took part in the afternoon, worker and customer alike.



The Playgroup's handiwork was selling

Signs and Symbols: the Oil of Chrism

In this the last for the moment of writings about the use of oil in the church, let's consider the third oil that is brought before the Bishop, during Holy Week each year.

This has substantially different symbolism from the other two and is usually visually different also. Although, like the other two it is olive oil, it is the only one that is also fragranced with spices and herbs, or more commonly a small amount of Friar's Balsam. Hence it is a slightly different colour when compared to the others.

It is also the only oil of the three that is 'consecrated'; the others being 'blessed'.

Chrism has been used for thousands of years and within biblical cultures there is a background of using it to anoint prophets, priests and kings. It is from this that Jesus received the name in Greek of

(*Khristós*) meaning "the anointed one" – 'The Christ'. So we

X
p
get Jesus Christ, Jesus the Anointed One.

i
As also used to consecrate church buildings, sometimes new altars or
T
vessels to be used at communion, as well as for people confirming the
O
earlier baptismal promises made on their behalf or when they were
C
much younger. The aim is to symbolically express the blessings of Jesus
the Christ as well as the richness of the Holy Spirit with his power and
strength.

Occasionally a newly baptised person will be anointed with chrism as a sign of the above as well as that they are now heirs to the kingdom of God, with Jesus their brother they will reign and so they are also anointed as a king or queen.

St Francis Playgroup

The pre-school playgroup organisation came into force in the early 1960's and for most of our congregation this was too late for them to benefit from it. Many however became aware of it through their children or even grandchildren and in so doing realised what fun they had missed.

All that was rectified during three afternoons in November when coloured paper, glue and glitter together with scissors (the safety type of course) were provided for some members of the congregation to relieve their missed childhood under the guise of making Christmas cards for the Bazaar. And so the St Francis 'post-work playgroup' was born.

Some dozen members (nearly all female) availed themselves of the opportunity and a jolly good time was had by all, – many are still trying to get the glitter out of their hair. The net result was that over 200 unique cards were added to the goods on sale at our Christmas Bazaar.



The women to stick with

Chilean Miners: The 34th Man

The Chilean miners have emerged from their ordeal testifying to the presence of Jesus with them, according to a CMS mission partner on the scene.

The Rev Alfredo Cooper, chaplain to President Sebastian Pinera, told BBC Radio Five Live yesterday that the miners had a sense of Jesus being the 34th man in the collapsed mine.

“Many of the miners went down as atheists, unbelievers or semi-believers and they have come up to a man testifying that they were not 33 but that there were 34 down there – that Jesus was there with them and that they had a constant sense of his presence and guidance,” he told Five Live’s Peter Allen.

Challenged by Allen that if divine intervention had saved the miners, divine intervention must have put them down there in the first place, Alf gave a careful, clear response.

“Man is subject to accidents and all sorts of problems thanks often to his wilful negligence, as was the case in this mine. There are consequences when you don’t care enough for people. And of course in those situations people tend to cry out to God... And the interesting thing is God has answered.”

Alfredo Cooper paid tribute to the work of all the scientists, engineers, politicians and press, who had contributed to the successful rescue of the miners. “We see the hands of all these magnificent experts all around, the good will of so many people internationally and the brilliant coverage of the press. We would suggest that all this works together for good, that certainly as we prayed God has guided in remarkable ways – even the scientists.” Alf helped to lead the country’s prayers for the trapped miners since the beginning. He described how he had convened an emergency prayer meeting at the presidential palace, and how the president had asked for a service of thanksgiving when it was discovered that the miners were still alive.

Where Did Christmas Stockings Come From?

No one is really sure, but a story is told of St Nicholas, a bishop who lived in the 4th century, who may have started the custom by accident. St Nicholas was of a wealthy family, and of a generous heart. As Christmas approached one year, he wanted to help a poor family whom he knew, but he did not want them to know it was him. So he climbed up on their roof on Christmas Eve and dropped some coins down the chimney.

The next morning the coins, to the great surprise of the family, were found in the stockings of the ladies, who had hung them to dry by the fire the night before. Every year after that they put their stockings out, in the hope that some more money would fall into them. They told the story of this amazing appearance to their friends and neighbours, and the custom caught on.

Is Rudolph The Reindeer A – Girl?!

Rudolph the reindeer may have a splendid bright red nose – but there is something else rather odd about him: he has antlers. And anyone who knows reindeer will tell you that Father Christmas's favourite reindeer for foggy nights cannot be male because only female reindeer have antlers at Christmas time.

Two professors at Edinburgh University have been looking into this problem. They found that female reindeer grow antlers in time for winter in order to dig in the snow to reach lichens and so provide food for their young. Males, on the other hand, grow antlers only in order to fight with other males during the mating season in the autumn. Once that is over, they cast their antlers away, well before Christmas.

So – who are the reindeers pulling Father Christmas's sleigh? We have always assumed that all those antlered reindeer were male. But perhaps this is not so.... perhaps we should rename Rudolph Rudolpha!

Letter from St James the Least of All

The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

On the perils of brides in churches

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Our final wedding of the year was perhaps a little more memorable than any of us had anticipated. It was a charming scene, with everywhere covered in snow – although a good job the bride had a bouquet of red roses, otherwise no one would have been able to find her.

As the photographer, bridesmaids and I stood at the lych gate, the bridal car arrived, braked – and carried on, sliding down the lane sideways and into the neighbouring farmyard. Fortunately, Mr Jones was there to use his tractor to pull it out of the mud.

Our verger, having attended the diocesan verger's guild Christmas party the night before, arrived late and did not have time to clear the church path. The path, being on an incline and bridal pumps not being equal to the task, the bride made a dramatic entrance into church backwards and on her bottom, demolishing the flower pedestal by the door in the process. Fortunately the petals stuck to the large patch of mud on her behind, making the congregation speculate throughout the service why she had a large floral cushion attached to her dress.

Our organist did not please the bride's mother by changing the wedding march to the skater's waltz as her daughter reeled up the aisle. He is still under a cloud from last week's funeral for our local butcher, when he played at the end of the service Bach's: "Sheep may safely graze".

At St James the Least, the best man stands over a large heating grid. The poor soul, unaccustomed to our ecclesiastical arctic climate, was

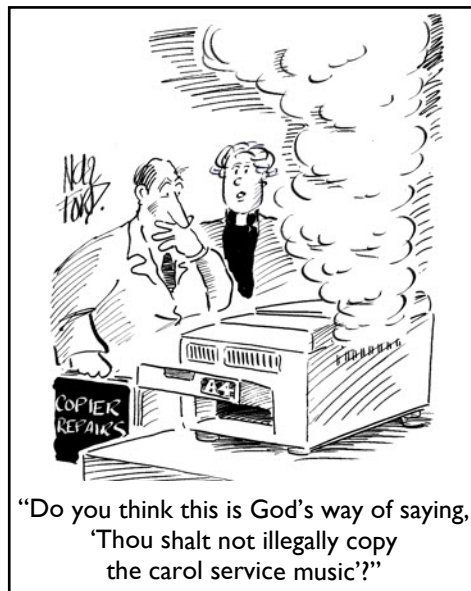
shivering so violently, he dropped the rings down the grid. There had to be a half-hour pause while the grating was removed and the groom, holding the best man's legs, lowered him into the hole to fish for them, lost among choirmen's peppermints and the organ tuner's cigarette ends.

In future, I have decided that wedding rehearsals should be full dress rehearsals. The bride, in a hooped dress, was 4 feet wide; the vestry door is 3 feet wide. Getting in to sign the registers was fairly easy, as the bride, a game girl, took a run up along the chancel and so built up enough momentum. Her exit was more difficult, but with the combined pushing of groom and bridesmaids, she re-emerged into church like a cork out of a bottle – and demolishing the second pedestal of flowers in the chancel.

Married life, they say, is not always a bed of roses, but hers has certainly begun that way.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



Christmas Angel

The Christmas angel sat atop
A splendid Christmas tree
On high, inside a shopping mall
All the people he could see
The runaway, the drug dealer
An addict needing more
The pick pocket, the benefit cheat
A drunk sleeps on the floor
A gang of hoodies with knives concealed
A teenage prostitute
A homeless man sits begging
Alone and destitute
The Salvation Army band arrived
“Oh come all ye faithful”
I doubt that you’ll find many
In this soulless shopping mall
In despair the angel closed his eyes
To the sound of cash tills ringing
The credit card it reigns supreme
Then -- he heard the singing!
The begging man he was the first
His tuneful voice sang loud
“Joyful and triumphant”
Soon there was a crowd
Rejoicing voices rang in exultation
“Hark the herald angel sing”
Praising carols, peaceful prayers
“Glory to the new born king”
The Christmas spirit touched them all
They smiled, embraced, good cheer
“We wish you a very merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year”

Elizabeth Thomas

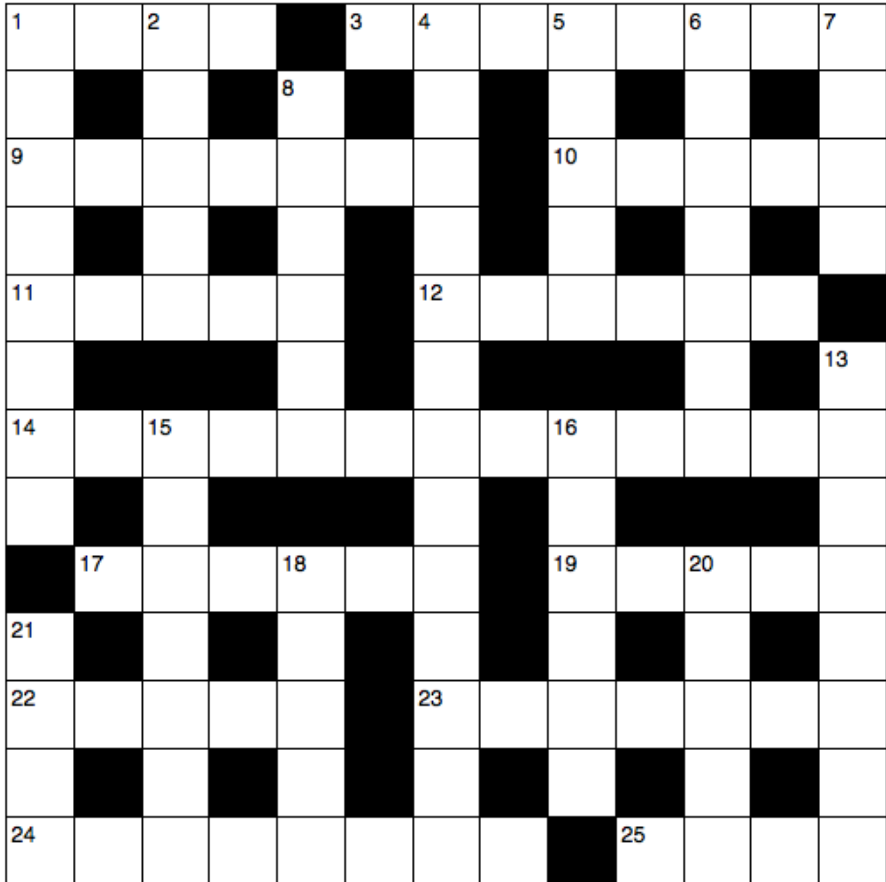
Sudoku

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

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Solution on page 31

Crossword



The bible references in the clues all refer to the text of the NIV version.

Clues

Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore'(Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
- 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
- 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)

Solution on page 31

Christmas crackers.

What's the smell of bad eggs
EGGTINCT (Extinct)

What's the expression on an auctioneer's face
FOR BIDDING

Why is it dangerous to have a nap in a railway carriage?
BECAUSE THE TRAIN RUNS OVER SLEEPERS

Why do women put their hair in rollers at night?
SO THEY CAN WAKE CURLY (*early*) in the morning.

When is longhand quicker than shorthand?
WHEN IT'S ON A CLOCK.

What do bees do with all their honey?
THEY CELL IT.

What do you get if you cross a jeep with a dog?
A LAND ROVER

What happens when a horse gets to the bottom of his nose-bag?
IT'S THE LAST STRAW

What's the best place for water-skiing?
A LAKE WITH A SLOPE

If an Indian woman is squaw, what's an Indian baby?
A SQUAWKER

What do you do with an angry candle?
WHEN IT FLARES UP, PUT IT OUT

When does a sailor take up least room in his ship?
WHEN HE SLEEPS ON HIS 'WATCH'.

What is it that works when it plays and plays when it works?
A FOUNTAIN.

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Details of services can be found on the back page.

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