



The Marksman

**The magazine of
St. Mark's Church, Versailles,
and
St. Paul's Church, Chevry.**

HE IS RISEN INDEED!

**Easter 2010
issue**

Welcome

A cynic once said that Easter is a time to count your blessings – before handing them over to the taxman. This issue has nothing to say about taxes, but a lot about blessings at St. Mark's: you'll read contributions from younger members travelling the world or letting their hair down right here in Versailles....and other articles by, shall we say, more sedate writers reflecting on the big questions of the environment, or on How Not to be Perfect.

You will notice some shortcomings in this issue: photos fuzzy, page-setting sloppy, general lack of artistic flair. Surely someone can help your lightly-talented editor to do a better job?

Don't be backward in coming forward

John Penhallow

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Just for starters! Husband (reading newspaper) "It says here men use only 15 000 words per day and women use 30 000"
Wife: "That's because we have to tell men everything twice before they listen to us"
Husband: "What's that, dear?"

A Word from Paul...



Time flies, doesn't it! The last edition of the Marksman was Christmas and now Easter is here. Where has the time gone?! In terms of my own life, my family and I are just arriving at our fifth anniversary of coming to Versailles! In terms of the church's year, we are right now at the centre of everything, the most important moment in this passing of time – what one song calls "The Greatest Day in History". On that first Easter morning, God did the unimaginable, the unrepeatable, the totally miraculous: he raised his Son Jesus from death and thus conquered mankind's most ancient and feared enemy, brought hope out of apparent defeat, shone light into the darkness, and affirmed and validated Jesus as LORD. That is the meaning of the Resurrection..... and it is powerful, when applied.

I recently came across this testimony, passed on by Simon Guillebaud. Theo is from Burundi. At the end of 1993, tens of thousands of Burundians were being murdered on both sides of the tribal divide as genocide kicked in following the assassination of the Hutu President. As a Hutu, Theo had to flee, or otherwise he would be killed by the other tribe, the Tutsi. He walked several hundred miles through the bush into Tanzania.

At one stage he was taken by a blood-crazed gang of Hutus, who insisted he and his five friends killed some Tutsis to prove they were Hutus. Theo was the leader of the Christian Union at school, and the other five looked to him. The choice was basically to kill or be killed. He chose to be killed. He was forced to lie down on the floor, where he prayed a feeble prayer of resignation, and waited for the machete to land on his neck. But suddenly a military helicopter flew overhead and everyone dispersed in different directions, and so Theo and his friends were saved and enabled to continue their journey.

What gives a person the ability to face their own death by choice, rather than do evil to another person? It is surely the knowledge that Jesus is alive and we truly live only in Him. No fear of death because in Jesus we already have eternal life. Powerful stuff!

This is what transformed the world as the early Christians spread the Gospel message of God's love stronger than death and more powerful than evil. It is still the same Good News that transforms people in our modern world which is sadly no less violent than it was in the first century.

You and I have not yet been called to lay aside our lives. I wonder if the reality of the Risen Lord means so much to us that we would..... I am challenged, aren't you?

I wish you a glorious celebration of the Greatest Event in History!

Paul Kenchington

Bricks and Mortar

With planning permission granted on 8th January, we await the start of building work in May (hopefully). Meetings with our architect, Henri Bidot, are currently taking place to put the timetable of works in place. Church members and supporters have been magnificent in raising around 400,000 euros so far. Pray for God's provision very soon of the 200,000€ still needed.

The ultimate target is more than one million euros: 1.1 million in fact – because the Council have committed before God to give away a tithe of our received donations so as to support other building projects. This will help to keep us from being self-focussed and remind us that we really are “Building to Serve Our Community”. The projects we have helped so far are: St.Peter's Chantilly, St.George's Baghdad, Rivers of Life Uganda, Love Uganda, a small local Indian church in Andhra Pradesh, Cry In The Dark (Romanian orphanage) and St.John's Nottingham Theological College. Congregation members are still invited to suggest other appropriate building projects in need of support.

We continue to rely on church members to pass on the news of REACH to family and friends, and so to spread the net as wide as possible, attracting the interest and participation of all those to whom we are connected: we cannot do this alone!

The next part of the spiritual arm of REACH will be the Download Day on April 20th. Bob Payne will speak on: “A Reality Check With Elijah”. 10.00-4.00pm; it will be a time of excellent teaching along with worship, fellowship and the chance for personal ministry. Please tell friends from other churches. **FILL IN A REGISTRATION FORM asap !!**



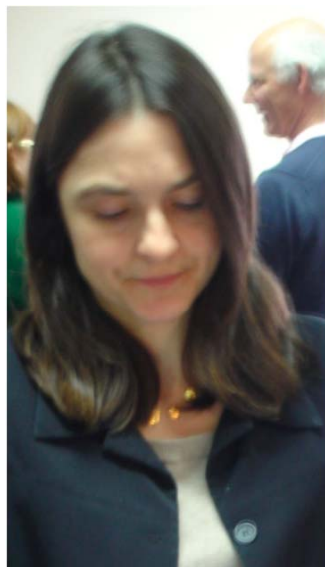
GRACE = **G**enerosity,
Reaching-out, **A**ction & **C**ommitment
Expressed

Paul Kenchington

Photo Opportunity



Future church activists



...and present ones

News from ICS

The 'Race' for St. Peter's and the kindness of strangers

So what do a cycle race, the French monarchy and an Anglican mission have in common? Let me explain: a French aristocrat was in exile in England. In appreciation of the kindness of his host country, he transferred a parcel of land to ICS in 1860 who in turn built a church on the plot of land, for the English and other English-speakers living north of Paris. So the kindness of strangers, an aristocrat's generosity, the vision of ICS and the hand of God laid the foundations for 150 years of Christian ministry that became St. Peter's, Chantilly and is now a thriving international Anglican church.

We doubt that the duc D'Aumale had a bike (or rather *un vélo*) but the current chaplain does... so on 11 May a group of eleven cyclists and a support team of six people will begin a cycling challenge. Chaplain Nick told us of their 'determination to incorporate the history into our celebrations this year. The bike ride begins in Orleans House, Twickenham, the residence of the duc D'Aumale of exile. We cycle on to the Weald of East Sussex before embarking on a ferry at Dover. From there we head for St. Omer, onto Bapaume in the historic region of the Somme. There we will pay our respects to the memory of John Attwood, killed in action on 31 July 1916 and commemorated in a memorial window inside the church. We cycle on through Amiens and on to Beauvais. Then it is home and the finish outside the church.' The 550 km bike ride is also to raise much-needed funds for the restoration of the interior of St. Peter's, so if you could sponsor the race or make a donation to help give a new lease of life to this historic building and symbol of Anglo-French *entente cordiale*, just go to the ICS web site where you will find donation forms, sponsorship forms and the facility to donate on line for the 'Chantilly - St. Peter's – building project'. Or just call Maggie at ICS with your credit or debit card to hand. The itinerary is:

May 11 Twickenham - Epsom - Wadhurst

May 12 Wadhurst - Dover - St. Omer

May 13 St. Omer - Bapuame

May 14 Bapaume - Corbie - Amiens - Beauvais

May 15 Beauvais - Chantilly Chaplaincy

For more information see April's *ICS News* (copies available in church).

Who's there? (Easter Poem)

What came first.....Easter ? or the egg?
Crucifixion ?.....or daffodils?
Three days in a tomb ?.....or four days in Paris?
(returning Bank Holiday Monday).

When is a door.....not a door?
When it is rolled away.
When is a body.....not a body?
When it is risen.

Question.
Why was it the Saviour rode on the cross?
Answer
To get us to the other side.

Behold I stand.
Behold I stand and what?
Behold I stand at the door and.....

Knock knock.

Steve Turner

Living in a Boat

We are living in a boat, nudging the shores of time. It is an ark with a multiple decked fore-castle of stone and a fore-deck of gravel with protective railings and gate, a screening hedge and a wide stone access gantry. There is a larger, walled and grassed rear deck which even has trees. Our boat (yes, it is now almost ours), is docked in neat array between its neighbours, lined up on one of the many crisscrossing jetties in a medium sized marina. Our little green launch is sometimes tethered opposite in a public space, sometimes brought in to its own private berth onboard. There is a main shipping route close by called the N-something. This feeds in to all the major transport lanes linking the mega-ports, the well-to-do leisure and even the struggling, backward docks, through a vast network of bituminous canals which only the launches use. There are some small ones like ours and some very big ones which people use even to move their wares and we all have to be very careful not to bump into each other, even though this traffic is highly regulated.

Like an ark, we batten down at night because it can be unsafe in port at night and you do not know the strangers that pass by, sometimes swaying on the boards. But during the day, when I go out onto the lattice of jetties that make up this marina, I like to look at everyone in the eye and greet them if they look my way and even if they don't! That is the way of sea-folk is it not? Is it because we are all voyagers in one way or another and far from home, in one way or another? It is strange, but few return my smile. Today one man standing fidgeting beside a launch caught my eye, gathered him-self, or so it seemed and looked on expectantly. I therefore asked him if we knew each other and he said "yes". "Where from?" I questioned, his face appearing vaguely familiar. He named a hospital I had never been to but where he apparently thought we had both been patients. "Sorry, no", I said "but maybe we have exchanged greetings before as we passed each other by!" He looked a bit hesitant and having mentioned a hospital, I suddenly thought, he looked a little fragile too. "Are you ok?" I asked. "Yes", he replied without inviting any continuation and so I wished him a good day, which he returned, and I strode on toward our boat. A quick witted launch thief, a cynic might surmise, but more probably just one lonely person paddling through the sea of life looking for familiar landmarks.

Some people never forget faces. I remember structures or types, of faces I mean, but often mix people up if they have striking features of a similar nature. Maybe they have a common ancestor some way back. Perhaps it is something tribal but forgotten. We all do, going back to the ark!

We have met a number of our friends by engaging in conversation in the open, in the market for example and boarded each other's boats after a while. Not the chummy, "ho! Ho! Drop down for a drink", for the one night stop-over, but the considered, planned and looked forward to meeting of souls hoping thereby to strengthen the chains of their lives' anchors. Contacts to embellish the deck strings of lights never last, but are eventually brought down when they no longer serve, but true friendships last over the sea of time even if the gaps between the boats are large.

We are floating on a sea of time. Sometimes it's sunny, sometimes it rains, sometimes it's warm or hot or cold and even snowing, but the sea is there around, below and the sky is above and also around. When the bulkhead is closed we are alone, seemingly safe but we still feel its effects. The boat does not sway or rock and I know that the day it does, it will break, but maybe the sea of time will have claimed me before then.

Usually the sea laps steadily along the shore of our lives, happily or monotonously, encouragingly or just eroding, often depending on how we ourselves perceive and respond to it. The sea is salt and that salt brings savour to the one who would but taste and appreciate what it brings, does it not? But the sea also shakes us. Sometimes harshly, tossing and overturning, jerking and throwing, snapping and tearing away every attempted grasp at stability, for we cannot control or contain it. Sometimes it is very gentle, soothing, calming, comforting, healing, mending. Like all good sea-farers we must remain attentive and hearken to the forecasts and warnings and be best prepared for all conditions so as not to be dismayed by the sudden surge. We really do need to know the sea-farer's guide and keep referring back to it all the time.

We are usually two on board now, both being captain and crew and have lots to do to keep the boat ship-shape. Sometimes this pre-occupies us far too much and we are distracted and not attentive to what is going on around us. Sometimes we focus on the fact that we are in a boat and long for a permanent and distant shore that is a definite home, yet that is for the end of the journey. Stability and purpose can come adrift at sea, especially in the doldrums. However, we are no longer in sailing ships but have power at hand and an unfailing guide to navigate. One is to be engaged, the other consulted and both to be fully trusted.

Next to us is moored an elderly couple. Next on to them, in an large old square boat with a zinc roof, live a catholic priest, being the "curé" for the marina and his curate, the "vicaire". It is an active sort of parish. Behind them lives one of the elderly couple's sons with his family. Our elderly neighbour is a self-made man. He is not pompous nor seemingly arrogant but intelligent and down-to-earth and atheistic. As a young scientific researcher, he met a direct need, developed a

practical solution, marketed his invention and established and grew a solid business with a local production unit, at one time employing over twenty people. The sea of time rocked along gently until his son took over, but he continues to go in to the factory every working day, pulling out in his expensive launch promptly at 8 AM despite being well over eighty years old. One day there came cheap, foreign and poorer quality imports, costs cuts by his customers, loss of business, a financial and then an economic crisis, the sea raced from choppy to heavy swell. They sold the business, a wise move probably and for the time being the son still manages it as an employee of the new owner. The father has had to relinquish control over the treasure he had built up. Now the sea is nagging, lapping endlessly, frustratingly, at a bright but under-occupied brain in an aging and slowly deteriorating shell. It is a loss of familiar landmarks, a life unmoving yet slowly drifting on the sea of time, waiting almost longingly for its end, yet oblivious to what that actually implies. Does the sea have an end? He is too intelligent to be a flat-earther, but like so many he behaves and believes just like one! Everything stops at the boundary, that's it, there's nothing beyond but oblivion! This is a comfortable notion in some respects, as it absolves one from having to ultimately account for all the navigational errors and willing breaches of the established code. It is understandably a common wish. How do I know all this? It is because we stop and talk, often he in his launch and I standing by on the jetty. We occasionally board each other's boats for a drink or a meal. We have discussed many things in fact, but talking of the only real Anchor at once frustrates yet seems to fascinate him. It is a stay for people who are somehow lacking, he suspects, yet he has now lost his own and is drifting dangerously closer to the edge.

David Logan

IN MEMORIAM – GEOFFREY HAYDOCK

Geoffrey Haydock was an active member of Saint Mark's for a quarter of a century, from 1969 to 1994. Several times secretary and treasurer, his quietly-spoken opinions and good humour helped steer this church through many difficulties. He died at his home in England on 14th January of this year, at the age of 84. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all his family and particularly to his wife Audrey and to his daughters.

“Children’s Church”

St. Marks, Versailles currently has a children’s programme ranging in age from 0-11 with our older children being part of our Youth programme.

We have 4 Sunday school classes which are grouped according to age:

Sparklers 3-5 years

Comets 5-7 years

Ex-stream Girls 7-11 years

Extremely boys 7-11 years

Each class has 2 teachers and 2 helpers who work on a rota system and our teachers are currently using the Scripture Union resource as their main teaching aid.

Our crèche caters for babies 0 - 3 years, and we will be implementing a short programme for our 2-3 year olds which will allow them to have fun learning simple biblical truths.

We average approx. 30-40 children each week in our Sunday School programme and our classes are held every 1st, 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month with the 3rd Sunday being dedicated to our family service called “On Your Marks.”(OYM)

We are in the process however of making some changes which we are very excited about!

Our idea is to start a “children’s church” concept where all our children/youth will meet together every 1st and 4th Sunday of the month for their own unique service of singing, praying, learning scripture and of course having fun!

Our aim is to encourage our children to learn more about Jesus and how they can enter into and develop a personal relationship with Him.

We aim to have everything set up and ready for starting the new term in September.

We want to encourage our children to learn scripture, be able to use their Bible and feel confident to ask their friends to come to Church, so our new awards system will be based on offering points for each of these areas as well as for attendance. These points can then be redeemed at our “prize table” which will be available every other month at our OYM service.

We are also looking into the AWANA programme as another alternative to our current teaching material.

We look forward to the year ahead and ask God to help and guide us as we “train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it” Proverbs 22:6.

Hilary McCullough

Not to be served, but to serve

OK, so serving coffee on Sundays isn't exactly glamorous, especially when the previous users of the kitchen haven't had time to clear away. But have you thought of all the other unglamorous ways in which a whole load of people are helping St Mark's to run smoothly?



Do you know who checks that the Communion packs behind each chair are complete?

Do you know who cleans the Church and all the offices?

Do you know who cuts the grass?...empties the dustbins...

...etc, etc...

Have you thought what you can do?



Benvenuto!

Welcome to my church...

In August 2009 I left home for the first time, headed to the southernmost region of Italy : Calabria. This region is does not only have some of the most beautiful natural landscapes around and some of the best food, but is also the poorest and most heavily Mafia-affected region of Italy. It has a strong catholic heritage, Catholicism which, in



Calabria, often goes hand in hand with superstition. A little daunted by the idea of going to one of the many impressive Catholic churches near to where I was staying, it was suggested that I look up an evangelical church nearby, in the hope that it would feel closer to home.

I walk into Bethel – la Chiesa Evangelica Bethel di Cosenza – to be greeted by the sight of a tiled floor, two levels of seating, and a few stares. The service was good, the speaker especially (and I was surprised to understand most of what he said), and many of the songs were translations of some of my favorite worships songs. Other than knowing no one in the church, I felt at ease.

This was to change at the end of the service – the songs ended, I put on my best “I’m new, lost and know no one” face, and waited to be greeted by those around me. No luck. Not a single person did any more than greet me with a “Pace” (“peace”, a common Italian Christian greeting). Shy and lost as I was I eventually decided to head over to a group of young people, and in hesitant Italian explained that I was new. The guy I spoke to was lovely – but had to leave about 5 minutes later, and failed to introduce me to anyone else. Discouraged, I left, hoping for better luck the following week.

The silence continued for three weeks – even a woman sitting next to me who I had passed a tissue to during the service left at the end without even a thank you. My faith in the Church as a body began to flounder...surely these people were my family in Christ too? And yet to me, family means welcome and warmth. I gave up on Bethel, and opted for a local Catholic church instead. Maybe I would have more luck there.

The fourth week I went to Bethel was during my parents’ short stay in Italy. I had decided that I would show them this church I had been going to, but that it was, in short, the church’s last chance. I couldn’t face voluntarily putting myself through three hours of ignored loneliness every Sunday for any longer.

And so, half way through the service in an Italian church in which I had lost faith, an elderly couple stood up at the pulpit...and started speaking English! It was an

answer to prayer. As we rushed over to speak to them at the end of the service, we learned that though they lived in Dundee, Scotland, their 24-year-old daughter was recently married to an Italian man, and attended this church on a regular basis. Ellie, as their daughter was called, greeted me with a hug (the first I had received in weeks) and the promise that she would introduce me to the rest of the young people in the church. One of these was Joy, a Scottish friend of hers who spoke very little Italian and who was feeling a little lost amid the Italian chatter, a feeling I knew too well.

And that Sunday – and those that followed, till December when I left Italy to head home – were joyful. Loneliness was replaced with a busy social schedule and smiles all around. Joy and I met frequently and became very close, sharing our experiences in this Calabrian world which in some respects was so far from our own.

I felt like God had stretched me as far as he could, and, just as I had more or less given up, showed His glory by showing me grace in a miraculous way.

So next time you see a face you don't recognize in church... go up and have a chat. Who knows? You may be their answer to prayer.

Laura Simmons

Laura is now preparing to leave for Romania to work and pray at orphanages run by Cry in the Dark, one of the charities which St Marks supports in its tithed giving.

*****OOOO*****

CONGRATULATIONS!

Paul and Clare are delighted to announce the engagement of their second son Robin to Louise Wellman. She is a primary school teacher in Somerset so she already lives close to Robin's base in RNAS Yeovilton, he is a Lynx Helicopter



Observer (aka "Technical Controller") with the Royal Navy. The wedding will be next spring near to her home.

In January Clare spent a week in Louise's school with one of her students from Versailles so was able to work alongside her as well as enjoying spending the evenings together and getting to know each other well. Being a mother in law seems rather like getting the

prize for being the person nobody wants to be with, but with a lovely girl like Louise it doesn't seem too awful a role to take on!

Rivers of Life

I think that everyone is now aware that I am off to Uganda on the Saturday before Easter. Feeling both excited and apprehensive, I am trusting God with my adventure out there. Being out of my comfort, being way out of my comfort zone is, to be honest, quite a scary prospect. I am, however, looking forward to being there! It has always been my dream to go to Africa, ever since I was a little girl. My heart would always dance when I heard about Africa and break when more atrocities and tragedies occurred. I am convinced that God has put Africa on my heart and I can't wait to find out why!



River Of Life is a growing church in Masaka, Uganda, passionate about spreading the good news of Jesus Christ and caring for the poor and vulnerable. They provide a home for orphans and vulnerable children, support the sick, elderly and infirm and are committed to loving our community in prayer and action. I don't think that there is anything they don't do! White Eagle is what I will be most involved in consisting of two homes; a boys home and a girls home. I will be spending lots of time with the girls, all of whom are orphans and most with quite harrowing stories. One of the girls, Robina is doing A levels at the moment, one of them is French, apparently she cannot wait to be able to speak lots of French with me. A clue that I am in the right place! A story that touches me particularly is the story of a little girl called Mercy. She was found in a pan in the street with arms the size of your little finger. Look at your little finger and you will begin to understand a little of the state that she was in. Terrible would be an understatement. The night before Emily, the director of White Eagle, had a dream that they would find a child. She was therefore taken into the girl's home; she is beautiful healthy girl and needless to say, I am very excited about seeing her. God's grace is so abundant, it is exciting and strangely enough heartbreaking to see it at work, in a good way, of course. What amazes me the most, what humbles and breaks my heart the most is the gorgeous smiles on these kid's face, I think we have a lot to learn from them!

What I am most looking forward to is actually one that entails quite a big responsibility! River of Life has asked me to start an early years learning centre with an orphanage called 'Nazareth'. My experience with the Maternelles 1 will be invaluable and I am hugely encouraged to see that I will be able to use everything I have



learned this year. God is definitely showing me that I am going to the right place. Challenges, I am sure, will arise but I know that God will be present and has prepared the ground for my arrival. That said, I would appreciate prayer. I am sure I have the tools I need but I am also sure I will need to acquire new ones. The opportunity to form real relationships is a very exciting prospect and I might have to buy a very big suitcase to bring all the children home with me!



On our way to church, on my last Sunday, Kingdom Come New Wine Live Worship was playing- a family favorite at the moment. We were listening to a version of All Who Are Thirsty (Come Lord Jesus Come) in an African style with African voices. It must now be one of my favorite ways of playing that song! Mum said that she wanted to me 'come back singing African songs.' You may have already guessed but I

was crying by this time before even starting the church service, I had no chance of keeping to together! As I think about those words spoken by my mum, I do begin hope that I will come back singing African songs. I hope my heart will sing of Uganda and of those children always. I don't for one minute think that this will be my only trip there, at all. My heart, I am sure, will be broken and changed for God's glory. I cannot wait to see how I grow and become the woman that God has planned me to be, I am convinced that this is part of the process, and it is a beautiful, excited, terrifying one at that! From ashes to beauty!

Thank you everyone for your love and prayers and support and see you when I get back.

Anna Thorley

Some thoughts from your Environmental Officer

BLACKOUTS CAN BE POSITIVE ! In the Philippines, where I come from, we would regularly have black outs (or brown outs : which didn't last as long). There was nothing to be done aside from waiting them out. I remember the sense of peace these respites from electricity would bring. One simply accepted them and did one's best without electricity.

In France where we very rarely have black/brown outs, I rediscovered this « trêve électrique » recently with the one-hour international lights-off for global warming on the 27th of March. My kids agreed to turn off all the lights between 20h30 & 21h30 (amazing, since they're quite stuck on their videos game & TV). We dined by candlelight (nice) and read the Bible together afterwards. The peace was there and was even felt by my kids (the candles made them sleepy !). Which just goes to show how irritating all that electromagnetic pollution is. The worst thing is, we're not even aware of it.

So I think I'll suggest from time to time that we have a quiet evening at home. A bonus: I discovered that candlelight makes teens more inclined to bare their hearts !

A suggestion for the homegroups : why not have your devotions by candlelight from time to time ? I'm convinced that electromagnetic pollution is one more thing that can come between us and God ! And you'll be doing something for the environment at the same time !

AN IDEA FROM METTLE

Here's a good idea from the teen Bible-reading notes Mettle of 22 March 2010 :

« Author and speaker, Shane Claiborne, of the Simple Way Community, has found a positive way of offsetting his carbon footprint when he has to travel for a speaking engagement. He asks the members of the church where he'll be speaking to go without oil for one day in the week leading up to it. By the church members giving up their cars and biking or car-sharing for one day, the carbon dioxide Shane produces in travelling becomes no more than would usually have been produced

that week. »

What if we did this at St. Mark's ? I'm not sure that the last sentence is necessarily completely true, but we would be doing our best ! Why not offer to pick up another church member who lives on your way to church this week ?

Aurea Laranang (formerly Tiberghien)

WHY I THINK ECOLOGY AND CHRISTIANITY GO HAND-IN-HAND

Just before her fatal accident in April 2007, I emailed my good friend Avril Machu to invite her to an event linking environmentalists and Christians. I was quite sure about her convictions about the environment (Avril was president of Terre & Environnement, a local ecological association), but not quite sure if her rare visits to our church were only out of a sense of tradition. She was the only one I knew (at the time) who came closest to allying the two.

She never got the email because of her bike accident. She died the month after.

Since then it has become more obvious to me that Christianity and ecology necessarily go hand-in-hand. How can Christians, who profess to love God, not love and care for His creation ? This means doing as ecologists do: polluting less (this can touch every single area of our lives, from using our cars as little as possible to choosing non-toxic products in our homes), eating foods non-contaminated by pesticides and which are grown close by and in season, re-using and repairing objects instead of using them once and throwing them away. This also means refusing genetically-modified foods, which amount to tampering with God's creation.

On the other hand, ecology without God leads to the dead end of worshipping the creation instead of the Creator, which boils down to a disguised form of humanism.

Aurea Laranang

Op Stephen....and other ecumenical happenings



Op Stephen, for those who don't know, is a Saturday morning breakfast for what are euphemistically called « personnes en difficultés ». It was founded back in 2002 by Paul Simmons, and fills a gap in the array of other voluntary services in Versailles – including SOS Accueil which St Marks supports financially.



Op Stephen is also a chance for some inter-church fellowship with volunteers from St. Michel, Versailles, and the Eglise des Nazaréens.

There was more fellowship with French-speaking Christians at St Marks in January when we hosted the annual service to mark the Week of Christian Unity. The worship was preceded by a buffet for the clergy, where Roman Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox and Anglicans all enjoyed Clare and Paul's hospitality, and one (or more?) glasses of wine, in perfect harmony. *O si sic omnes !*

I feel sad tonight

I feel sad because a young man lashed out at me when I reminded him that the time he was spending playing on the computer was proportional to the growing incapacity of the polar bears to hunt for food in order to survive... I feel sad because this young man (for whom I care a lot) like so many people doesn't seem to see the connection between his actions and the devastation of God's earth.

I feel sad when I see all these people who have lost their jobs or risk doing so forget that their greatest help can be found in God. They will fall into the trap of fear because they have no relationship with the one true God. They have come to believe the lie that man is the centre of the world and that they can be self-sufficient. I feel bad for these people, some of whom I know personally and care a lot about. I feel powerless to help them because they will not listen to me. I want to tell them : the gift is there, waiting for you to accept it. The burden is not for you to bear alone. I want to tell them : If only you knew, you are never alone, even when the human being closest to you has deserted you, because God will always be there beside you. He always has been ; you have simply not noticed. Of course you've rejected religion. You have gotten hung up on the many mistakes of an all too-human church, when all God wants is a one-to-one relationship with you.

I feel sad because so many people seem to take life as principally a means of distraction and forget the essential : eternity. Their two options are working too hard or having fun, both seemingly designed to « make time pass more quickly ». To what end? Too many people forget to ask themselves this question in their quest for « a good life ». Or perhaps they do ask it subconsciously, and it niggles at them though they can't quite put their finger on it, because they don't know of the possibility of a living relationship with God. Thus the overdependence on drugs (legal and otherwise), on video games and other pastimes. It's all such a waste.

I feel glad, though, because I as a Christian can make a difference. With the help of the Holy Spirit, I can witness to these people. There is a lot to be done !

Aurea Laranang (formerly Tiberghien)

Hedgefund Managers...

The Hedgefund Managers gave a concert at St Mark's to raise funds for the REACH building project on Friday 26 March. The concert was well attended both by people from St Mark's and people from outside the church, and a total of 800 euros was raised for the building project. They put on an excellent show and the evening was greatly enjoyed by old and young alike.



The Hedgefund Managers formed in 2007, and the band consists of Nick Kenchington (lead vocals & bass), Arthur Sangouard (lead guitar), Tom Galley (guitar) and Jean Caminade (drums). Their style is a mixture of blues, jazz, funk and rock music. They say they are very bad at practicing together but love improvising and messing with actual songs, giving them a twist of their own.

They play cover versions mostly of 70's rock music, as well as some newer songs and some of their own compositions. Sadly, their last concert is probably going to be in July, as three of the members will be leaving for university in the autumn.



Questioned by the Marksman, Arthur (above left) assures us his girlfriend's name is not Delilah. Nick (right) denies borrowing his father's Old School Tie.

Short story – The (almost) Perfect Wife

'Try jogging', remarked our daughter walking uninvited into the bathroom as I prepared to depth charge into the foam.

'Why?' I enquired, peering from under the frill of my plastic bathhat, one bunioned foot arrested in flight.

She didn't reply. But her expression spoke volumes.

'You look like a cottage loaf,' she tossed over her shoulder. And walked out.

I lowered my mountain of flesh into the bubbles.

'Why do I have to be perfect?' I muttered. 'SHE expects me to be a cross between Brigitte Bardot and that crank who memorised the Bible in fifteen minutes.'

I down periscoped and submerged.

'There's something pathetic about a woman who doesn't want to look her age,' I gurgled, warm suds swishing around my spare tyre. 'No-one's allowed to be mediocre any more.'

And I relaxed.

Climbing into my housecoat, with the stomach button missing, I waddled into the box-room and rummaged through a suitcase marked 'Church Jumble Sale'. A discarded girdle labelled « English Rose » surfaced. I held it up in disbelief. The last time I'd seen anything THAT narrow it had been full of glue. But the cottage loaf remarked rankled so panting and wheezing I squirmed and squeezed till I resembled a peony. But the distribution of fat was merely different. Thanks to English rose my tum had risen a few feet and I looked like a pouter pigeon.

Our daughter reappeared and examined my new shape.

'Here's a book,' she announced condescendingly. 'You're approaching that dangerous age. Better read chapter five.'

Chapter five had a page of questions. But I was stumped at number one.

'How many times have you done this since your honeymoon?' it enquired.

We hadn't had a honeymoon. So I decided I was disqualified. But I was curious to know what other couples hadn't done so I read on.

'When did you last lean over the back of your husband's chair, tickle his ear and whisper "pussikins".'

I never had. If I tried he'd be sure to reach up, scratch my nose and whisper back "Fido". Everyone says the dog is the most important person in his life.

'How long is it since you crept away for an evening together, had dinner by candlelight and whispered sweet nothings.'

I thought back. Must have been during the great freeze. We had a puncture on the way to the restaurant. A power cut halfway through the pud. and

spent most of the evening arguing whose fault it was the dustbin hadn't been put out the night before.

Maybe number three would be more helpful.

But it wasn't.

'What did you say when your husband brought you that ring with a ruby the size of an egg as a surprise present?'

Nothing. He never had. The only surprise present he'd ever brought was a suction plunger to unblock the sink.

Still, not to be defeated I decided to try question four. With my finger jammed on its helpful hint I dropped my voice several octaves and went all throaty.

'Daaaaaarling,' I contraltoed down the phone.

'What's the matter with you?' my husband cut in. 'Got a sore throat? You sound awful.'

And he switched me to "hold". So I hung up.

'Meet him at the door wearing baby doll pyjamas,' advised number five.

'No you don't,' my inner voice hissed. 'Not with YOUR knees.'

I paused, not wanting to give up too easily. Perhaps it meant dressing up. But we'd never cared for fancy dress in our family since I sent our youngest to a Sunday School party wearing a brown paper bag over his head and he almost suffocated because I'd forgotten to cut a hole for his nose. He was supposed to be a tombstone. But he nearly ended up a corpse. And we'd gone off fancy dress ever since.

I sighed, caught a glimpse of my silhouette in the mirror and breathed in deeply, making myself concave.

'Your abdomen's sagging,' said our daughter, reappearing. 'Pull your tummy in.'

I threw the book at her.

'I was only trying to help,' she replied huffily. 'Still, if you don't mind Daddy getting restless in middle age and turning to fresher fields.....'

I resented being compared to a field and was about to say so when our Adonis appeared. I watched the top of his bald head as he climbed the stairs.

'Don't forget,' hissed my self-appointed Samaritan, 'there are millions of lonely women out there and they're ALL looking for a husband.'

I went to meet Casanova.

'Darling,' I cooed throatily, conscious that our offspring was hovering in the wings. 'Do you know you're the most wonderful, exciting, adorable man.....'

He looked up. His eyes were watering. His nose was red. And he was sniffing.

'Got any beechams powders,' snuffled the answer to millions of lonely women. 'Think I'm starting a cold.'

His offspring was wafting round me like a revolving door, gesticulating wildly and mouthing "now's the time" without explaining for what. Taking another deep

breath I tripped over his briefcase and fell flat on my face. From this appealing position I made one last ditch attempt.

'Sweetheart', I cooed, watching him turn the bathroom into a disaster area in his search for drugs. 'Everyone says how lucky I am to have you.'

'Whose everybody,' he snuffled, adding as an afterthought. 'What are you doing on the floor? Looking for a pin?'

I was stumped. But refused to give up.

'The book says if women treated their husbands better they wouldn't wander.'

He sneezed again, pounced on a bottle from amongst the rubble and began to gargle.

'Where am I supposed to be going?'

He spat and took another gulp of disinfectant.

This was about as romantic as the Vapour Rub he was now smearing all over his chest. I studied his shape. He looked like an inverted pear.

I decided we weren't demonstrative people. The Brownies Handbook was more my line of literature than 'The Perfect Wife'.

A smell of burning wafted across from the bedroom.

'What', spluttered our hero, rushing back into the bathroom and plunging flames into the bath I'd forgotten to empty, 'was my thermogene vest doing wrapped around the light bulb?'

His daughter had the grace to look embarrassed.

'We're creating an atmosphere,' she answered lamely.

'What for?' he croaked. 'A documentary on the Great Fire? Somebody open the window, if there's any more atmosphere in here I'll pass out.'

The bedsprings creaked as he lowered himself onto them and disappeared, coughing and spluttering, beneath the sheets.

'Did you say there are millions of lonely women looking for a husband?' I grated picking up his shoes, socks, tie, shirt and pants.

My counsellor opened and closed her mouth several times like an air-locked goldfish, too overcome by this picture of middle-aged bliss to reply.

'Why?' I yelled, my voice lost in the attempt to compete with the rise and fall of our hero's snores.

Noreen Riols.

Have you ever seen the Matterhorn?

One of the best views of Switzerland's most famous mountain is a village called Zermatt, high in the Alps. When you arrive at the railway station, all you can see is the steep sides of the valley. As you walk to the other end of the village, suddenly the Matterhorn pops into sight, majestically prominent above the skyline.

But the view of the Matterhorn is not the only remarkable feature of Zermatt. It also has an 'English Church' – St. Peter's – built by ICS, which opened for public worship in 1870. There ICS has ministered to Britons on their grand tours, early alpinists, members of the Alpine Clubs, day visitors touring Switzerland on rail tours, snowboarders, skiers, walkers, English-speaking residents and resort workers. St. Peter's is also a memorial chapel, marking the lives of those who died in Zermatt skiing or climbing, for example. It is a place of great tranquillity, where those awestruck by the scenery can give thanks to God and those needing quiet can pray, those needing counsel, encouragement or wanting the good news of Jesus Christ can do so in conversation with or at services led, by the volunteer chaplains provided by ICS. Countless people have found faith, or been helped in their walk with God, through ICS's ministry in Zermatt.

To mark its 140th anniversary, we are holding two services:

Monday 10 June 2010 at 2 pm, St. Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham, UK
following ICS's AGM and annual supporters' meeting (from 11.30 am)

Sunday 11 July 2010 at 10 am, St. Peter's Church, Zermatt

If you would like to attend either, or know someone who goes to Zermatt and who would appreciate an invitation, call Jeannette at ICS for the Zermatt anniversary leaflet on 01926 – 438 720 (international +44 1926 – 438 720) or ajskuse@ics-uk.org or download it from our website www.ics-uk.org

Hearing Aid

"Anyone with needs to be prayed over, come forward, to the front at the altar," the Preacher says.

Leroy gets in line, and when it's his turn, the preacher asks: "Leroy, what do you want me to pray about for you."

Leroy replies: "Preacher, I need you to pray for my hearing." The preacher puts one finger in Leroy's ear, and he places the other hand on top of Leroy's head and prays and prays and prays, and prays for Leroy.

After a few minutes, the Preacher removes his hands, stands back and asks, "Leroy, how is your hearing now?"

Leroy says, "I don't know, Reverend, it ain't til next Wednesday!"

Looking Forward (Dates for your Diary)



an international church to the west of Paris

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Apr 10	Uganda Prayer Meeting
Apr 10-11	Slum Survivor
Apr 14-17	Archdeaconry Synod
Apr 20	DOWNLOAD DAY with Bob Payne; 10.00-4.00
May 15	Ladies Prayer Breakfast 7.30am
May 21-24	Pentecost Weekend away at Houlgate
June 4	Prayer Gathering for KTD
June 5	KINGDOM TRAINING DAY: Charlie Cleverly
June 19	Family Sports Day for Fathers Day weekend.
June 28- July 2	ICS Conference in UK
July 2-23	Uganda Mission: STEPPING OUT IN UGANDA
July 24-30	New Wine Summer Conference
Sep 4	Men's Prayer Breakfast 8.30am
Sep 18	Rentrée BBQ
Oct 8	Prayer Gathering for KTD
Oct 9	KINGDOM TRAINING DAY: John Hughes
Nov 20	Ladies Prayer Breakfast 7.30am
Nov 23	DOWNLOAD DAY: Barry Kissell

Houlgate Reminder



Our Speakers for the Weekend will be Mark and Helen Jackson

Mark and Helen currently lead Healing on the Streets at St Aldates in Oxford, as well as the prayer ministry and short term mission trips. Married in 2004, they are excited that the Lord has been releasing them from full time secular work to become more involved in

ministry. Mark was a builder and Helen a teacher until 2008. Helen taught overseas for 14 years and has a passion to see children raised cross-culturally exploit their full potential.

We also look forward to welcoming back Ben and Laura Chase to lead the children's ministry for the weekend.

St Mark's Anglican Church, Versailles
In the Diocese of Europe
founded in 1814

St Mark's is a self-financing chaplaincy working in partnership with:
The Intercontinental Church Society, 1 Athena Drive, Tachbrook Park,
Warwick CV34 6NL United Kingdom

“Our God is able to do abundantly more....”

31 rue du Pont Colbert, 78000 Versailles

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Associate Chaplain St Paul's:	Elaine Labourel	01 69 04 09 91
Administrators:	Christina Galley	01 34 52 28 85
	Kevin Bodsworth	01 30 95 84 49
Youth Worker:	Nathan Lambert	06 88 35 51 97
Children's Programme Coordinator:	Hilary McCullough	01 45 37 28 73
Evangelism Coordinator:	Kevin Bodsworth	01 30 95 84 49
Music Ministry:	Paul Kenchington	01 39 02 79 45
Churchwardens:	Barry Saunders	01 46 23 99 09
	Alan Kendall	01 39 18 62 28
Deputy wardens:	Anne-Marie Laidet, Mike Hudson, H��l��ne Wilkinson	
Lay Assistants:	Buki Kogbe, Gareth Lewis, Clare Kenchington, David Logan, Barry Saunders, William Morris	
Church Council:	John Ferrero, Catherine Fourel, Anne-Charlotte Tassin, Elizabeth Coy, David McCullough, Paul Simmons	
Archdeaconry Synod Representative:	Jim Watkins, Barry Saunders	

Worship:

St Mark's	9.00am	1st Sunday	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.30am	1st Sunday	Morning Worship (CW)
		2nd & 4th Sundays	Holy Communion (CW)
		3rd Sunday	All-Age Family Worship
		5th Sunday	Praise & Prayer
St Paul's Chevry	5.30 pm	1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays	Holy Communion (CW)
		2nd & 4th Sundays	Evening Prayer (CW)

Association Cultuelle D  clar  e (d'apr  s la loi de 1905)

REACH OUT for God and find Him – He is not far from each one of us

Acts 17, v 27

**St Marks Church Versailles
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For more information about St. Mark's, go to

www.stmarksversailles.org