

St Mary's RC Church
Merthyr Tydfil
Parish Advisory Council



ST MARY'S MAGAZINE

Number 10

Christmas 1998

CANON'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the 1998 Christmas edition of St Mary's Magazine. Since the first issue in May 1996 we have seen a steady improvement in content and presentation. This is due to the interest shown by so many who contributed items which gave much enjoyment as memories were recalled of times past. The Editorial Board also played a significant role as they sought to make the publication more attractive and readable. To all concerned much thanks.

Christmas time is rich in folklore and memories, happy and sad, of times past. It is a feast which is timeless as we span the various phases of our lives and recall past rich experiences even as we share new ones. Closely connected as it is to our religious beliefs and our family's life it is not surprising if one's experiences of Christmas do not explain the kind of people we are. So many of our standards, relationships and values were built upon the example set us by the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. It is not to be wondered at if we experience a tension between our Catholic roots and a fickle materialism of modern society especially evident during the Christmas Season. It is a measure of how much we understand and have assimilated the spirit of the story of Christmas how we cope and bear witness or otherwise to the Christ Child. Let us pray that we will be faithful to the "One who comes in the name of the Lord."

Of course we cannot spend all our time looking back. The world in which we live, economically, culturally, socially and environmentally is changing so rapidly that we must be alert, aware and active. Never before have the times demanded of the people that they stand up and be counted for those things in which they believe. Gone is the time when we could leave it to others to do our share, speak for us and even think for us. Christmas challenges us to be generous in carrying our share of the responsibilities, to speak with knowledge on the issues which exercise so many minds and, guided by the the Christmas message, work out what contribution we can make to bring about a more just society. In the coming year as we enter the final preparations for the Great Jubilee of 2000 the Parish Advisory Council will seek to put into effect a programme designed to do just that. Then we will have a fresh incentive to live the implications of Christmas in a positive and Christlike way. Only then will we realise what it means to have 'A blessed Christmas'.

A blessed Christmas is my prayerful wish for all

Sean M Kearney
Parish Priest

EDITORIAL

Our thanks, again, to those who have contributed to the Christmas Day edition of the Magazine, our regular writers and especially those of you who have prepared something for the first time. The contributions from Bishop Hedley and St Mary's schools are especially welcome and an innovation this year is a Christmas story.

Instead of a Christmas edition next year we plan to have a Millennium Special for New Year's Day 2000; all the themes will be related to the new year, the new decade, the new millennium. Any good ideas on the nature of the Millennium magazine will be welcome now. Meanwhile please start thinking about what you are going to write for us. It might be about past New Years' experiences that you have had, hopes for the future, something a little bit special to celebrate Anno Domini 2000. The editorial group comprises Paul Price, Peter Williams, Jack Walsh and the editor so please let us have your thoughts on what the Millenium isse of the magazine should contain. Meanwhile, a Happy and a Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Hywel Mathews
Editor

THE CHRISTMAS TREE ANGEL

This story tells of the importance of knowing that life is "now" and that we each bring into life a personal message.

In the beginning

The little angel was born into the world from the warmth and darkness of the box into which she had been packed, by her maker. She was curious and excited as she felt the box being opened, and amazed and delighted when she found herself brought into the bright world of glittering light and colour and placed on top of a Christmas tree in the centre of the room.

She felt proud and important being the centre of attraction and warmed by all the attention given to her as she sat there, admired by all around her.

After a few days the lights around her suddenly went out and were replaced by the cold grey light of a winter day filtering through the windows of the room. The little angel felt cold, miserable and forgotten and said to herself, "How I wish I had spent more time looking around and experiencing the world, when all the bright lights were on and I could see clearly what was around me." And she sat there considering her own misfortunes.

The next day a woman arrived and took the Christmas tree, with the angel on it, up into the attic and dumped them in a corner. There was no light in the attic except that which filtered through cracks in the floorboards. And the little angel felt very alone. After a while a mouse came along and looked at her. "Mouse", she said, "I am very unhappy. It is very dark in here and I wish I had spent more time enjoying the grey light of winter in the room below." The mouse looked at her sadly. The attic was his home and for him there was light enough. But the little angel was wrapped in her misfortunes and didn't listen to him.

Much later

The owners of the house moved and cleared out the attic and the little angel was taken out and thrown into the coal shed. How very dark it was in there.....only enough light to dimly see the lights of coal around her. "How awful this is", she said, "and how black. I wish I had listened to the mouse and enjoyed the light of the attic." The lumps of coal looked at her. This place was their home and for

them there was light enough. They tried to comfort her but she wouldn't listen. She lay there thinking of all the light in the precious places she had been, and she filled her mind with these thoughts of regret.

After a few months

A young boy came into the coal shed and found the angel and took her out, thinking she might be something he could play with. When he looked at her and saw her dusty coat and her sad face he lost interest and threw her in the dustbin. How completely dark it was in there with the lid on. The little angel sank into her misery wishing she was back in the dark warm light of the coal shed.

The following week the dustman arrived. He took the lid off the bin and took the little angel out before dumping the rubbish in the dust cart. He took her home, because it was Christmas time again, and he needed a decoration for his tree. And so, once again, the little angel found herself on the top of the tree, surrounded by bright lights. How she enjoyed the experience and how thankful she was. This time she was determined to look around in the light and really see what was around her. As she did so, she caught sight of herself in the mirror over the fireplace and realised, for the very first time, that there was something written in the ribbon around her neck.... She looked hard and eventually made out the words. They said "Glory to God in the highest and Peace on earth to all." The little angel discovered that she had a purpose, a message to give to the world.....something she had never realised before and she was filled with wonder and delight at what her maker had given her.

After Christmas

The decorations were cleared and the little angel was taken outside into the garden and thrown on top of a pile of leaves. This time she was not unhappy.....she felt at one with nature that surrounded her, and as her body slowly crumbled and decomposed with the leaves on which she lay, she felt fulfilled and at rest, knowing that she had been created for a purpose. She had fulfilled the role for which she was intended, the role that her maker had designed for her....and felt at peace.

God gives all of us a second chance.

Sister Breda Gainey

CHRISTMAS SEARCHWORD

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

WORDS TO FIND:

Angel
Bethlehem
Christmas
Donkey
Egypt
Frankincense
Gloria

Hosanna
Israelite
Joseph
King
Lord
Mary
Nativity

Offering
Prophets
Quote
Redeemer
Shepherds
Testament
Universe

Vision
Wise men
Xmas
Yuletide
Zion

All these words can be found in the wordsearch grid,
reading in straight lines, horizontally, vertically or
diagonally, either backwards or forwards.

Prepared by Amelia England

Answers on page 10

THE TRIP TO DUBLIN

It was bonfire night 1998. The smell of smoke filtered through the air and we could see the sky littered with bright coloured flashing lights as we travelled to Cardiff Central Station to meet the others. A group of us from Bishop Hedley High School were going on a pilgrimage to Dublin. We arrived at the station at nine o'clock in the evening and caught the train to Holyhead. After checking in at Holyhead we immediately boarded the catamaran. It was four o'clock in the morning and we were all very tired; unfortunately for some but fortunately for us the journey was delayed for two hours. The duty-free shop on the catamaran was excellent. We all bought various perfumes, after-shaves and chocolates at great prices! We had an excellent time on board but, I must admit, it was extremely difficult to stay awake.

We eventually arrived at Dun Laoghaire at about eight o'clock in the morning to find we had to wait for another train to take us to Dublin. While we were waiting in the station we had a cup of coffee to keep us awake. The train journey to Dublin was short and quick and we arrived in the city at about 9.15 am. We were all starving and went straight for a cooked breakfast in a lovely cafe. The breakfast was beautiful - sausages, eggs, bacon, beans - we felt so much better after filling up.

At about ten o'clock we went to visit Trinity University in Dublin to see the Book of Kells, which is the oldest set of Gospels in Europe. This was very interesting and most informative. There was a lovely gift shop at the university which sold beautiful Celtic jewellery. Some of us bought earrings and necklaces which were very unusual.

After leaving the university we headed straight up to the river Liffey and we all spat in the river because it is supposed to be for luck - well, it's tradition after all. We then made our way up to the Guinness factory. It was a long walk up but it was worth it for a free pint of Guinness. Well we couldn't visit Dublin without trying the original Guinness, could we? To be honest, I didn't like it; it tasted like cold coffee.

After this visit we had the afternoon to ourselves. We shopped 'til we dropped - literally! The shops were quite difficult to find because they were so spread out, but after spending the afternoon there we did find most of the shops we wanted to find. The shops were full of Christmas decorations and we were getting quite excited. We did quite a lot of our Christmas shopping even though the shops were quite expensive.



Late in the afternoon we went for a meal in a beautiful Italian restaurant and then met up with everyone else in the Harp pub at about six o'clock. The atmosphere was brilliant. We met many Irish people who were very friendly and welcoming and we also found out a lot about the Irish way of life. We had a few drinks and we sang many Irish songs there. It was great!

We left the Harp at about eight o'clock and we headed home. I can't remember much about the journey home because we all slept for most of the time. The trip was excellent and very enjoyable, but also very tiring and, to be honest, when I got home on Saturday morning, I went straight to bed and didn't wake up until eight o'clock in the night. A worthwhile trip!

Lauren Griffiths, Head Girl, Bishop Hedley High School

Lauren, with a number of Year 13 pupils, travelled to Dublin with Miss P O'Halloran and Mr B P Evans. The visit is now an annual 'pilgrimage', first arranged by the former school chaplain, Fr Jeremy Thomas, who is now studying in Chicago.

HEAVEN'S GROCERY STORE

I was walking down life's highway a long time ago.
 One day I saw a sign that read "Heaven's Grocery Store".
 As I got a little closer, the door came open wide,
 And when I came to myself, I was standing inside.
 I saw a host of Angels. They were standing everywhere.
 One handed me a basket and said: "My child shop with care".
 Everything a Christian needed was in the Grocery Store,
 And all you couldn't carry, you could come back next day for more.
 First I got some PATIENCE; LOVE was in the same row.
 Further down was UNDERSTANDING, you need that everywhere you go.
 I got a box or two of WISDOM, a bag or two of FAITH.
 I couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST for it was all over the place.
 I stopped to get some STRENGTH and COURAGE to help me run this race.
 By then my basket was getting full but I remembered some GRACE.
 I didn't forget SALVATION for salvation is free,
 So I tried to get enough of that to save both you and me.
 Then I started up to the counter to pay my grocery bill,
 For I thought I had everything to do my MASTER'S will.
 As I went up the aisle I saw PRAYER and I just had to put that in,
 For I know when I stepped outside, I would run right into sin.
 PEACE and JOY were plentiful, they were on the last shelf.
 SONG and PRAISES were hanging near so I just helped myself.
 Then I said to the Angel, "Now, how much do I owe?"
 He just smiled and said "Just take them everywhere you go".
 Again I said "How much do I really owe?"
 He smiled again and said

"MY CHILD JESUS PAID YOUR BILL A LONG, LONG TIME AGO!"

This story was acquired and sent in by Beti Aris, who heard it some years ago when on holiday in the Adriatic.

LOOK AHEAD TO TOMORROW

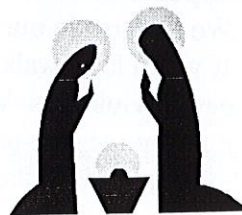
There is always the hope of tomorrow
 To brighten the clouds of today
 There is always a corner for turning
 No matter how weary the way.
 So just look ahead to tomorrow
 And trust that you'll find waiting there
 The sunlight that seemed to be hidden
 By yesterday's cloud of despair.

Neil Jones

PRAYER FOR THE ELDERLY

Take my hand O Blessed Mother
 Hold it firmly lest I fall
 I am nervous when I'm walking
 So today I humbly call
 Help me at every crossing
 Watch me when I'm on the stairs
 Help me with my undertakings
 Lessen many of my cares
 When the evening falls upon me
 And I fear to be alone
 Take my hand dear Blessed Mother
 Once again and lead me home
Sent in by Margaret Pearce

*Peace on
Earth*



THOSE QUITE REMARKABLE SHEEP

I must truly confess that I had spent very little time, or thought, on the subject of sheep. Then a chance remark was made to me quite a long way from home. Someone, who had just enjoyed a holiday tramping over the Welsh Hills, said to me: "Those sheep of yours are quite remarkable - they've no fear of anybody or anything." To my surprise I found myself agreeing with him completely. Not without a tinge of pride I told him that our sheep were different, that they were certainly not the usual 'baa-lambs'. I told him that our sheep, when encountered on their patch, would stand four-square, stare you in the eyes and dare you to jostle them off their chosen piece of turf. They were sheep that definitely had character.

My only one-to-one encounter with a sheep - quite a large one - was during the purgatorial, blizzard winter of 1947. It was a terrible day; no one with sense stirred from home. There was a mere handful of children in school. These children lived just a stone's throw away. Their homes have long since been demolished to make way for modern planning. In the lunch break I was on the point of leaving the school to go to the 'Chocolate Box' opposite our church, for bread, when I heard a very slight shuffling sound. In the completely empty cloakroom was a sheep. His body was against one wall and his nose against the adjacent one. He had picked the spot that was furthest from the door. He was so very still. We looked alike. Just our eyes, noses and mouths were bare to the elements. He was covered in wool and I covered in layers and layers of clothes.

I patted him and had shock number one. There was no feeling of life whatsoever. A beautiful big pig, when its back is scratched has an almost benign look on its face. A cat purrs like a well-oiled machine when patted and a dog, when acknowledged, wags its tail with joy - that is if it is lucky enough to have a tail. This sheep was different. I felt just as if I had patted a sodden floor-mop. I then tentatively tried to find out how deep its coat was. I then had shock number two. I almost lost track of my hand, as far as my wrist, in damp oily wool.

A cob for the sheep

I left to buy my bread - very important with all the snow around! I then thought that as bread was our staff of life that it could not do any harm to a sheep, especially as there was not a single blade of grass around. I bought a nice fresh cob for the sheep.

He was still in the same place. I swear that he had not moved an inch. I held out the cob and he very slowly did an about turn and walked towards me. I broke the loaf of bread into pieces. I then had shock number three. I had never before seen a loaf of bread demolished so quickly. Generations of mountain munching had gone into the creating of that mouth. It was a piece of expert machinery. Not a crumb was lost - so neat was the eating of that bread. I went into school. I never saw that sheep again, not all through the rest of that long, hard winter.

Life went on and years passed until one day, pottering around in my kitchen, with my wireless on as usual, my antennae twitched on hearing the word 'sheep'. A very heated and intriguing discussion was taking place, involving a group of ladies, a farmer and a reporter. The ladies were incensed. A sheep, it seems, is more than willing to try out any new 'recipes' planted in a garden. They will eat anything that moves in the ground. But they will not eat one thing; they will not go within square yards of a daffodil bulb. That was something that I learned that day.

Marvellous jumpers

The farmer asked the ladies what they expected him to do; he could not fence in the entire mountain. A fence would be useless. "They are marvellous jumpers", he said. "Best of them can do six feet". I myself can vouch for them jumping four feet. They do not leap like other animals - they have lit-off on all fours. They go up in the air as do jet fighter planes. They do a clean no-nonsense air-lift. I thought that the farmer had the last word when he told the ladies that the sheep were on the mountain long before they had arrived. But then I felt that the *coup de grace* must surely belong to the women. One of them said to the farmer: "It comes to something now, when those sheep are now joining the end of the queue to cross the road at the zebra

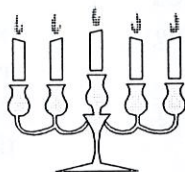
crossing." The discussion then ended - it was time for The News.

Just a few weeks ago I read a tale about these resilient animals. Up North there was a man who loved his lawn. It was his pride and joy. Then he was struck with arthritis and crippling pain which put paid to any gardening. The lawn grew into a weed-infested jungle. Desperately the retired couple sought help from the Council. No manpower was available. The man thought that they were unnecessarily flippant when they asked him about sheep. He felt despondent, but not for long! In no time at all two sheep were gently hoisted on to the lawn from a small van. They were from the local St Mary's Urban Farm. Tyke and Bruno took over. The neighbours loved them, the neighbours' children loved them; they were a hit. In less than ten days the lawn was lovely, it was all crisp and even. The retired couple were delighted. The man said: "They have eaten my fuscias and other plants, but I don't care." He also said, "And they were so quiet!"

I think that sheep are the Marthas of the animal world. They do not have the magnificence of tigers or the rest of the big cat family. They do not have the sheer joy and exuberance of dolphins, nor the overwhelming size of hippos and elephants. But they are always there - steadfast, chewing, quiet and totally undemanding. They give us their lovely soft warm wool to keep us snug in winter. Our hills would be bereft without their comfortable and very gentle baas.

When travellers encounter our sheep on narrow mountain roads they would be wise to ponder on two words, 'bump' and 'bulk'. In front of them stand very independent creatures who, apart from shrewd faraway eyes, haughty, long Roman noses and neat precise mouths, are covered entirely in six inch deep, very dense, top-quality pure Welsh wool duvets. Better to concede right of way.

Mary Gaiter (Williams)



TRUST IN GOD

My God, you have created me to do you some definite service.
 You have given some definite work to me
 which you have not given to any other.
 I had my place in your plan;
 I may never know what it is in this life,
 but I will be told in the next.
 Therefore I will trust you in all things.
 If I am sick, my sickness may serve you.
 If I am worried, my worry may serve you.
 If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve you.
 You do nothing in vain; you know what you are doing.
 You may take away my friends; you may put me among strangers;
 You may make me feel forgotten; you may make my spirit sink;
 You may hide my future from me;
 Still, You know what You are doing and I trust You. Amen

*Cardinal Newman
 Chosen by Jack Walsh*

BILL AND THE APPLE

This story was written in response to a request from Mrs Richards, Year 4 teacher in St Mary's School. The context was to describe the qualities of a piece of fruit and to integrate the description into a story.



There once was a man called Bill. Bill was going for a walk, so he put an apple in his pocket. He took with him a rope, a gun, walking shoes, a long stick and a sword. First he came to a cliff and got his rope out. It was a big cliff, but he made it. Secondly he came to a swamp. He got his long stick out and used it to help him cross it. When he had finished his walk, he sat down to eat his apple, round and shiny with a furry stalk.

It was 20 cm around the middle and 6 cm tall. It was a big apple because it weighed 100 grams. Its skin was smooth and felt a little bit like wax but it was cold. Bill smelled the apple. It was fresh and clean. When he bit into the apple it was crisp and crunchy and juicy but most of it was sour. The skin was tough and the flesh was chewy. This was Bill's favourite place and he was sitting down to eat his favourite fruit.....an apple!

Gethin Evans, aged eight years, St Mary's School

THANK YOU FOR THE PRESENT

The class was asked to write a thank you letter or poem to an aunt or uncle who had sent a present that they didn't like. Here is one of them.

Dear Aunty Joan,

~~My parents said I had to~~ I am writing to say I'll never wear those Minnie Mouse slippers those slippers were lovely.

~~My parents also said I had to say~~ Thanks for the Barbie dressing gown. It makes me look like a clown Mum says it suits me now I'm grown up ~~or maybe I should just throw up.~~ I love baby pink the colour reminds me of that horrible drink. Now thanks again for the horrible lovely slippers and the totally disgusting stunning Barbie dressing gown.

Thank you (not)

Love

Ceri

Ceri Crimmings, Year 8, Bishop Hedley High School

A SELECTION OF SAYINGS

'The greatest of faults is to think you have none'..'Nothing intoxicates some people like a sip of authority'..'If you attempt to solve a problem that doesn't exist you'll soon create a real one'..'The weaker the argument the stronger the words'..'He who thinks of number one should remember it's next to nothing'..'The trouble with being punctual is there is no one there to appreciate it'..'Opportunity only knocks - temptation kicks the door in'..'It's easier to follow the band than to face the music'..'Love looks through a telescope - envy through a microscope'..'Time flies, but remember, you are the navigator'..'If you've never been late you've never been missed'..'Laughter is the sun that drives the winter in the face'..'Good sense is a thing we all need, few have and none think they want'..'Life is not about what happens to you, it's about how you handle what happens'..'Foolproof systems don't take into account the ingenuity of fools'..'A wise man is like a pin - his head keeps him from going too far'..'If you never step on anyone's toes you're standing still'

Submitted by Josie Egan

"ALLWEGOSSOUT"

I suppose you'd expect to find a variety of people serving in shops and large stores, as in any other job. There's the pleasant and conscientious, the indifferent and the couldn't-care-less among them; and I've met them.

Have you used the telephone to ring a firm? "Good morning. Thank you for ringing Escots. Tracey speaking. How can I help you?" Well at least that is pleasant. The expression that creases me is "Allwegossout". Loosely translated this means "all our available stock is displayed." Then you say to the assistant, "Have you a size fourteen please?" Without making a move she confers with her colleague by saying, "We 'aven't got a size 14 'ave we Leanne", who answers "Nah". This is on a par with the 'helpful' girl who tells you that the dress you've tried on looks "fablous". This saves her wasting any more time, and conversation resumes "...so I told him.....".

The beautifully made up young lady on cosmetics in a large store made me feel better when she said "You've got really good skin". Then she killed it by adding ".....for your age"!

Finally, you'll enjoy this one. In a newly opened very large store in Cardiff I asked for tissues, whereupon the lady said, "Oh not in Health Care dear. They're in General Provisions." Of course, silly me! Some minutes later I asked "Where are the eggs, please?" The answer - "Behind the milk". When I asked where the milk was he sighed and said "Well, by the Butchery". See what I mean!

Mary Mathews

A CHRISTMAS WISH



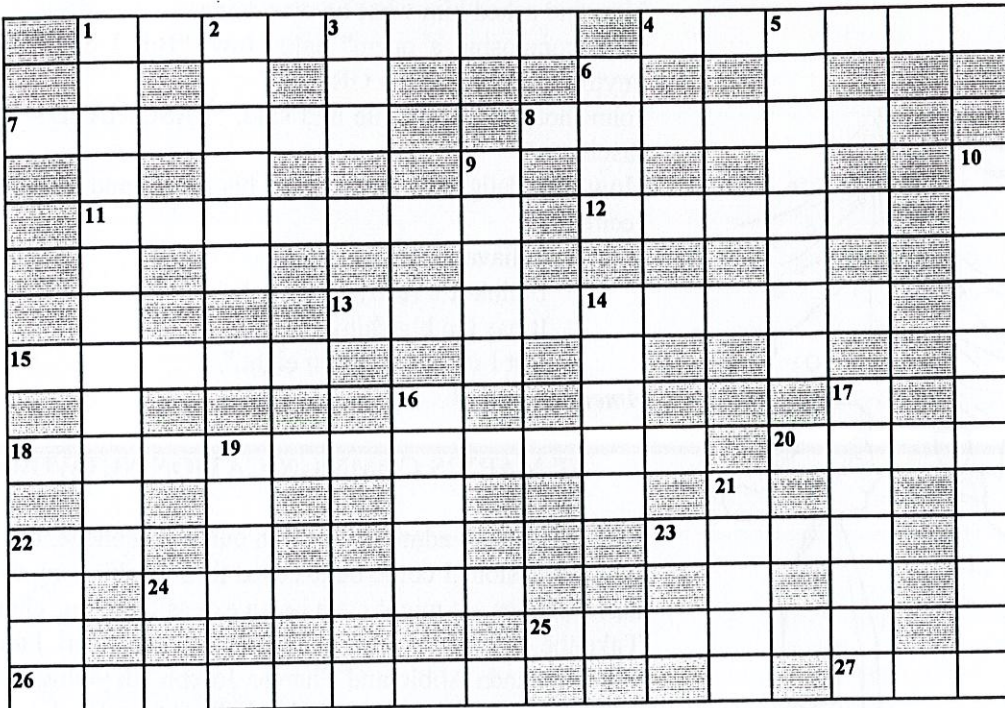
Christmas comes but once a year, you often hear it said.
How I wish we celebrated Christmas every day instead.
Rushing around the shops is not what I have in mind,
I think we should exchange gifts of a priceless kind.
Smiles don't cost a penny, but are worth their weight in gold.
Time for each other, as nowadays time is bought and sold.
Memories last a lifetime, make them happy come what may,
And Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men, for these dear Lord I pray.
Show us how to live our lives as though it's Christmas every day.

Amelia England

Solution to the Christmas Searchword on page 4

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

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD



Across

1. True believers (8)
4. Hail the heaven-born ----- of peace (6)
7. The Pope's office (6)
8. Religious doctrine of Christ and the Apostles (6)
11. See 16 down.
12. The Wise Men were warned by God in a ----- not to return to Herod (5)
13. The first witnesses to the birth of Christ. (9)
15. A stable and a manger set the ----- of the Nativity. (5)
18. Word-made-flesh (11)
20. Wise Men from the East (4)
22. A Christmas Carol, -- Three Kings (2)
23. Of exalted rank (4)
24. Season before Christmas (6)
25. Honour as holy (6)
26. Manifestation of Christ to the Magi (8)
27. Jesus is the --- of God. (3)

Down

- 1 and 6. Offerings the Three Wise Men brought to the new born King. (12, 4)
2. A great Hebrew prophet who spoke to the Lord in a vision (6).
3. Dried grass for fodder (3)
5. ----- Own, a popular Irish magazine (8)
6. See 1.
- 9 and 17. -----, Editor of St. Mary's Magazine. (5, 7)
10. When the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary (12)
14. ----- was King when Jesus was born in Bethlehem (5)
16. and 11 across. -----, St. Mary's Parish Priest (5, 7)
17. See 9 down.
19. A Christmas Carol, See ---- the Winter's Snow (4).
21. Christian scriptures of the Old and New Testament. (5)
22. Knowledgeable (4)

Crossword designed by Amelia England

For the answers to the Crossword see the back page

HUW'S POEM

John was strolling through Cyfarthfa Park when he saw Huw sitting beside the lake, beneath the trees. He sat down beside him, and asked him what he was doing.

"I'm composing a poem" said Huw, "But I can't think of anything to rhyme with GREAT"

John thought for a while and said, "FASCINATE – great – fascinate."

Huw was delighted. He finished his poem, and then proudly recited:

"I have a donkey jacket,
I think it's really great.
It has ten big shiny buttons,
But I can only fasten eight."

Amelia England

ST MARY'S COMMUNICATION NETWORK

I teach business administration in our local college, but on many occasions I could be excused for mistaking my work surroundings - it might even be an extension of our church! Take the current class for example - Angela Lloyd, Patricia Prudon, Linda Abbio and Theresa Joseph, all young women with children at St Mary's School. Together they have chalked up many air miles and bring experiences and customs far removed from Merthyr Tydfil.

Quite recently Theresa, originally from Madras, was telling Patricia that her brother had moved from India to Singapore. Patricia replied that this was a coincidence since she was planning a visit to Singapore before Christmas to see relatives. Further enquiries revealed that the two families lived only a few doors from each other! Now a box of very special liqueur chocolates is winging its Christmas way half way around the globe, courtesy of friends and colleagues of quiet old Merthyr Tydfil!

Diane Profit



Gran: Thanks for the drink, Miranda. What are you waiting for?

Miranda: Daddy says you drink like a fish and I want to see.

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across

1 Faithful; 4 Prince; 7 Papacy; 8 Gospel; 11 Kearney; 12 Dream; 13 Shepherds; 15 Scene; 18 Incarnation; 20 Magi; 22 We; 23 High; 24 Advent; 25 Hallow; 26 Epiphany; 27 Son.

Down

1 Frankincense; 2 Isaiah; 3 Hay; 5 Ireland's; 6 Gold; 9 Hywel; 10 Annunciation; 14 Herod; 16 Canon; 17 Mathews; 19 Amid; 21 Bible; 22 Wise.

Please send your comments on the magazine to the Editor, Hywel Mathews, Rose Cottage, 1 Rock Lane, Cefn Coed, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 2LN, Telephone 01685 722506.