

## OVER TO YOU.....

You may remember a few months ago I spoke about saying 'thank you' – well this month I would like to refer to 'being thanked'.

As many of you know the Bishop of Lincoln retired at the end of January and he came to speak at the annual Conference of Bishop's Visitors (of which I am one!) in Edward King House as has been his wont over the period of time he has been in Office. (I will enlighten you as to the duties of a Bishop's Visitor next month.)

He told us that when he was newly ordained the then Bishop told the ordinands that during their ministry things would not always go to plan and there would be 'down' days. So it would be a good idea to have an 'encouragement file'. This was to put things in such as thank you letters from parishioners, photos or cuttings from happy events etc. to be looked at and remind one that not everything has been difficult or stressful.

As you can imagine we were treated to a potpourri of memories:-

- A photo of attending a Jewish Wedding in the Jews' House where he was invited to give a blessing.
- Meeting members of the Royal family.
- Celebrating 700 years of St. Botolph's church in Boston.
- Pictured with the Archbishop of Canterbury opening the St. Lawrence Academy in Scunthorpe.
- Blessing the 'gritters' during the recent spell of bad weather.
- Wearing silly hats in a crisp factory, flying with the Red Arrows.
- Operating a checkout in Tesco's in his red cassock - hardly any of the customers noticed!

And so the list goes on.....

So maybe we could have, (perhaps some of you already **do** have), a gratitude box for when we receive a thank you etc. (I'm sure we all have photos from happy occasions.) But the greatest thing to remember is that we don't expect to be thanked when we do things to help others but it is nice when we are!!

Have a good month!

Sue W.

## Simon Mayor and Hilary James at Ropery Hall

Across Britain from Shetland to Sark, and across the globe from Vancouver to Singapore, Simon Mayor and Hilary James have brought their special blend of dazzling musicianship.

A diverse array of talents combines to form a hugely entertaining stage show. There can't be many performers who slide easily from a beautifully evocative Irish ballad into a mandolin and guitar version of Handel's "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" and then have the audience singing one of their own notorious comic songs.

Hilary James' singing has received huge acclaim but she's famed too for an unlikely taste in bass instruments while Simon Mayor started out as a guitarist and fiddler, but his current position as one of the world's foremost mandolinists (and composer for the instrument) has led to an ever increasing number of invitations to play and teach at festivals and conventions.

They will be appearing at Ropery Hall on Friday, March 4, with tickets costing £10 in advance. More details can be found on [www.roperhall.co.uk](http://www.roperhall.co.uk)

## Victorian Day 2011 – Sunday July 31

Roll Up! Roll Up! Roll Up! All the fun of a Victorian Fair will be in Barton during the summer holidays thanks to the town's Civic Society.

The themed Victorian Day is taking place on Sunday, July 31, and Wilderspin National School on Queen Street is again the backdrop for the event. Although details are yet to be confirmed it is hoped that attractions such as traditional games, horse and carriage rides and stalls will once again ensure that the Society's Victorian Day will be one to remember.

Any local charities and organisations who would like to take part by either having a stall, dressing up for the day as eminent Victorians or providing games are asked to contact the Civic Society's Liz Bennet on 01652 660380.

**THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

will take place in St. Mary's Church Hall

on

**TUESDAY 15TH MARCH 2011**

commencing with the Eucharist in Church at 7pm

**AGM REPORTS**

Now that the mince pies are a distant memory and in order to distract you from the hot cross buns which appeared in the co-op over a week ago (!) please could those groups who would like to contribute to the AGM Report start sharpening their pencils? If you can send me the reports electronically it would be a great help. My email address is [brown5le@btinternet.com](mailto:brown5le@btinternet.com) If you can't do that a written piece will still be included, but I do need all contributions no later than Sunday 13th February please. Liz.

**Retirement of the Rt. Rev. John Saxbee Bishop of Lincoln.**

Several of us were privileged to attend the Celebration Eucharist to mark the retirement of Bishop John, held at the Cathedral on Saturday 15th January. Seated in the nave one hour before the service, we were able to enjoy the singing of the choristers as they prepared for the service and later be encouraged by the Director of Music to have a go ourselves at singing parts of the Liturgy.

The Bishop's procession gathered at the West Door, the choir sang Bruckner's Locus Iste, a trumpet fanfare preceded the singing of the hymn 'Come Thou Holy Spirit Come' and so the Eucharist began. The congregation joined in the singing of the responses. The choir sang Mozart's Sanctus and Agnes Dei – Vaughan Williams 'Love Bade me Welcome' and Walford Davies 'God be in my Head'. In addition to this traditional music of the Liturgy there was also singing by the children of Ready – Steady – Choir, a contribution from the Diocesan Ladies

Choir and a post communion prayer from the trio U2charist band with Bishop Tim on the guitar.

Perhaps the final words should be the first words spoken by Bishop John at his installation as Bishop :-

'My inclination is towards liberality in belief and practice. I incline towards celebrating diversity rather than regretting it; I incline towards inclusiveness so that all creation comes within the embrace of God's love, and I will seek to neither do nor say anything which will deter anyone from exploring with me the faith and vocation which is theirs as gift from God.'

A truly memorable occasion and a magnificent farewell to Bishop John.  
Ian and Sheila

Flowers were given to the Church at Christmas in loving memory of George and Jessie Holland and Owen Stone.

Donations were also received to buy flowers in loving memory of:-

Lauretta and Stanley Welch  
Amy and Ernest Cook  
Benjamin Watling  
Neil Huteson  
George Stead  
Christiana and Ernest Brumpton

**ST MARY'S TEACHING EVENINGS**

Over the past few months we have benefited from some excellent speakers on a range of subjects. The issues covered so far have included different translations of Old Testament texts, the life of Bishop Edward King, the mission of the Church and a discussion of the Psalms. We have been lucky to have some excellent local expertise in the shape of Viv Rowett whose knowledge of the Old

Testament is always a revelation, and also to attract speakers from further afield such as David Leaning and even our own Bishop David.

On Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February this run of excellent speakers continues as we welcome Revd David McCormick who appropriately enough for the date, will discuss some of the issues of sexuality which concern the church just now. David is the Director of Continuing Ministerial Education and Development for Lincoln Diocese. He is also an outspoken advocate of an inclusive church and has a breadth of knowledge of this subject which should prove both illuminating and stimulating. The evening begins at 7.30 pm. Forget taking your loved one out for dinner - come early to grab a good seat!

### **THE SIGN OF THE CROSS**

In this case, not the liturgical gesture, but the little red cross sported by Fr David, various clergy around the deanery, including Owain at Brigg and Felicity at Ulceby, and more recently by me. If you look closely, you'll see that the crosses bear the legend "SCP" and they are in fact the badge of the Society of Catholic Priests, (presumably I should have one that says "Wannabe" but they haven't got round to making those yet).

The Society is for those members of the clergy – male and female – who identify with Catholic tradition and spirituality and who support the understanding of the Church as fully inclusive. They are not a pressure group and are in full communion with their diocesan bishops. In the light of recent debates about women bishops and so on, it's important that groups like SCP are properly understood. A group calling itself the "Catholic Group" in General Synod recently took out a large spread in the Church Times, claiming to represent the views of Catholic Anglicans. In fact this was very misleading and the group represents the views of *some* Catholic Anglicans but by no means all. SCP represents those clergy who welcome the presence of people of all genders and sexuality within the Catholic tradition and who see that tradition as something within which to grow, rather than take refuge. The Patron of the Society is the Archbishop of Canterbury, who said,

"The Society of Catholic Priests exists because clergy in the Catholic tradition who are happy to affirm recent developments in the life of our church feel the need for common disciplines of prayer and thinking that will help them resist some of the managerial or functional language about ministry that has become popular of late – but without reinventing the old tribalism".

Since our mission statement refers specifically to the "inclusive good news of Jesus Christ", I take membership of the Society to be a privilege and the little red badge as token of that inclusive good news which all of us hope to share with those around us.

*Fr Liz SCP*

### **CHURCH SPRING CLEAN (or "Come scrub with us")**

This ancient Anglican tradition will take place on Tuesday 19th April (Tuesday in Holy Week). We would remind all readers that St Mary's is an inclusive church and therefore welcome duster-wielders regardless of gender, age, marital status.....

### **LINCOLNSHIRE TALE**

Mavis Enderby and Mablethorpe went with Ancaster to Chapel wearing their Great Coates but the weather turned warm so they wished they had worn their SomerCoates.

When they left Chapel waiting outside to Greetham was Old Bolinbroke with his silk Hatton. He walked Witham down to the seashore where they had the Holbeach to themselves. Soon a Rippingale blew up and they beat a hasty retreat making a Halton the way back at the sign of Temple Bruer where several other village worthies were congregated.

Here they decided to have a Little Hale which everyone agreed was Great Hale so as fast as they emptied their glasses the landlord kept Fillingham. Eventually they began to Bicker and Wrangle and it

became very easy to Nettleham. Suddenly someone bawled, “*Any more of your Sausthorpe and I will give you such a Belton that you may Well wish that you had never been Bourne.*”

Now the landlord was afraid that there was Gonerby a rough house so he Nocton the bar and asked them if they Woodall be reasonable and Stow it. He was ridiculed and told that he had got a Swineshead on his shoulders so he let his temper and started Hammeringham.

Before the end of the melee his barrels had started to Leake and most of his bottles and glasses had Binbrook. Many of the participants were Horbling about whilst poor old Aby could only Crowle. It was also quite apparent that, to get them clean, their clothes would require more than a Little Steeping in a good detergent.

Here we will draw the Kirton on this village drama which began so Appleby but whose characters appear to be of Littleworth. Although many of their names were recorded in the Domesday book there is only one of them that could be called Welbourne.

**Message from David Redrobe in response to January’s “Over to you”**

I thought you would like to know that my best friends tell me I am possible descended from the illegitimate son of a Cardinal! Genuine family research shows that I am really descended from a Liverpoolian cloth and dyer's family.

**THANK YOU**

- ❖ For helping to raise about £300 for the BeAttitude project.
- ❖ For the collection at the Carol Service of nearly £160 for **SCORE**
- ❖ For the Christingle collection of £304 – well up on 2009
- ❖ For the donation from the Ladies Group for heating repairs

**THE BISHOP OF GRIMSBY'S LETTER : FEBRUARY 2011**

Since last September, many of us searching the internet will have used a programme called 'Google Instant'. This software displays the results of our queries as we type them and Google claims that it will change the way we use the internet. A bold claim and only time will tell, but the question in my mind is whether, with all this access to knowledge and information, are we actually any the wiser?

Wisdom is about making the best use of what we know and making judgements which lead to good choices. Wisdom is not the opposite of folly, but rather it is the key ingredient to navigating our way through life. Down the ages wisdom has been prized in bringing together what we know, what we understand and what we've experienced of life, to interpret not only what is happening, but how people are reacting and behaving.

Wisdom and the search for wisdom are at the heart of religion and philosophy. In Judaism, wisdom is closely associated with justice and fairness. Across each of the world religions, wisdom is the distinctive human attribute to which we should all aspire. In Christianity wisdom is understood as a gift which gives our knowledge, understanding and experience such a Christ-like quality that the wisdom of the world is seen to be folly.

Such a gift is grounded and renewed in our prayers, our study of the Bible and in the worship through which we celebrate our faith in Jesus Christ. There are no shortcuts to gaining the 'mind of Christ' or the wisdom which comes with it - it only comes through the practice of faith.

In the mighty rush of modern life, with a relentless demand for instant reactions, decisive leadership and immediate replies to emails - wisdom can so easily be squeezed out.

Impressive software and the faster delivery of information will never be a substitute for the wisdom we need to be happy, to live at peace with one another and to cope with all that life throws at us. In St. Paul's

words to the Colossians, we need to “set our minds on the things which are above”, for that is where true wisdom is to be found.

+David Grimsby

### **Bishop makes passionate plea against tuition fee hike and student debt**

Trebling student tuition fees will normalise debt for the young and contradicts Christian teaching, says the (now retired) Anglican Bishop of Lincoln.

The comments from the Rt Rev John Saxbee came during an impassioned debate in the House of Lords over the Government's plans to raise university fees to up to £9,000 a year.

Peers, many of them of 'independent means', approved the moves - but with fierce opposition from former university vice chancellors, noted educationalists, the opposition benches and one senior Liberal Democrat, higher education spokesperson Baroness Sharp.

Bishop Saxbee, who is a patron of the Student Christian Movement, suggested that the Government's attempt to move university teaching from a public good to a private enterprise was morally indefensible and contrary to the teachings of Christ. He declared: “The recent financial crisis shows us that policies based on debt are speculative to say the least. We must ask whether the normalising of debt in this way is morally defensible or socially sustainable. Surely it is for the sake of the common good that the state uses taxpayers' money to fund higher education,” the bishop continued. “It is the mechanism whereby the common purse funds what is for the common good.”

The Christian thinktank Ekklesia and the Student Christian Movement are among those who have argued that the government's current plans threaten the foundations of the public university. Similar concerns have been raised by academics and student bodies across the countries.

Alternatives include tax and spending adjustments within the

government's overall budget and a Business Education Tax (BET) put forward by the University College Union, Compass and the Green Party, among others.

### **Rotary News - ShelterBox on the ground as disaster hits Brazil**

A ShelterBox Response Team (SRT) and representatives from ShelterBox Brazil are in place to deliver aid to hundreds of families after torrential rains triggered floods and massive landslides in the country. Conrado Orsatti, from ShelterBox Brazil, travelled to the affected area as soon as the disaster hit. He says the situation is dire and fears it could become worse. ‘There are about 10,000 displaced people who cannot return to their homes because they're buried,’ he said. ‘Brazil has never before seen a disaster of this proportion. The situation is chaotic, not only for the families who have lost their homes, but the number of dead is expected to exceed 1,500 people.’

The official death toll is now more than 600 people and it is feared hundreds more remain buried under the mudslides. There are five cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro that have been hit the hardest; Petropolis, Teresopolis, Nova Friburgo, São José do Vale do Rio Preto and Sumidouro. SRT members Mark Eccles (UK) and Laura Dale (UK) were working in Colombia delivering aid after flooding but have now arrived in Brazil to step up the relief effort and clear the logistical channels for aid to be delivered.

ShelterBox Head of Operations, John Leach, said: ‘It's clear there's a big need in Brazil and ever since the floods and mudslides hit we've been doing everything we can to help. ShelterBox Brazil were on the scene immediately, we now have a Response Team in the country and more SRT members en route. The next step is ensuring the fast and effective distribution of aid to families in desperate need.’

This is the latest bout of South American floods ShelterBox has responded to with Response Teams still working in Colombia and Panama.

Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb,	9.30 am	Presentation of Christ in the Temple	Said Eucharist (MU Corporate)
	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group ( Trinity chapel)
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W meeting
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>		<b>5 before Lent</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>2.30 pm</b>		<b>Service at The Willows</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Choral Evensong</b>
Mon 7 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	2.00 pm		Worship Group (vicarage)
Tues 8 <sup>th</sup>	1.30 pm		Staff diary meeting (Birchdale)
	7.00 pm		Churches Together
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		Service at Eagle House
	7.15 pm		Ministry Team (vicarage)
Fri 11 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W meeting
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>		<b>4 before Lent</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>4.00 pm</b>		<b>Baptisms</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Evening Worship</b>
	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>for AGM</b>	<b>articles to Liz</b>
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	2.00 pm		Standing Committee (vicarage)
	7.30 pm		Teaching Evening (Hall)
Tues 15 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm		Said Eucharist
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		Mothers' Union
	2.00 pm		Service at Beech House
	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group
Thurs 17 <sup>th</sup>	am		Home Communion
	7.00 pm		Deanery Synod (Barnetby)
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W meeting
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>		<b>3 before Lent</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Family Worship and Baptisms</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>

	Parish	News	Deadline
Mon 21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	am		Home Communion: St. Peter's Court and Victoria House
Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup>	2.30 pm		Communion at The Willows
Wed 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup>	5.00 pm		E1W meeting
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>		<b>2 before Lent</b>	
	<b>8.00 am</b>		<b>Said Eucharist</b>
	<b>9.30 am</b>		<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>		<b>Evensong</b>
Mon 28 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	9.30 am		Deanery Chapter (Barnetby)
	7.00 pm		Eucharist and PCC

**Please note:**

- ❖ David is unavailable Mon 31<sup>st</sup> Jan – Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Feb and Mon 21<sup>st</sup> – Fri 25<sup>th</sup> Feb.
- ❖ Kathy is unavailable Mon 14<sup>th</sup> – Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Feb.
- ❖ Toddler Time now starts at 9.30am on Mondays
- ❖ Open Door has been suspended pending restructuring

**CHRISTIAN AID CAMPAIGN**

Did you know that the World Bank is charged with helping the poor yet its funding huge fossil-fuel power plants that threaten to accelerate climate change and drive the poor even deeper into poverty? As the World Bank reviews its energy strategy, Christian aid is calling for an end to loans for fossil fuels and new investment in a low-carbon energy future that lifts people out of poverty and protects the poor from effects of climate change.

If you want to know more log on [www.christionaid.org.uk/worldbank](http://www.christionaid.org.uk/worldbank) or see Penny for a copy of a letter to send to the Secretary of State.  
Penny



Three pictures from Penny's trip to the Far East.



Some of the choir on the occasion of Alan's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as choirmaster

## FROM THE REGISTERS:

### BAPTISMS:-

Jan 9 Amelie Sofia ATKIN daughter of Amanda Jayne and Craig ATKIN

Jan 16 Sophie May JINKS and Jessica Louise JINKS daughters of Marie Jane and Martin Stuart JINKS

Isabelle Margaret NEWTON daughter of Stacey Louise GARRETT and Matthew NEWTON

Emma Faith PARKIN daughter of Helen FOOTE and Marcus Stanley PARKIN

Harley Lance-Michael STEARMAN son of Kerri Jayne TOYNE and Lee Daniel STEARMAN

MARRIAGES:- None in January

### FUNERALS:-

Nov 22 Marjorie Isobel TAYLOR

Dec 23 Lily WILSON

## MOTHERS' UNION NOTES

On Wednesday January 19<sup>th</sup> at 2pm we held our Annual General Meeting. Sheila welcomed everyone, with a special welcome to our chairman Father David. Apologies were given for those unable to attend. We then held a short service before the business of the day. This consisted of the hymn "Brother, sister let me serve you", a reading from Ephesians 4 verses 1 to 16, read by Brenda Skinner, then prayers from Sheila. The AGM then followed. Father David said how pleasing it was to have a good, healthy, thriving Mothers' Union branch in the parish with a tremendous amount of work done by the members and officers of the branch. Thanks go to everyone. Brenda Skinner read the minutes of the A G M 2010, followed by Sheila giving the leader's report. 2010 had been a very good year with a variety of interesting speakers, Elinor then read out the treasurer's report.

The election of officers and committee followed, Leader Sheila Holt, Secretary Brenda Skinner, Treasurer Elinor Cartwright, Assistant treasurer Joyce Gibson, Banner bearers Mavis Nutbrown, Liz Brown and Edith Hobson, refreshments Janet Petch, sick visitor Val Dukes other committee members Linda Bromfield and Angela Henson. The A.G.M closed at 2.45pm. Refreshments were then served and members volunteered their names for rotas for Reader/vote thanks at monthly meetings, readers at corporate communion, prayer-time leaders, and the altar flowers. Brenda Skinner

Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> 9.30am Corporate Communion Reader Angela Henson

Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 2pm meeting. Speaker Rt. Revd David Tustin. Reader/vote of thanks Viv Rowett

Flower rota Feb 6<sup>th</sup> Sheila Holt; Feb 20<sup>th</sup> Brenda Skinner

## MICHAEL ROBERT IN CONCERT

On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at 7.30pm

At Holy Trinity Church, Barrow upon Humber. DN19 7AA

Join us on the evening of Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February for an amazing time of music and worship with the Michael Robert Band from Oregon in the USA. Michael is on tour in Britain for just over a week, and we are privileged that he has chosen Holy Trinity, Barrow as one of the venues on that tour. Michael Robert is best known for his powerful renditions of the classic hymns 'At the Cross' and 'Crown Him' and has released 4 CD's in the last 2 years. If you want to visit his website [www.michaelrobertmusic.com](http://www.michaelrobertmusic.com) you will be able to hear and see more for yourself.

The concert is free but there will be a collection for Michael's ministry during the evening. There is limited seating in church so it must be allocated it by (free) tickets available from Annette 01469 531613 or Sue 01469 530357.

We anticipate this event will be very popular so please do call us as soon as possible if you would like to come.

## ORDINARIATE TIME?

It's been a funny few weeks for anyone on the catholic end of the C of E, since the papers have been making it clear that everyone on the high side of middle has now sent a forwarding address courtesy of the Vatican, and therefore to be an Anglican now involves having a life size photograph of Nicky Gumbel pinned up on your bedroom wall.

Rumours of the death of the Catholic tradition within the C of E are rather exaggerated: I've spent today at a meeting of a diocesan group for clergy of the Anglican Catholic persuasion where we admitted one new member under 50 (see article elsewhere, I suspect), expect to admit another (even younger) at our next chapter, and probably number about 10% of the active clergy of the diocese — and remember that we clergy are not natural 'joiners'.

But I don't want to spend time on the hiccups and strains of the Ordinariate business. Or, more correctly, I want to think about one implication of it only.

You probably know that the Papal Bull '*Apostolicæ Curæ*' in 1896 pronounced Anglican orders "*absolutely null and utterly void*". Therefore, those clergy who swim the Tiber must accept that they have never presided at a proper Eucharist, have never given a real blessing, and — for me, who have ministered in a hospital, most painful — have never given a valid absolution or the proper *viaticum* to someone on their deathbed.

It's not for me to comment on those who have found it necessary to continue their Christian journey within the RC tradition. But reflecting on the necessity of denying one's ministry leads me to wonder how I would cope with (so to speak) announcing to all those whom I'd absolved, to whom I'd offered blessings *in extremis*, to those to whom I'd given communion as they set off on their great journey that I'd come to the conclusion that I was doing the equivalent of a doll's tea-party, playing at it, not offering the real thing. And that reflecting in turn led me to realise that ministry — in my case, priestly ministry — is not about my own sense of status or whatever — it is about responsibility to the rest of the People of God.

Like I say, those who have taken advantage of *Anglicanorum Coetibus* and departed for Rome cannot have found it an easy decision, and

none of us has the right to judge them. But the difficulties I — and most of the clergy I know — would have in following them are crowned by this sense of a betrayal of those to whom we have ministered over the years. Ministry is not about fulfilment, nor even my own tender conscience, but about the loving, sacrificial service to those ministered to.

For once, February is Ordinary Time (hence the appalling pun on which the article's based). Christmas is behind us and Lent is yet to arrive. In this time of quiet, it's perhaps no bad time for each of us, ordained and lay, to reflect on our calling, and ask whether we offer it in a spirit of service to others or for our own self-fulfilment. For most of us — certainly for me — it'll be a mixed answer, a bit of both. But where does the balance lie? Faced with either betraying those who have trusted us or following our own desires — which way would we jump?

*Fr David*

## BEWARE THE WANDERINGS OF EASTER !

In A full cycle of the dates of the dates of Easter, the very early date of March 23<sup>rd</sup>. happens in slightly less than once a century.

The opposite extreme of April 24<sup>th</sup> happens about one and a half times in a century, or if you prefer that is three times every two centuries.

A statistician could work out the probabilities of these two dates coming within three years of each other, as they do from 2008 to 2011.

But in the 1,000 years from 1755 to 2755, the 3 year jump occurs 9 times out of a possible 12 times!

More information next month.....

D.B.R.

## THE BOOK OF RUTH

The book of Ruth in the Old Testament is a beautiful story with many messages and layers of meaning. If you would like to explore this story in an informal reading group of around 6 sessions, please listen for or look out for details of a first meeting. I'm thinking of afternoon sessions, 2 pm-3.30, beginning in Lent, probably taking place in the church hall. The intention is to read, to enjoy, to ponder. Anyone who is so inclined may also like to produce writing, painting, embroidery etc in response.

Viv Rowett

## ST. MARY'S LADIES' GROUP

We spent an interesting evening looking at the holiday Penny Phillips and Sheila Tilley spent in Vietnam, Bangkok, Cambodia and Thailand (some photos of which you can see on the centre pages).

One of the highlights was the abundance of the God Buddha statues which appeared everywhere. Also offerings of food, flowers were left nearby. It is also the custom to dip locus flower petals in water and sprinkle over one's head for a safe journey. The boys become monks to be assured of an education.

They saw men panning for gold in the Mekong River and travelled down by boat for three days.

Paddy fields were everywhere as rice is a staple dish and is served much stickier than we eat it. It is also laid out to dry to make rice paper. One of the highlights of the 'food' was eating fried cockroaches and tarantulas!! Ugh!!

They watched silk being spun - silk worms are fed every hour to fatten them up. They then spin a cocoon around themselves and they are stopped before they seal up the end so that they can be unravelled and the thread used.

Various modes of transport included motor bikes, rickshaws, ferries and a type of narrow boat. You can see Sheila and Penny on one such boat ride in the photos.

Of course there were memorials and museums for the Vietnam War. There are 200 mass graves, concrete cells in which the prisoners were put - so small they could not move - shades of the German concentration camps - sobering places which had to be visited to help one understand the suffering which went on.

Tunnels were built for the people to hide and live in. They ate early in the morning so that the cooking could not be smelt and blocked up the ventilation/ access holes with American clothes.

Penny and Sheila also visited and walked over the 'Bridge over the River Quai' - just like in the film!! They obviously had an excellent time and were 'treated' to two extra weeks because of the volcanic ash cloud - lucky people!!

Thanks were given to Penny and Sheila by Pauline Chapman.

Sue W.