

## **From the Vicar - May 2025**

I hope you are well and enjoying this season of Easter?

I'm writing this on Palm Sunday, very aware that you will read it in early May when, for many people, Easter will feel well and truly over. The Easter eggs will have been eaten and, perhaps, many will be reflecting on the 80th anniversary of VE Day and celebrating the May Bank Holiday weekend. And I'm sure we'll all be thinking of the world-famous Cuddesdon Fete – more of that later!

It's hard to write a May magazine article, when my heart and mind are very full of Palm Sunday, and of the journey through Holy Week which will follow.

I particularly enjoyed Palm Sunday this year. As I presided at the altar in All Saints, I reflected on what a huge privilege it is to be a priest, and to be the Vicar of Cuddesdon, Garsington and Horspath. My mind wandered back almost 20 years, to the time when I first began to follow Jesus as my Lord and my God, and gradually began to hear, and respond to, his call.

When I first started assisting in the sanctuary, I never imagined that, one day, I would have the pleasure of presiding at the Eucharist – and to do so, now, in Cuddesdon – God's Holy Hill, as my dear former colleague Mark Chapman named it – is a source of great joy.

This morning, I had the privilege of presiding in Cuddesdon and in Horspath; of blessing and distributing palm crosses; and of playing the parts of Peter and of Pilate, as we read a dramatised version of the Passion narrative – detailing the events of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Then, this afternoon, in Storytime Church, around the fire-pit in the Forest Church at College, we again shared the story of Palm Sunday – Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey; crowds waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord." It was lovely to share the story of Palm

Sunday with some of our children and families; to hear a child tell his two favourite Bible stories (Jonah and the whale, and David and Goliath); and to toast marshmallows and hot cross buns on the fire, as we discussed how we would spend Holy Week and Easter.

I wonder if you have a favourite Bible story? Perhaps you could come to Storytime Church to share it with others around the firepit? Our next Storytime Church is on Sunday 11th May at 3pm – the day after the Cuddesdon Fete.

I must learn to stop inviting colleagues to open the Fete! Last year, Mark Chapman and Linda Collins opened the fete ... and left us in September. This year, we invited the Rt Revd Humphrey Southern to open the 2025 Cuddesdon Fete ... and shortly afterwards he announced that he and Emma will be leaving us at the end of the year. I'm sure that you will all join me in wishing Bishop Humphrey and Emma well, and in praying for them, and for the College community and governing body as Humphrey and Emma prepare for a well-earned retirement.

As I am sure many of you are aware, the residential College community is far smaller than in previous years. We are therefore counting on the whole village to make sure that the 2025 world-famous Cuddesdon Fete is a success. Thank you for your ongoing support.

God bless

The Revd Tom