

RECTOR'S PINT

I find that January and February are possibly the hardest months of the year to get through. It is partly the post-Christmas effect. Our 2023 Christmas in all three parishes was remarkably good, and I left our Christmas Day service in Little Milton with a feeling of joy and goodwill. I was then clobbered by the inevitable bug. I was in bed at 9pm on New Year's Eve, and spent New's Year's Day in a haze, having cancelled a meet up with friends. I did not face the New Year filled with great enthusiasm! I had just turned 64 a couple of days earlier, and was feeling every one of those years.

However, I write this following a rare and crisp frosty morning. The first snowdrops are showing and as I walked with Oscar past the windmill, the sun was rising over the Chilterns. To the south are The Clumps and beyond those, the foggy outline of the Downs; ancient Wessex. I was overwhelmed with gratitude, and with a reminder that moments of joy, when they come, need to be welcomed and cherished.

We are already looking forward to Lent. As usual, there will be a weekly reflective service of Compline every Wednesday at 6pm. There will also be a series of Lent Lunches, and in addition, we will be hosting a series of studies every Tuesday looking at St Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. The details are included here, following The Pint. Further details of venues for all the Lent activities will follow once they are known.

On another matter entirely, I have been so struck with how divided things are now. This came to a head for me with the demonstrations around the world relaying to Gaza, and the corresponding rise in antisemitism, not least in London. In December I organised a simple and non-partisan 'vigil for peace' in St Mary's. I hope that for those who did come, they found it helpful. I am grateful to Andrew Meynell for letting me have a prayer he came across some years ago, which comes from St George's Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem. I believe it still has relevance now.

Pray not for Arab
Or Jew,
For Palestinian
Or Israeli,
But pray rather
For ourselves,
That we might not divide them
In our prayers, but keep
Them both together
In our hearts.

Simon

Lent Lunches

Every year we are pleased to host Lent Lunches around the Parishes. These raise much need money to support Christian Aid and they also have the added joy of bringing people together

to share a convivial lunch. We do ask for donations to cover the costs and also to be able to give generously to Christian Aid. Although we are suggesting a donation of £10.00, any donation will be gratefully received.

There will be three Lunches, all beginning at 12.30pm.

- Weds 28th February, hosted by Jane Jefferis at Northland Cottage in Great Milton
- Weds 6th March, hosted by Scilla Greenall and Anne Maloney at Dellafield Cottage in Little Hadley
- Weds 13th March, hosted by Sally Anne Denis and Jane Willis at Spring Cottage Little Milton.

There is no need to book in advance, do come along.

Lent Course 2024 - The Christian Life in a Turbulent World

If you're interested in how much the historic Christian faith has to teach us about how to navigate the complexities of the 21st century, there will also be a five-week Lent course on Tuesday evenings throughout Lent. The first is on 20th February at The Rectory in Great Milton, and the others will be on 27th February and 5th, 12th and 19th March all at 7.30pm. We will be using Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians, one of the earliest Christian writings to provide a framework for our discussions. Everyone is welcome, but it would though be helpful to know who will be coming, so please contact me at: simoncronk@btinternet.com 01844 278349.