



Prayer Diary

February 2012

“And a sword will pierce your own soul too.” Luke 2:35

Right at the beginning of February we celebrate the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas). Suddenly the scenery of the Church’s year changes. The warmth and glory of the coming of God into the world as the Christ child, captured so wonderfully in the soft golds of Rembrandt’s painting of old Simeon, take on a different hue as Simeon tells the child’s mother that “a sword will pierce her own soul” for her son “will be opposed”. Even now the cross begins to loom. We step more deliberately into its shadow when Lent begins toward the end of the month. Indeed, many of us will receive the sign of the cross on Ash Wednesday when we are invited to walk with Christ along his way, the way that gives life to the world at the cost of his own life.



The days between 2nd (the Presentation) and 22nd (Ash Wednesday) are an in-between sort of time. February often feels like an in-between month: rather nondescript and uneventful. The winter is running out of darkness but spring still seems a while away. “Never make a major decision in February”, I was told by a former Principal of Ridley Hall as I took up the post: “everyone in a Theological College is too tired and jaded for good judgements to be made at that time of year!”.

But February is also the time when the seasons start to turn, when signs of the future begin to dawn. And February forces us to make a decision for Christ. Will we rise to the challenge of following Jesus through Lent again? Will we take on the discipline of discipleship? Will we walk with him on the way to the cross, even though a sword may also pierce our own souls?

+ Christopher

Focus on Rugby Deanery

In each of the remaining months of this year, the Prayer Diary will focus on one of the eleven deaneries in our Diocese. In this February edition we are looking at Rugby Deanery. We’ll be praying for each of the parishes and church schools in the *Cycle of Prayer*, and this is the first of two articles which aim to give a wider context for your prayers.

Rugby Deanery has a population of about 80,000 people. The town of Rugby (located towards the eastern edge of the Deanery) is surrounded twenty five parishes, many of which are rural villages. Their Deanery Share covers the full cost of their own parochial ministers, and it also funds 1.41 parish posts in deaneries that need financial assistance.

The Deanery Lay Chair, Kevin Downham is “very impressed with the way that churches have responded to their Parish Share in recent years. There are now fewer parishes in Rugby Deanery that are not covering the cost of their own ministers.”

Kevin is also pleased with the new initiatives within the Deanery for working with children and young adults (see page 7). However, like several other deaneries, he is concerned about the financial resources that are needed to maintain the large number of buildings within Rugby Deanery.

One approach to this challenge has been the closure of St Matthew’s Church in the centre of Rugby. The heating system at St. Matthew’s broke down over a year ago, but a warm welcome was extended by the congregation of the other parish church of St. Oswald’s. After much prayerful thought the PCC decided they could not justify the very high cost of running two parish churches, together with a new heating system and other major repairs at St. Matthew’s. The parish (known as “m2o”) agreed that the two churches should continue to use the building of St. Oswald’s. This was rededicated by the Bishop of Coventry on 22nd January as “St. Matthew & St. Oswald”.



Martin Saxby - Area Dean and Vicar of m2o

Martin Saxby, the Vicar of m2o (and also the Area Dean) said that this move “has been a challenging and difficult process for people to cope with. Some have been unhappy, but most people recognise it is the best way forward under God.”

Martin is also aware of another big challenge and opportunity facing Rugby Deanery. A large housing estate is to be built on the land that was once the site of the Rugby radio masts. “This new estate will be the equivalent of adding a new parish with about 14,000 residents. The challenge will be resourcing and funding the ministries in this new community.”

Cycle of Prayer - February 2012

Wed 1 Feb

Coventry Refugee & Migrant Centre. Give thanks for the welcome given to refugees and asylum seekers by the CRMC and by many churches. Pray for those who are destitute and for the Hope Fund set up to support them.
Brigid, Abbess of Kildare, c525

Thu 2 Feb

St Andrew, Rugby. Clergy: Mark Beach. Readers: Catherine Evans, Susan Goddard. We pray for God's blessing on this parish and church leaders. We pray for the Diocesan Board of Education Conference. We pray for Margaret Simmons' licensing as Priest-in-Charge, Hillmorton.
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

Fri 3 Feb

St Andrew's Benn C of E Primary. Headteacher: Abi Huggins. Thank God for all of our children, staff and their families. We pray particularly for our children that have lost members of their family in recent weeks.
Anskar, Archbishop of Hamburg, Missionary in Denmark and Sweden, 865.

Sat 4 Feb

St Matthew's Bloxam C of E Primary. Headteacher: Sukie Owers. Thank God for the wonderful new editions to our school community and for the passionate commitment of staff that make such a difference to the lives of those with whom they work.
Gilbert of Sempringham, Founder of the Gilbertine Order, 1189

Sun 5 Feb

*Third Sunday
before Lent*

The Revel C of E Primary. Headteacher: Jill McDonald. Thank God for the unity we experienced in our recent SIAS inspection when the whole team was recognised for their firm commitment to our Christian ethos. We pray for our success in our plans to further improve our provision for those in our care. We pray for the Queen's Accession Jubilee Service, Coventry Cathedral.

Mon 6 Feb

Leamington Hastings C of E Infants. Acting Headteacher: Rose Plumbley. We pray for all the pupils, staff and Governors of this school. We pray for the General Synod meeting. We pray for Archdeacon Ian as he is readmitted to Stanmore hospital.
The Martyrs of Japan, 1597

Tue 7 Feb

We pray for St Bartholomew's C of E Primary Headteacher interviews. We pray for the Incumbent interviews for Allesley Park & Whoberley.

Wed 8 Feb

St Leonard Birdingbury, St Peter Bourton, St Nicholas Frankton & All Saints Stretton on Dunsmore. Clergy: Barbara Clutton. Readers: Elizabeth Kirk, Kevin Downham. Children's Worker: Karen Armbrister. Thank God for all our full churches at our Christmas services. We pray for our outreach plans for children's work and the Alpha Course.

Thu 9 Feb

Brailes C of E Primary. Headteacher: Sarah Plaskell. We pray for all the pupils and staff of this school and give thanks to God for their hard work. We pray for Bishop John in Malaysia for the enthronement of the Archbishop of SE Asia, Bishop Bolly Lapok.

Fri 10 Feb

St John the Baptist, Hillmorton. Clergy: Margaret Simmons. Thank God for the ministry of Andrew Haines and his wife Chris who retired in January. Margaret was licensed as Priest-in-Charge last week, and we pray for the many opportunities ahead.
Scholastica, sister of Benedict, Abbess of Plombariola, c.543

Sat 11 Feb

Knightlow C of E Primary. Headteacher: Jill Vavasour. Thank God for the amazing blessings we received when we shared our wonder of God's world on Reverence Day. We pray for all those in our school and village community who are carrying burdens of sadness and grief at this time.

Sun 12 Feb

*Second Sunday
before Lent*

St George's Church, Rugby. Clergy: John Parker, Hilary Iredale. Readers: Carol Davies, Mike Iredale. Thank God for increased links with the community, and the launch of our youth club. We pray for Messy church starting this month, our elderly with deteriorating health, perseverance and joy in our service. We pray for the Queen's Accession Jubilee Service, St Mary Warwick.

Mon 13 Feb

Dunchurch with Thurlaston. Clergy: Malcolm Garratt, Morris Rodham, Clive Harper, David Charles-Edwards. Readers: Mary Garratt. Thank God for signs of the relevance of our ministry to our community, new friends and church members. We pray for this year's planning cycle and efforts to meet the needs of families and young people.

Tue 14 Feb

We pray for blessings on those getting engaged, entering into the covenant of marriage and the relationships of those already married.
Cyril and Methodius, Missionaries to the Slavs, 869 and 885.
Valentine, Martyr at Rome, c.269

Wed 15 Feb

Tysoe C of E Primary. Headteacher: Sarah Slatter. Thank God for the pupils and staff of this school. We pray for them during this term.
Sigfrid, Bishop, Apostle of Sweden, 1045. *Thomas Bray, priest, Founder of the SPCK and the SPG, 1730*

Thu 16 Feb

m2o Rugby. Clergy: Martin Saxby. Associates: Tim Norman, Alan Cartwright; Curate: Sheila Bridge; Children & Youth Worker: Mel James. Readers: Mervyn Hill, Glenn Lowde, David Long, David Price. Thank God for the service of rededication and for the acquisition of a new Church Centre. We pray for our Lent Programme and how to apply it in our lives and obey it in serving our community.

Fri 17 Feb

Ettington C of E Primary. Deputy Headteacher: Patricia Steward Thank God for all the pupils and staff. We pray that God guides the recruitment process underway for a new Headteacher.
Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda, Martyr, 1977

Sat 18 Feb

St Mark, Bilton. Clergy: Tim Cockell, Joy Sharpe, George Heighton. Reader: Betty Aspinall. Thank God for completion of the new North porch and servery. We pray we can build on the many links we have with people in the community.

Sun 19 Feb

*Next Sunday
before Lent*

St Peter Church Lawford and St Margaret Wolston. Clergy: Kevin Flanagan, Paul Simmonds. Readers: Helen Simmonds, Jayne Hayward, David Gadsby, Jayne Flanagan. We pray for God's blessing over these parishes.

Mon 20 Feb

Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford. Clergy: Paul Wilkinson. Readers: Arthur Webster, Jackie Gare. Thank God for signs of new growth within our churches. We pray for wisdom as the PCC seeks to guide the church forward into new ventures. We pray for the Section 12 meeting for Cheylesmore.

Tue 21 Feb

Bilton C of E Junior. Headteacher: Richard Powell. Thank God for the joys we have experienced over the holidays and for our safe return to school for the start of the new half-term. We pray for Maria Gooch TA, whose brother has terminal cancer.

Wed 22 Feb

Ash Wednesday

St Peter & St John Rugby led by the Rugby Team. Readers: Ann Franklin, Kenneth Timson. We pray for these parishes and for God's help and guidance for the continuing work of the team. We pray for disciples throughout the diocese as they begin the season of Lent.

Thu 23 Feb

Ilmington C of E Primary. Headteacher: Sally Naish. Thank God for the pupils and staff of this school. We pray for a joyful and productive new term. We pray for Bishop Christopher during the BCST and BEST meetings.
Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, Martyr, c.155

Fri 24 Feb

The parishes of Brownsover and Clifton upon Dunsmore, Clergy: Timothy Davis, Diane Bussey. Readers: Peter Kent, Catherine Hammond. We pray for the communities of these parishes and for God's ever present guidance for the church leaders.

Sat 25 Feb

Newbold and Tredington CofE Primary. Headteacher: Carl Upton Thank God for the pupils, staff and Governors of this school. We pray for a productive and joyful new term.

Sun 26 Feb

*First Sunday
of Lent*

Flecknoe, Grandborough, Leamington Hastings and Willoughby. Clergy: Jane Close. Reader: Alec Parker. Thank God for all the new opportunities linking these churches with their local communities. We pray for Bishop Christopher during his retreat.

Mon 27 Feb

Bagington, Bubbenhall and Ryton-on Dunsmore. Clergy: David Wintle, Paul Wignall. Reader: Rosemary King. We pray for God's blessing upon these parishes. We pray for Bishop John during his visit to Warwickshire County Council offices. *George Herbert, Priest, Poet, 1633*

Tue 28 Feb

Brinklow, Harborough Magna, Monks Kirby, Pailton, Stretton under Fosse, Churchover and Willey. Clergy: Robert Ireton. Reader: George Lee. Thank God for his blessing on the Christmas services. We pray that the House-for-Duty appointment will be finalized shortly. We pray for Bishop John during the local Ecumenical Leaders' meeting.

Wed 29 Feb

St Oswald's C of E Primary. Headteacher: Stephen Winter. Thank God for our lovely school and everyone who supports us. We pray for Zoe and ask God to give her the strength and spirit to get back to school as soon as she can.

Rugby is one of our larger deaneries, with 14 benefices and 12 church schools. This means that most of the prayer requests this month have focused on local issues.

Next month's deanery has fewer benefices and schools. There will therefore be more space to pray for national and ecumenical issues.

Rugby's Generation Project



Last July, Rugby Deanery set up an imaginative new project aimed at connecting with young adults in the area. Matt Caldicott was appointed to lead the 'Generation Project' for three days a week. During the remainder of his time he is training to become a Pioneer Minister, and is currently a student on the CMS Pioneer Mission Leadership Training Course. (See <http://pioneer.cms-uk.org> for further details.)



The bandstand in Caldecott Park

Matt is developing the project in several different ways, and one of the most exciting is the team of 'Park Pastors' that he is growing in Caldecott Park ...similar name but spelt differently!

Matt says, "I didn't go into this with any pre-conceived ideas as to what would happen. On my first day I felt that the best place to connect with young adults would be in the park. That snowballed into developing

relationships with people, and the doors have also opened with Rugby Council."

The Council owns a disused cafe near the park's bandstand, and is allowing the Park Pastors to use this as their base. They are also supporting Matt's plans to re-open the Cafe which will be run by a Cafe Manager and a team of willing volunteers. At the moment they are simply trying to connect with local people. For example, as Matt explains, "We met a couple this morning who just wandered in, and we talked to them about the project, and one of them volunteered to help with the Cafe. They have no faith background, but are very happy to get involved."

Matt is particularly keen to connect with young dads, and having three young children himself, it is a group of people he closely identifies with. Matt says, "I want to get alongside some guys and support them in family life."

The Park Pastors are just one of the projects that Matt is developing under the umbrella of the Generation Project. His aim is to gather a "missional community" who have a heart to reach those who don't engage with the other expressions of church that the town currently offers. It is an opportunity to release people into the mission field of our culture, so that we might re-establish some contact with the "missing generation".

You can contact Matt Caldicott via rugbypioneer@gmail.com

The Diocesan Mission Fund

In the summer of 2009, the Diocesan Synod decided to set aside £350,000 for parishes, benefices and deaneries to use for new forms of mission which are pioneering, sustainable, and have an emphasis on making new Christians and disciples. The aim was to encourage people around the Diocese to initiate mission focused activities, by providing some financial assistance to get projects started. The Fund's priorities are projects which are:

- **Missional**

Funds will be given towards projects and initiatives which aim "to make new Christians and Disciples". These initiatives are expected to introduce Christ in such a way that people may have the opportunity to consider following him.

- **New or Pioneering**

The Fund was created with the hope of expanding the range of mission activity in the Diocese, rather than to fund existing work. It is also hoped that areas and people in the diocese who are not currently in contact with the wider church will be reached. Potential applicants are asked to prayerfully consider imaginative ways of building bridges with local communities, which will make Jesus more accessible to those outside church circles.

- **Sustainable**

Deaneries and benefices are encouraged to submit applications which fund soundly based short-term initiatives. The allocation of funds does not commit any further support, and for longer term projects, a condition of grant approval will be that applicants demonstrate where else they will look for continuation funding. Applicants should also be able to show that the project is supported by both their benefice and their deanery.

The Generation Project (see page 7) is just one example of how the Diocesan Mission Fund is being used to support new initiatives. In future editions of the Prayer Diary, we will be featuring other projects around the Diocese; so please look out for the logo shown opposite.

Please pray for these new initiatives and also think about ways in which the Mission Fund could help new projects in your deanery. Further details, and an application form, can be downloaded from www.coventry.anglican.org/admin/missionfund

