

All Saints Alive

READER'S VIEWPOINT

Spring has sprung! *Janet Bird rejoices*

As I sit and write, the sun is shining, the birds are singing and the temperature outside feels more like Summer than Spring. I've just finished an energetic bout of spring cleaning and I'm feeling quite pleased with myself!

Isn't it annoying how when the sun does come out it shows up just how much dust there is on the furniture and how dirty the windows are? Once you get started on the cleaning you begin to realise just how much clutter you have accumulated over the winter and what started out as a quick tidy and clean becomes an all day job (or if you're like me - even longer!)

It never fails to amaze me just how much paper we accumulate and I often think that I would like to put up a notice asking the postman to stop his deliveries – except that of course then we would miss out on the important letters as well as the rubbish. In the end we just have to make a regular effort to sort out all the papers, re-cycle what we don't need to keep and file away everything that is important.

Having too much clutter makes it difficult to see what is important and this is just as true in our spiritual life. We all have so much to think about that it may be difficult to concentrate on what really matters. We may feel that we need guidance but not know where to find it.

If you want to embark on some spiritual decluttering a good place to start might be to read Chapters 6 and 7 of St Matthew's Gospel. In just a few pages we can read the guidance which Jesus gives to help us with many questions which are just as relevant today as they were in first century Palestine. Despite all that has happened in the 2000

years between then and now human nature is still much the same.

Jesus covers the subjects of prayer, almsgiving, money, anxiety, judging others and building our lives on a firm foundation. He gives us the Golden Rule by which we should live our lives – “do unto others as you would have them do to you.” It is a simple rule but probably most of us find it difficult to follow all the time!

Many of us spend most of our time worrying about something or other - our jobs, our families, housing or money, and sometimes we feel that we are all alone with nobody to talk to. However the Bible can provide most of the answers to the questions which are worrying us and sharing a problem with a friend can often make a tremendous difference.

I'm sure that most of us are worrying about the question of when we will get a new priest. We seem to have been very fortunate so far, and the quality of the worship at All Saints during the vacancy does not seem to have suffered at all thanks to hard work by our Churchwardens and the immense support of so many members of the local clergy including our own Gerry Booker. The services at Easter were particularly uplifting and as usual the church looked absolutely beautiful. However we will all be pleased when we have our own full time priest at the helm.

Nevertheless, sitting back and worrying about what is going to happen won't actually get us anywhere. God knows what we need at All Saints - the right person to lead us both spiritually and pastorally. In His own time He will provide, with a little assistance from the 'powers that be' and

with the support of all our prayers. In the meantime we need to ensure that the spiritual and pastoral life of our church continues to be well supported by us all. As we enjoy the beauty of Spring and rejoice in the rebirth going on all around us may we never lose sight of the sacrifice made by our Lord Jesus Christ who died that we might have everlasting life.

Hertford Art Society

The 55th Annual Open Exhibition will run from May 6th – 19th at the Cowbridge Halls, Cowbridge, Hertford. The Exhibition is open daily from 11am to 9pm and admission is free. There are restricted opening times as follows: Sunday 6th 1pm – 4.30pm, Sunday 13th 11am – 4.30pm, Saturday 19th 10am -1pm

Cowbridge Halls was built in 1891 and was home to the famous 'Celebrity Lectures' until about 25 years ago when it became disused until recent refurbishment.

Working with Courtyard Arts as part of the Bridge Arts Festival, various free recitals and performances have been arranged during the course of the exhibition. Please see posters for full details, or visit www.hertfordartsociety.co.uk

Women's Fellowship

At our meeting in March we had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. Alan Stewart, the Priest-in-Charge at St. Andrew's and Hertingfordbury. He gave us an interesting and thoughtful Lenten Talk on the difficulties of loving those who have hurt us in any way and how to overcome this through prayer. We were left with much to think about.

On Wednesday 23rd May at 2.30 p.m. in the church meeting room Mrs. Greeley will give a talk with slides on her visit to Assisi.

If you have not already paid your subscription (£3.00) please do so at the May meeting.

Mary Geering

Double Trouble...Living with Manic Depression

Pauline Rhodes
(Formerly parish administrator at St Andrew's)
(ISBN 978-0-9529765 -6-1)
Fourem Publications 2007

Offer Price £5.99 (RRP £7.50) exc. p&p
from www.livingwithmanicdepression.com
also from Books@Hoddesdon (£7.50)
Tel. 01992 442290

"Much is written these days about depression. We're bombarded with statistics showing more and more of us are suffering from an illness often blamed on the stress of modern life.

But what is it really like to suffer from Manic Depression?

Pauline Rhodes writes candidly of her personal struggle in a courageous book which will give hope to fellow sufferers and to the family and friends who also have to confront this complex illness.

Pauline's moving account traces her depression back to its roots before chronicling the ups and downs that have shaped her life for nearly 20 years.

A gifted writer and journalist, Pauline offers vivid descriptions of her darkest hours in the depths of despair: *"No one can reach me down there, try as they might. Yet gradually, as I endure the darkness, imperceptibly, it lightens again and I rise to my old level"*

At the same time her reporter's eye for detail lends a gritty realism to the account of her struggle to "stay afloat" through years of depression.

A thread of optimism runs through the story as she writes of the new opportunities her illness has presented to her. This book will strike a chord with anybody touched by Manic Depression."

Stuart Penson