



FEBRUARY 2014

LENT 2014 WILL SOON BE UPON US - BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

Fasting

Lent is a time of giving things up. For Christians, it is one way of remembering the time Jesus fasted in the desert and is a test of self-discipline.

There are many foods that some Christians do not eat in Lent, such as meat and fish, fats, eggs, and milky foods. Some Christians just give up something they really enjoy such as cakes or chocolate.

Shrove Tuesday 4th March 2014

In western Christian churches, the day before Lent starts is Shrove Tuesday. This is also known as Pancake Day. This day was traditionally the last chance to use up the foods Christians would not be eating during Lent. Today people often give up chocolate or alcohol.

Festivities take place in many cities all over the world, including Mardi Gras in New Orleans (USA), Carnival in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Venice (Italy). People dress up, wear masks, parade and dance in the streets.

Ash Wednesday 5th March 2014

On Ash Wednesday many western Christian churches hold services during which Christians are marked on the forehead with a cross of ashes. This is a sign of saying sorry to God for any wrong doing (penitence) and mortality. The ashes come from burning the palm crosses from Palm Sunday of the previous year.

Lent is a time of preparation for **Easter**, ending in Holy Week.

Close your eyes for a moment and think of something that you just can't live without. Your morning cup of latte? How about that gin and tonic after work? Or your favourite television programme?

Make a pact with yourself that starting right now, you will forego that pleasure for an entire week (or a month, in the case of a weekly activity). Don't wait for Monday or any other "right time". Just do it now.

Tell God your plans and ask for his help in sticking with it. And when it's time for that latte or television programme, have a quick chat with God about it or anything else that comes into your mind.

Note: Fasting normally involves abstaining from meals or specific foods for a certain length of time – for example, not eating at all for 24 hours or skipping lunch for a week. Health considerations are important, so if you have an eating or metabolic disorder, fasting from food is not an

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option for you. There are other ways to fast, though. Soap operas, shopping for little luxuries and eating chocolate are all good targets for fasting! And then there's silence. How about no talking for an hour, or even a day?

Try to spend the time you free up to give something to others – write a letter, run an errand, send an email or pray for them.

"When you go without eating, don't try to look gloomy as those show-offs do when they go without eating. I can assure you that they already have their reward. Instead, comb your hair and wash your face. Then others won't know that you are going without eating. But your Father sees what is done in private, and he will reward you." Jesus, in Matthew 6:6-18

Churches Together in Wadebridge LENT STUDY and DISCUSSION

For 2014, we will follow a course from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, '**Parables and Possessions**', which explores through the parables, how a right relationship with money can aid us in our quest for a right relationship with God. We reflect on Jesus' experiences and teaching and then, remembering the command 'Go and do likewise', consider what it means for us today.

The six sessions will be very relaxed and informal, where we can participate or just listen as we wish. Each will have a different leader, drawn from all the denominations in the town, and will be duplicated to give a choice :

evening (Thursday, 7.30 pm at Cornerstone) and
afternoon (Tuesday, 2.00 pm at St Michael's) .

Dates and Themes as follows :

Session 1 : Temptation : Thurs 6th and Tues 11th March
Session 2 : Betrayal : Thurs 13th and Tues 18th March
Session 3 : Forgiveness : Thurs 20th and Tues 25th March
Session 4 : Ridicule : Thurs 27th March and Tues 1st April
Session 5 : Sacrifice : Thurs 3rd and Tues 8th April
Session 6 : Transformation : Thurs 10th and Tues 15th Apr

For further details contact Christine Todd : 01208 816043
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More information also available at www.ctbi.org.uk/len
All are welcome to join us. Each session is stand-alone, so even if you can attend only some of them, please do come along.

An Orthodox Christmas

Christmas Day was soggy. The neighbours had been flooded. One of the Narthex rugs was soaked but the little rural church of The Archangel Michael and St. Piran at Laity Moor was filled to celebrate The Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The international congregation included peaceful forty-day-old baby Anastasia Elizabeth Kviatkevic.

The Blessing of Water is various and may include homes, businesses, schools, and in many parishes takes place regularly throughout the year and when there is a need.

What took place in Falmouth on January 19th was the Outdoor Blessing of Water - which can be lake, river, or sea in this case. It is not peculiar to the Greek or Albanian Churches.

There was no organ, Victorian carols, modern jungles, holly or baubles but an increasing number of candles as the Ikon of the Nativity was revered before lighted tapers were placed adjacently. Although the Eastern Liturgy is theologically similar to that in the Catholic/Anglican Western Church it takes a little time for Western Christians to appreciate its finer points.

The Orthodox emphasizes key aspects with incense and repetitive chanting, quietly and gently, drawing the congregation into the kernel of its theology with the outer shell of noise and packaging stripped away. This has been described as a "*Journey to the Kingdom*" in a work of that title.

The Nativity Liturgy of 2013 was rather longer than usual reflecting the background of the assembly. The Nicene Creed and the Lord's Prayer were spoken in English, Syrian Arabic, Russian, and Greek.

There was a short intermission when the children sat on the floor in front of the priest, while he explained the Ikon of the Nativity of Christ, who was born in a cave and worshipped by local shepherds and Kings while angels sang and Joseph felt a little confused.

Extracts from a letter by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew were read, persecuted Christians in the Middle East and Africa were remembered. But beyond this God's greatest gift to mankind was celebrated with grateful thanks.

Holy Communion for all Baptised Orthodox persons, including children followed before the concluding distribution of blessed bread to everyone. We then gathered in the Narthex for hot drinks with British and Greek Christmas food. Christmas in Orthodoxy is a Christian Religious Festival far removed from tinsel, turkey and tawdry commercialism.

Is that not what it should be?

Primrose Peacock.

JOY, MISSION, CONVERSION, DIVERSITY, POOR, INCLUSIVE,

These are the main words on the cover illustration from a recent copy of *The Tablet*, derived from Pope Francis's latest missive to the church and the world. These are the words he uses to speak of his faith, his hope and his love.

The larger the word, the more it is used and the more it is heard. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, also uses this kind of language and this kind of approach to being Christian in the world at this time. This synergy of spirit is surely God-given and a means of much grace.

This is also the message of Christmas; this is what God's incarnation is like: The "Word" made flesh, Love incarnate looks and feels and sounds like this.

JOY is the most obvious sounding here, and at Christmas we hear the words "Joy to the World" because God's reign of righteousness and justice is coming in, is coming amongst us, is born again in us, and is taking flesh amongst us, nearer than heartbeat, closer than breathing.

And this Word comes to us as we are, where we are, gracing us with an unexpected gift to our souls and lives, even and especially if we don't feel like or think we deserve it. It still comes, with clouds descending.

It has been said that it was by a Joyful Generosity that the church captured Europe in the first place. This is what we are hearing and seeing again in these days, building on the work and the hope of so many who have come before, including previous Popes and Archbishops of Canterbury.

David Moxon

Could you be a Samaritan Listener?

Cornwall Samaritans based at Truro are looking for volunteers to become listeners.

Samaritans offer a 24 hour a day, 365 day a year confidential, non judgemental listening service to anyone who is experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. We do not offer advice, but by giving time, empathy and human contact we help people explore their own options to try to find solutions which are right for them. Each year Truro Branch alone receive over 52,000 contacts.

We ask that volunteers give a minimum of 4 duties a month comprising of 3 x 3 hour day / evening duties and one 4 ½ hour night duty. (The night duty can be discussed if anyone has a medical problem.) Full training is given and travel expenses are available.

Why would you consider volunteering? Here are some quotes from our volunteers ' I have learnt so much about people and life', ' it's the most worthwhile thing I do', ' it makes me realise that my problems are not so great after all', 'Samaritans has changed my life and the way I look at others.'

If you would like to find out more, why not come to one of our Information Evenings.

Contact us on - 01872 277277 (please check that you have been connected to Truro Branch) 01872 262505 (to leave a message)

Email us at trurossamaritans@gmail.com

War tears lives apart

Love can help piece them back together

'The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer... in whom I take refuge.' 2 Samuel 22:2-3

For a growing number of people across the world, the horror of war is a part of daily life.

Right now, fuelled by the devastating violence in both Syria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the numbers of people driven from their homes by war is on the rise.

It stands at 42 million people – an appalling statistic and a stain on the conscience of humanity. We can't turn our backs. We must act now.

The good news is that your church can make a real difference.

Last year, a magnificent 20,000 churches across the country helped raise over £12m for Christian Aid Week.

This Christian Aid Week (11–17 May 2014) we want to go even further. We want every church in Britain and Ireland to get involved – whether by giving, acting or praying.

Together we can send people living in fear this message: you are not alone. We're with you, helping you to rebuild your lives, and working for peace.

Imagine what such an expression of love would mean to people searching for the strength to cope with the devastation of war, and how it could help to drive out their fear.

Demonstrate God's love for those living in poverty and show how much good the church is doing in the world this Christian Aid Week.

Together we can reach the 42 million people caught up in conflict and help them live a life free from fear.

Could your church provide some of these gifts of hope?

£15 could provide blankets for refugee children to protect them from bitter night-time temperatures.

£40 could provide enough good quality and nutritious food for two refugee children for a month.

£150 could help us provide specialist emotional support for a child deeply traumatised by the horror of war that they've witnessed or experienced.

**Be an instrument of God's peace.
Give, act and pray this Christian Aid Week.**

caweek.org

Pulpit exchange organised via Penryn and Falmouth Churches Together.

This year the week of prayer for Christian Unity coincided with the Blessing of the Sea for the Greek Orthodox Community and Epiphany 2 in the Anglican Church. Falmouth hosted all three with the Sea Blessing taking place below the Greenbank Hotel at low tide on a rather soggy foreshore.

It was attended by several Anglicans in addition to Orthodox congregation but had been preceded by a Pulpit Exchange programme organised by The Rev. Colin Biggs of the United Reformed Church.

Apparently this is not an entirely new activity, although not all churches participate

In 2014 Mr Biggs preached at the Salvation Army, while Mrs Biggs visited St. Budock who sent a representative to the Friends Meeting House in Falmouth. A Friend from there visited All Saints Falmouth. The Rev. Charles Blizzard from Emmanuel Baptist Church preached at Falmouth Methodist Church, while Deacon Michelle Legumi from there went to King Charles the Martyr, the parish Church of Falmouth. Fr. Mark Mesley from St. Michael's Penwerris preached at Penryn Methodist Church while Lieut. Mark Godwin from the Salvation Army was at St. Michael's.

The Rev. Celia Phillips from the Methodist Circuit visited New Life (Assemblies of God) with Mr Alex Renfree from that congregation preaching at Falmouth U.R.C. church.

The Rev. Stephen Tudgey of King Charles preached at Emmanuel Baptist Church. Mr Biggs who organised the rota states that the thinking behind it was to "encourage local church leaders out of their comfort zone" It sounds as though he succeeded.

Primrose Peacock.

CHURCHES TOGETHER CULDROSE

The next Chaplaincy walk will be on 26 Feb - 1300hrs, meeting up at the Top House Inn, The Lizard.

The Feb walk will include a visit to the Lizard Lifeboat Station to formally present them with a cheque for £180, raised from a cake sale held on base and hopefully a tour around the Tamar Class vessel.

You or anyone else are welcome to join us.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

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