

Ealing Abbey Parish Magazine



Easter 2006

FROM THE EDITOR

Once again, I would like to thank all those who have written articles for this edition of the magazine. The drawing on the back page is by twelve-year-old Veronique Jasinski who is a regular contributor. This edition also includes a pull-out calendar of events which highlights what is planned in our parish until the end of the year.

I wish you all a happy Easter.

All contributions to the Parish Magazine are welcome. Please send them to "The Editor – Parish Magazine" c/o the Parish Office or by e-mail: parishoffice@ealingabbey.org.uk.

Echoes

by Mary King

For the past few weeks, a large number of us have been gathering in the Abbey hall on Saturday afternoons to participate in the “Echoes” course and I have been asked to write a few words to describe the experience.

I had heard about “Echoes” from previous participants who had felt it had been an enriching experience, so I was interested when I heard the Abbey were going to run the course for a second time. Also, as a parent, I have become ever more conscious in recent years that my ability to articulate and pass on the faith to my children was not as good as I would like it to be. Children have a habit of asking questions about religion that seem simple but are actually very complex and I found the prospect of finding my way around the Catechism of the Catholic Church very daunting. I was, therefore, hopeful that this course would help me in my role as a parent by providing me with a greater understanding of our Catholic faith. I was not disappointed.

The course took place on six Saturday afternoons from 1.30- 5.00pm in the Abbey Hall. The time was spent in prayer, reflection, listening to scripture and a series of talks on aspects of the faith all given by Marianne Cuthbertson, the catechetical co-ordinator for the parish. Many people involved were catechists, some from other parishes, but a number were, like me, simply parents who wanted to be able to understand and share their faith more coherently and articulately with others. The last time I received formal instruction on the faith was as a nine-year-old Confirmation candidate so this was a long overdue lesson and as I discovered there was a lot to catch up on!

The course is called “Echoes” because Catechesis (the process of handing on the faith) is likened to the echoing of the Church's message, which is passed on from the faithful of one generation to the next.

"I handed on to you that which was handed on to me" [1 Corinthians 15:3].

The teaching covered a tremendous amount of ground in just a few weeks - these are some of the areas covered:

The role of the catechist.

The 2nd Vatican Council.

Church teaching documents.

How Christ's life is passed on to us through Scripture and Tradition, interpreted by the Magisterium.

How to use the Catechism [not nearly as forbidding as it looks].

The work of the Trinity in catechesis.

The Catholic story as the history of salvation.

The role of the priest and the participation of the laity.

What is Liturgy?

The Eucharist as the central mystery of the faith.

What role can we play in helping to pass on the faith?

I thoroughly enjoyed the Echoes course and recommend it to anyone who would like to know more about their faith. I go to Mass every week but I sometimes feel distracted by my children. However, these sessions have definitely made the Mass a more meaningful and powerful part of my life and this is the most important benefit I have gained.

In many ways, this course has made me realise how little I know but I do feel a renewed interest in finding out more... ■

PARISH ADULT FORMATION

The Catholic Church recognises that parents have a unique role in being the “principal” and “first” educators of their children. To support and help parents in their task of educating their children in the faith, this year's Parish Adult Formation programme will consist of a six week refresher course on some of the Church's major teachings and end with a day's retreat here at the Abbey.

Further details will appear in the weekly newsletter after Easter.

A little Lectio Divina during the last Season of “At Your Word, Lord”

Poem written by Jennifer Smith

Luke 13: 18-21

We are seed
We are leaven
Invisible
Alive
Nurtured by the very Love of Trinity
 The Power of Life we received at Baptism
Hidden
 Yet active

 So much loved by God Himself

Nothing can stop this Power
 Each and every one of us possesses
 And so often forgets

Recognise it in each other
Love our neighbour
 Love the Christ within him
 Recognise the Life of God within her

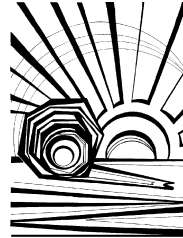
Love God with all your being
 Love and acknowledge the Trinity
 Glowing with life and love within you
Love and receive the Life of Christ in the Eucharist
Love the whole of creation, His Beloved

Blow on the flame
Warm the leaven
Water the earth
 That the seed may grow

And the Kingdom may come.

A POLISH EASTER TRADITION

By Malgorzata Zajackowska



In the Christmas edition of the Parish Magazine, there was a feature about Polish Christmas celebrations. We are now approaching Easter and I would like to tell you about a liturgical custom that is particular to Poland.

The custom that is so special to us Poles is of erecting a ‘Christ’s Tomb’ in our churches where, after the Good Friday service, the

Blessed Sacrament is placed in a prominent position surrounded with flowers and candles. Sometimes, a figure of Christ is laid in the tomb below the raised Monstrance. Usually, these tombs have a topical theme. Often, during Poland’s history of turmoil, they reflected some political meaning.

In Poland, there is a tradition of visiting as many churches as possible during the Easter Vigil and praying quietly, for a while, in all of them. Throughout those two days, the churches are full all the time. Guides and Scouts or other uniformed organisations keep guard and many people spend time praying. If anyone is interested, they are most welcome to join the parishioners of the Polish Church in Ealing for a quiet meditation in front of the Blessed Sacrament, exposed in this special way.

Anyone coming to the Polish Church on Holy Saturday might be surprised to see people with little baskets of food making their way into Windsor Hall, next to the church. This is another Easter custom. Typical Polish Easter food of decorated hard-boiled eggs, bread and sausage is brought to be blessed. ■

The Polish Church in Ealing is on the corner of Uxbridge Road and Windsor Road.

Selling the idea of sin

by Fr James

Introduction:

I have recently, on different occasions, been told by two good friends that the idea of sin is outdated, even dangerous, and that to inflict the idea of sin on a child, a convert to the Church or to continue teaching about sin in the Church is psychologically crippling, even demeaning and certainly unhelpful. They thought that at best the idea and teaching of sin is out of date, if not irrelevant. They told me that the idea of sin should be interpreted and spoken of today as a breakdown of personal relationships between someone and God or between two people. Sin can be social sin or environmental sin, and embrace the structures of inequality and oppression and of environmental degradation and global warming for which no one in particular can be blamed, and for which no-one can make atonement or restitution. I was not however convinced by these arguments and I started wondering about Jesus' teaching on sin, and I remembered that Jesus himself loved sinners. The breakdown of relationships is the result of sin, and is not sin itself!

Perhaps today, we need to admit more than ever that we are all sinners, but "loved sinners", in order that we might have a realistic view of ourselves and our place in the world. In the pericopes in Mark 2, 13-17 we find Jesus calling the social outcast Levi to come and follow him. Later he ate in Levi the sinner's house with his disciples and with tax collectors and sinners. There are several images of sin and sinfulness, and some indeed might cripple with fear, but others can be used in instructing or catechising about sin and they can build up our faith.

Sin as stain

I remember that when I was only two or three, I was one Summer day allowed to play in the garden at home. I remember sitting in the sun and making mud pies, happily mixing earth with water and making a terrible mess. There was mud on my hands, mud on my face, mud on

my clothes. All of a sudden in my blissfully happy state I became aware of my mother, or was it my grandmother watching me. And what did she do?? She smiled, picked me up and took me away into the house for a good bath.

This is a marvellous image of sin. It is the image of plain "dirt". When we sin we need a wash, a wash in the saving love of our God and of his son. One of the titles of Mary is Immaculate, which literally means "without sin".

When we think of forgiveness as washing free from sin, the sacrament of penance becomes approachable and we are not afraid of asking for this saving bath in God's great love for us.

Sin as crime

Often however, when Catholics think of sin, we think of it as a crime, and we know that when we commit a crime a punishment is due. When we have this idea of sin with its eternal punishment, it might prevent us from feeling enthusiastic about approaching the sacrament of penance. Indeed we know that St James writes, "the wages of sin is death!", but as human beings we do also need a bit of encouragement.

Sin as sickness

The Catholic tradition has also spoken of sin as a disease or weakness whose remedy is healing or strengthening nourishment. The tradition speaks of the Eucharist as "medicine of immortality". The celebration of Mass and the fruitful reception of Holy Communion is a way of receiving God's love and forgiveness and his promise of everlasting life.

Sin as missing the mark

In the third century St Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons in southern France wrote about salvation. One of his most well-known sayings is "the glory of God is someone fully alive". It is a wonderful statement reminding us that when we are happy, fulfilled and about the Lord's

business, we become an image of God's presence and glory among his people on earth. Irenaeus also described sin as "missing the mark", whose remedy is simply trying again. He used the image of an archer whose aim in life is not yet perfect. We keep on sinning all through life. We keep missing the mark, but the competition is not over till the end of our lives, so we need the simple advice, "Pick yourself up, brush yourself down and start all over again!!" It isn't the falling down that is serious, it's the getting up each time after we fall down that helps us to keep on trying – trying to love and serve God better, trying to be more loving to others, and allowing ourselves to be loved by the Lord until we are ready to enjoy his presence forever. ■

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Easter Garden

A group of parents and children from the Family Mass have been busy creating an Easter Garden in the Abbey. The theme this year is loosely based on the children's story "The Selfish Giant" by Oscar Wilde, reflecting thaw, spring, compassion and conversion of the spirit.

The garden can be seen in the third alcove on the right as you walk in from the back of the church.



One Man's Story of Surviving the Holocaust: Rudi Oppenheimer

Mr Rudi Oppenheimer, a Holocaust Survivor, recently visited St Benedict's School to give a moving account of his experiences and those of his family. Deputy Headmaster Carlo Ferrari, describes the visit:

In early February, soon after Holocaust Memorial Day, we were delighted to welcome to the School Mr Rudi Oppenheimer who came to talk to the Sixth Form and Upper Fourth History groups. Every Holocaust survivor has a different story. This is certainly true for the story of Rudi Oppenheimer who, with his brother Paul and sister Eve, was fortunate to survive for five years Nazi-controlled Holland, and in the camps of Westerbork and Bergen-Belsen.

Mr Oppenheimer recounted the story of his early life in a moving and humorous manner. He came from a typical middle-class family of assimilated Jews who lived in Berlin. Once Hitler and the Nazis came to power, life became progressively more difficult for his family. His father, a banker, was fortunate to be able to transfer his job and move the family to Amsterdam where he hoped they would be safe. Rudi explained how these were happy days for his family. He told of his experiences as a young boy at school and how his life progressively changed. But the good times only lasted for four years.

In May 1940, the Germans invaded The Netherlands and within five days, the Dutch army surrendered. The Germans occupied the whole country, took over its government and soon started to persecute the Jews who lived there. Anti-Jewish laws were introduced in an insidious, step-by-step fashion designed to restrict the life of all Jewish people in Holland. He was not allowed into public places like parks, zoos, restaurants, hotels, museums, libraries and swimming pools. He had to attend Jewish schools and wear the yellow Star of David. He had to hand in his bicycle and was not allowed on the bus or tram.

Rudi talked about the experiences of his family who were sent for “re-settlement in the East” and were transferred from Amsterdam to Westerbork. From Westerbork there were regular weekly transports to the extermination camps of Auschwitz and Sobibor. Of 100,000 deportees, fewer than one percent survived.

Rudi’s family was rounded up in Amsterdam in June 1943 and sent to Westerbork, but they were exempt from deportation to Auschwitz or Sobibor because their sister, Eve, was British. She had been born in London in 1936 during a six-month spell when the children and their mother were living with an uncle and aunt in London. This fact alone eventually saved their lives. In February 1944, after seven months in Westerbork, Rudi’s family was deported to Bergen-Belsen in Germany. By this time, Paul was 15 years old, Rudi 12 and Eve only 7.

His description of life within the camp was moving. Told from the perspective of a 12-year-old boy, the students could empathise more readily with his experiences. Rudi, Paul and Eve survived and were liberated by the Russians in April 1945. Sadly, their mother died from illness in January 1945, leaving Eve alone in the female camp. Their father died from illness in March 1945. They later discovered that all four grandparents had been gassed on arrival at Auschwitz. After liberation, the children eventually managed to contact their uncle in London and were taken in by his family.

Since retiring after a very successful career as an engineer and computer specialist, Rudi and his brother Paul decided that they would tell their story. Rudi has spoken to 640 groups of young and older people and thus touched the lives of over fifty thousand people. Paul has written a book ‘From Belsen to Buckingham Palace’ in which he describes their lives. ■

More information and a fuller version of their story can be found on the website www.hmd.org.uk/resources/survivorstories/oppenheimer.

Turning Green: Guilt or Awareness ?

by Martha Rumian

Test your reaction on the following facts:

1. By 2025, approximately 70% of people will not have access to water. This is due to uncharacteristically increasing world temperatures, a result of burning fossil fuels.
2. 20 years from now , the world will Feast and Famine: good growing conditions for northern European climes, but crippling droughts for 65 developing countries already at the margins of grain production.
3. Levels of disease are rising as pests and viruses are encouraged to develop by warmer weather - bird flu is a recent example.
4. In the last 10 years, floods and hurricanes have cost the US \$300 million compared to \$75 million in the preceding 10.

What occurs to you?

Lowry landscapes, a famished and gazing people, miles of Andrex puppy loo roll alongside its recycled equivalent ? The recent disaster appeals, the political commitments and backslidings, the species, disappearing, reappearing and disappearing again. In short, the chaos, the conflicting interests, our ever-increasing distancing from a modus vivendi with the earth. Too much has been happening too quickly and our euphoric lifestyles are beginning to glare inconsistently against the backdrop of the real world. And this for some time now.

It’s not a guilt trip we’re being asked to undertake, it’s a reality check. What am I really entitled to as far as resources go? Though our nation seems to be at the forefront of addressing global poverty and trade justice issues, the ecological commitment, the stuff we can do, as individuals, in the here and now, independently of government, is often low priority in our lives. Marches and meetings, self-deprivation, are not necessary: a few extra habits picked up, some wise consumer choices could be the much achieved by the many. - So start with you.

11 things you can do:

1. Change your electricity supplier to a green supplier (eg. Good Energy) which provides energy from wind farms, hydroelectric and solar sources.
2. Insulate your loft and hot water tank.
3. Recycle and buy recycled. Recycle tin cans, plastic bottles, glass, paper, electrical equipment, clothes. Buy replaceable rather than disposable products (eg. water filter, razors).
4. Eat more pulses and vegetarian alternatives to fish and meat. Eat organic, locally produced, animal friendly, fair trade foods.
5. Switch off lights, computers, appliances when not in use ie. switch off from stand-by mode. Invest in a Savaplug for fridges and energy-saving light bulbs.
6. Use electrical appliances efficiently, eg. full loads in washing machines, only as much water in kettle as necessary for drink, natural drying rather than tumble drier.
7. Take with you strong re-useable carrier bags when out shopping rather than taking plastic ones at the till.
8. Avoid flights and car use (CO2 emissions).
9. Don't leave taps running. Have showers instead of baths.
10. Switch to organic gardening methods which do not use chemical weedkillers. Don't water your lawn (except in prolonged drought once a week). Don't buy cut flowers – they are imported from vast distances (CO2 emissions) and heavy on herbicide use.
11. If you take a flight trip, offset your resulting individual CO2 emissions by making a corresponding donation (as per calculation) to a CO2 Offset Programme, eg. Climate Care which will compensate on your behalf by planting a tree, investing in renewables etc.

Be Happy. Turn Green! ■



COUNCIL NEWS

by Ian M. Potts



As I have agreed not to be political in these notes, I won't say anything about the current controversies in the council, like the tram, council tax or extended licences, except to draw your attention to the fact that this is your opportunity to make your views known.

In case anyone hasn't noticed, there is a Council Election on Thursday 4th May and, once again, there are a number of parishioners standing. At the last count, there were eight of us standing for four different political parties and there may well be some more that I have not yet heard of.

Whilst I was Mayor, I drew attention to the large number of parishioners who have served on the Council over the past 40 years the London Borough of Ealing has existed. Depending on how the votes go, there should be at least three after this election. However, to come back to my opening comment, if you want to influence the result you need to go out and vote.

It's my personal view that what we do in the Council has more effect on your day-to-day life than what they get up to at Westminster, so it's even more important to vote in the local elections. In practice, people don't seem to see it this way, which means that those who do vote have a proportionately larger effect - so go on, exercise your democratic rights. ■

(Ian Potts is currently Councillor for Ealing Broadway Ward, which includes the Abbey)

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS:

Baptism

January

Daniel Norris
Isabelle Le Bouedec
Adriana Krickic
Emma Hermans

February

Emily Kemp
Robert Jeffries
David Agyei
Daniel Higgins
Elizabeth Hajian
Christine Hajian
Morgan Goffikin

Marriage

January

Andrzej Kowalczyk and Dorota Wasowska

February

Andrea Taborelli and Karen Matthews

Death

January

John McCusker
Irene Moss-Blundell
Ricky Marcangelo
Michael Costelloe
Dennis Ford
Merle Michalski
Monica Phelan
Antonio Parla

February

Lionel Deghenhard
John Taylor
Norah Chambers
Bryan Fitzgerald



Drawing by Veronique Jasinski (12)