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Unfortunately there will be no further services during the current restrictions. However services are being live streamed on Facebook. To keep in touch with on line events search & follow St Oswin's & St Marys (Facebook page).



### Readings for May

#### 3rd May

#### 4th Sunday of Easter

Readings: Genesis 7  
Acts 2.42-end  
Gospel: John 10.1-10

#### 10th May

#### 5th Sunday of Easter

Readings: Genesis 8.20-9.17  
Acts 7.55-end  
Gospel: John 14.1-14

#### 17th May

#### 6th Sunday of Easter

Readings: Genesis 8.20-9.17  
Acts 17.22-31  
Gospel: John 14.15-21

#### 21st May

#### Ascension Day

Readings: Acts 1.1-11  
Ephesians 1.15-end

#### 24th May

#### 7th Sunday of Easter

Readings: Ezekiel 36.24-28  
Acts 1.6-14  
Gospel: John 17.1-11

#### 31st May

#### Pentecost

Readings: Acts 2.1-21  
1 Corinthians 12.3b-13  
Gospel: John 20.19-23

### Picture Quiz answers

**Its safe to assume that all the regular events and events scheduled during May have been cancelled. But if in doubt please check with the organiser and above all stay safe .**

**Martin**

1. TS Elliot " April is the cruelest month"

2. Comedian Eddie Large – acted alongside David Tennent and David Morrissey in the TV musical/play Blackpool

3. Tim Brook Taylor of the Goodies

4. Peter (the cat) Bonetti

5. Martinus Beijerinck and Dmitri Ivanovsky discovered viruses

6. Bill Withers – sang "Aint no sun-shine"

7. Boris Johnson who is recuperating at Chequers

8. Captain Tom Moore raised more than £25m for the NHS

9. Chris Whitty – Chief Medical Officer

10. Priti Patel – grossly overcounted the number of COVID 19 tests

11. Nick Cave – singer – "who said



### Contacts at St Mary's

#### Priest in charge:

Reverend Tom Birch

Tel: **01661 853254**

Reader: Georgina Harper

Churchwardens: Peter Pescod,

Bill Jordon CBE

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#### Safeguarding Officer:

Caroline Grinsted: 01661844280

csgrinsted@btinternet.com

#### Magazine ads and Editor:

Martin Davenport

email: stmarysmag@btinternet.com

Publication Date: Last Sunday of the month

- All contributions for the magazine to the Editor by the **second Sunday** of the month.

### A word from the Vicar

These are changed times, unprecedented in our lifetimes. We each had dreams and plans as to things we might do in 2020. At New Year none of us were expecting this by Easter. And each of us, in our own ways, adjusts to a 'new normal' which is very different from our old normal. And as restrictions are slowly relaxed over the coming months new, new normals will emerge.

Whenever and however this situation changes we will adapt. But the 'back to normal' as many seem to be talking about will not be normal like it was pre-pandemic. This experience, this time, has and will change us. The past is not coming back. And furthermore, it looks like very few people want it to; a survey this week revealed that less than 1 in 10 people want life to return just like it was. This experience has made them aware of ways to live differently which they want to maintain into their new, post-pandemic, normal life.

How you are reading this magazine may well be an example of new normal. In recognition that many people can receive it electronically the 'print run' has been significantly reduced but it is now available through the parish website. Parish life is now very different to how it was but parish life goes on. Services continue, albeit livestreamed through the Facebook



page(www.facebook.com/StOswinStMary). Care is shown through telephone visiting and numerous other acts of service and love. We must continue to ask the same questions we always should as we seek to be Christ's church and to love and include. Who is here? Who is not? Who's alright? Who isn't? How is the love of God to be shown to all?

Our times may change but God is unchanging. He is calling us ultimately to be enfolded into his unchanging nature of love. We will be, but we're not there yet, and so for us change and adaptation is an inevitable aspect of being made new. Such newness is a work in progress.

Happy Easter

Tom

### Smile Lines



**Asleep** - A young man fell asleep in the Sunday morning service, and soon began to snore. The preacher stopped and impatiently motioned to the young boy beside the man to wake him up. The boy said: "Wake him up yourself, you put him to sleep."

**Water** - The Bishop was coming to speak at Deanery Synod and everything that could be done to make the evening a success had been done. There were fresh flowers on the table, and coffee and cakes prepared. When the Bishop arrived, however, he was in a crabby frame of mind. Looking around, he beckoned a nervous vicar over. "I would like to have a glass of water in front of me

on the table, if you please," he said. "To drink?" was the vicar's idiotic question. "Oh no," was the sarcastic reply. "When I've been speaking half an hour about parish shares, I do a high dive."



### Dorothy Was Puzzled

Dorothy was puzzled and more than a little alarmed. She hadn't seen Marcus for several days, but worse, she hadn't seen anyone else either. There hadn't been any human presence in church for weeks, and she couldn't understand it. Where was everybody? There were always days when the church was virtually deserted, but never for weeks on end like this. Although it was actually quite nice having the church to herself (it was her home after all), without human beings coming in chomping on biscuits after the service each week, there were no crumbs. And no crumbs meant no food for a little elderly mouse.

Dorothy wondered whether God had moved out? Or whether she had done something to upset God? Wasn't God supposed to protect all creatures, particularly humans and church mice? Why had God forgotten her?

With no food, Dorothy barely had the energy to crawl over to her patch of sunlight on the church floor, but once there she felt something tickle her little pink ear. Marcus! Dorothy was so relieved she wanted to hug him, but it was difficult for a little elderly mouse to hug a spider with eight legs so she contented herself with saying crossly, 'Where have you been? Where is everyone?' "Haven't you heard? They're all ill. Well, not all ill actually, but there's this

### Picture Quiz



1. He gets a mention in the magazine



2. A "Blackpool" cameo role with the two Davids?



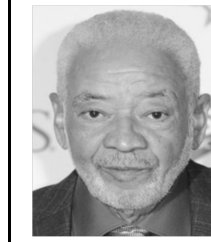
3. Another victim



4. Who used up his 9<sup>th</sup> life



5. They discovered them in tobacco plants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century



6. He sang about sunshine



7. Found a great place to social distance?



8. He did more than clap



9. He is not smiling now



10. Who had an abbot moment?



11. He said the gospel is more inclusive

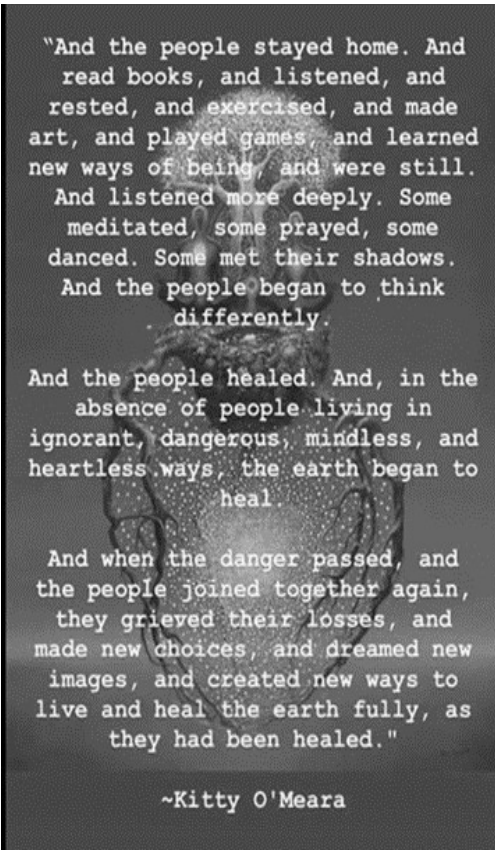
Answers are on page 10 just stand upside down.!

The balance of nature is a theory that proposes that ecological systems are usually in a stable equilibrium, which is to say that a small change (e.g. the size of a population, for example) will be corrected by some negative feedback that will bring the parameter back to its original "point of balance" with the rest of the system.. It is also sometimes applied to the relationship between the Earth's ecosystem, the composition of the atmosphere, and the world's weather. Global warming for example is the result of a huge imbalance between mankind and nature. Since the Covid 19 outbreak, the worlds economies have been brought to a halt the majority of the worlds airlines grounded and our own movements and freedom drastically curtailed. What if the persecution of the Pangolin was the tip of the iceberg and Covid 19 serves us with a warning of things to come and how powerless we are when the forces of nature try to correct the imbalance. Global warming if left unchecked will allow the permafrost to thaw and could potentially release many Covid 19 type viruses from animal cells that have been frozen within it for millions of year. A crucial lesson from this pandemic to help prevent the next one is that the more we degrade our environment the greater is the imbalance of our civilization with nature and the more we will experience horrors like Covid 19 or much worse.

We are already talking about the new normal after lockdown. But should it be business as normal, still pursuing the holy grail of endless economic growth or should we heed the pangolins warning and make radical change in the way we live. Will you consume as much, drive as much and fly as much.? Or will you carry forward

some of the good habits we have learned during lockdown?

**Martin**



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horrible virus which is spread from human to human and some of them are dying, so they all have to stay away from each other. That's why the church has been closed and no one can come in.' Dorothy gasped. 'Is it a punishment from God, do you think? Have humans been so awful that God wants to wipe them from the earth?'

Marcus resisted an urge to laugh. It wasn't really fair to laugh at someone else's beliefs, however erroneous they might be. But hadn't Dorothy learned anything about God in all the years she'd been a church mouse? 'No, definitely not, Dorothy! You know God is love itself. Love couldn't possibly wish anything as horrible as this on anyone or anything. In fact, God is right now helping humans to come up with some answers to the problem. God has the scientists working on producing a vaccine to protect people, and God would rather God's house was shut than people getting ill through it.'

'But God isn't here!' Dorothy's voice rose to a wail. 'I'm so hungry and I feel abandoned by God.'

Marcus snorted. 'You've been through many a winter with leaner times than this, Dorothy. And God doesn't live in church, God lives in people (and church mice and church spiders too) and all around. God is everywhere. You just need to trust God, make this little sacrifice and have patience. All will be well, you'll see. God never abandons anyone. Say a little prayer, keep the faith and just wait.'

So Dorothy did, and do you know, Marcus was right.

Janice Scott

**Ovingham - Front Gardens in Bloom.**

During this difficult time it is so good to see so many of you spending time in your gardens pulling out the weeds and giving the garden a general tidy up. The Parish Council are planning to organise a Village Garden in Bloom Competition during the next few months. Gardening will help to pass the time which has been unexpectedly given to us through this pandemic. More importantly it will improve fitness, mental health and well being. Every garden visible from a public footpath will be considered, there will be no entry form. Gardens will be judged during the months of July and early August. Obtaining bedding plants should not be a problem as the local garden centre in Mickley, Ovington and Wylam are organising a delivery service. More details will follow in the next few weeks, categories will include, large garden, small front garden and most attractive house frontage. There will be a PRIZE for each category !!!!

Doreen Jordon

**April is the cruellest month**

With these words T.S. Eliot opened his modernist masterpiece, The Waste Land, in 1921. It was the aftermath of World War I and the Spanish flu pandemic. Millions had died. His poem brims with the pain, the trauma, the disillusionment and the death of that time.

Now it is April 2020. Eliot could never have imagined that nearly 100 years on, April might well become our 'cruellest month', when trauma and death stalk our

land as the coronavirus pandemic is forecast to peak.

These are times unparalleled in any of our life experiences. In the words of the Psalmist, the 'foundations are being shaken'. And yet – as Christians we can lift our eyes from the turmoil and look up. Psalm 46

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

'Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea...

'Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts.

'The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

'He says, "Be still, and know that I am God..."

Let's all take refuge in Him, as we seek His grace to cope with the many challenges which daily life is throwing our way at present.

**Anne Coomes**

## Who said that?

Christ's ascension into heaven was the real commencement of His reign. – **John Calvin**

Let us endeavour so to live that when we die even the undertaker is sorry. – **Mark Twain**

With the Old Testament, I was an observer. It was exclusive. The Gospels were inclusive. That had a huge impact on the way I then started to write." **Nick Cave**

Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn. – **Robert Burns**  
Don't aim at success – the more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you are going to miss it. For success,

like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one's dedication to a cause greater than oneself. – **Viktor Frankl** (Psychiatrist, concentration camp survivor and author of Man's Search for Meaning)

## We are survivors (for those born before 1940)

We were born before television, before penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens; before dishwashers, tumble driers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip dry clothes and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and then lived together (how quaint can you be?). We thought 'fast food' was what you ate in Lent, a 'Big Mac' was an oversized raincoat and 'crumpet' we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating and 'sheltered accommodation' was where you waited for a bus.

We were before day care centres, group homes and disposable nappies, word processors or young men wearing earrings. For us 'time sharing' meant togetherness; a 'chip' was a piece of wood or fried potato; 'hardware' meant nuts and bolts and 'software' wasn't a word.

Before 1940, 'Made in Japan' meant junk, the term 'making out' referred to how you did in your exams; 'stud' was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and 'going all the way' meant staying on a double decker bus to the terminus. In our day cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mown, coke was kept in the coalhouse, a joint was a piece of meat you ate on Sundays and pot was something you cooked in. Rock music was a mothers lullaby,

Eldorado was an ice cream, a 'gay' person was the life and soul of the party while 'aids' just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1940 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the way in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make, no wonder there is a generation gap today but.....By the grace of God, we have survived!

From an old press cutting - provided by **Doreen Hirst**

## Lift your spirits – it's blossom time at the Orchard

By the time this reaches you the apple trees in Ovingham Community Orchard will be in full bloom. If you are fortunate enough to be able to go out for a walk for exercise we would like to encourage you to take a stroll round the field and enjoy the uplifting sight to the young trees in full bloom. Every tree is a different variety (all now labelled) and you will note a wide variation is how they are blooming and growing.

We are unfortunately unable to hold any events at the Orchard until conditions regarding the virus improve, but we will be keeping an eye on it and watching how things are growing. The protective green netting will come off the native hedge soon to allow it room to thicken out and grow freely to eventually provide a home for birds and insects. We will also look and see what wildflowers grow in the area near the gooseberries which was seeded with a native mix in the autumn. Hopefully the seeds were not washed away in the flood, which now seems such a long time ago!

Nature continues to do its stuff happily without us, so it's an opportunity to enjoy the peace and the beauty of our lovely village green and Orchard.

You can find more details about the Orchard at

<https://ovinghamcommunityorchard.home.blog/>

## Is Nature Fighting back?



The Pangolin a small scaly mammal with the appearance of a reptile finds itself at the centre of the Covid 19. Pandemic. As one of the most widely trafficked mammals in the world, the pangolin is currently threatened with extinction. The abuse of this poor harmless creature along with others in Chinas wildlife markets is horrific. Its scales are used in traditional Chinese medicine, while the animal's meat is regarded a delicacy.

A recent study has shown that the virus that causes Covid-19, bears genetic similarities to a different strain of coronavirus currently infecting the Malayan pangolin population of southern China. Professor Holmes from the University of Sydney added: "It is clear that wildlife contains many coronaviruses that could potentially emerge in humans in the future.