

Catechesis is the teaching of the faith and may take place in many different ways and situations. There is much discussion about the best way to transmit the faith and it has long been observed that the faith is not taught but caught. In other words faith is not an academic exercise of committing facts and concepts to memory but a lived reality that speaks to the heart and transforms a person for good, because we believe God is good. The first step of faith is to orient ourselves to God and walk in his ways. How this looks and feels is unique to each person but has many shared characteristics with those also sharing the journey.

I would argue that the dichotomy between teaching and catching is a false one because the reality is that the faith is both taught and caught, it is not either/or but both/and. The human quest for God is a complicated search. People will hopefully see attractive qualities in us that relate to our faith which may then motivate them to ask questions about the faith. Both the heart and mind are instruments in the search and the Church needs to speak to both convincingly about the God they proclaim. Practically at this time in the Church's year if we are talking about the joy of Christ coming into the world we should have a palpable joy in our worship and in the way we celebrate the feast. In this way we become living; breathing Catechists by the way we live our faith. We do not preach ourselves nor put ourselves on a pedestal but try despite our weaknesses to reflect a loving, compassionate God. It is this reflected light that we hope will bring others to faith. An appeal to the searching heart has also to be met with answers for the questioning mind. The Church has in her worship a rich treasury to meet both these needs.

Our worship can be a form of Catechesis, there is an ancient Latin maxim "Lex orandi, lex credendi" which loosely means the way of prayer is the way of faith. Over Advent and Christmas many infrequent worshippers will be coming to Church and some may be returning after a long absence. It is a pleasure that such seasonal pilgrims come and that the Church should strive to be a house of prayer for all people by welcoming all who draw near with faith. It is important that with the stresses and strains at this time of year our worship is infused with joy. Why? Because our hearts and minds should be alive and responsive to the wonderful Christmas message that the Church proclaims a new each year. God loved the world and sent his son to save us, to bring us into a life giving relationship with ourselves, our neighbours and with God. Christ coming into the world is an affirmation by God of his favour and goodness towards us. Christ's ministry and his death reinforce the power of God's favour and goodness. Christmas is a joy because it reminds us of God's great love for humanity despite our manifold sins and wickedness. The words of our liturgy hold these pithy truths before us and our carols resound the joy and wonder of the incarnation.

James

DIARY FOR DECEMBER 2014

- Sun.7th Second Sunday in Advent**
8.00am No Service
9.45am Mattins at Alderley
11.15am Family Service at Birtles (Christingle)
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley
- Thur.11th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
- Sun.14th Third Sunday in Advent**
8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
9.45am Family Service at Alderley
10.30am Holy Communion at Birtles
6.30pm Combined Choral Evensong at St. Mary, Alderley
- Thur.18th 10.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
Sat. 20th 12.30pm Holy Matrimony at Alderley
- Sun. 21st Fourth Sunday in Advent**
8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
9.45am Nine Lessons and Carols at Alderley
11.15am Nativity Play at Birtles
6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols at Alderley
Tues. 23rd 12.30pm Holy Matrimony at Alderley
- Wed. 24th Christmas Eve**
3.00pm Crib Service
10.00pm Midnight Mass at Birtles
11.15pm Midnight Mass at Alderley
- Thur. 25th Christmas Day**
8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley
11.15am Family Carols at Birtles
- Sun. 28th Sunday after Christmas**
8.00am Holy Communion at Alderley
9.45am Holy Communion at Alderley
11.15am Holy Communion at Birtles
6.30pm Evensong at Alderley

(services continued)

Sun.4th January

8.00am	<i>Holy Communion at Birtles</i>
9.45am	<i>Holy Communion at Alderley</i>
11.15am	<i>Family Service at Birtles</i>
6.30pm	<i>Evensong at Alderley</i>

COFFEE is available in the Parish Hall after the 9.45am Service.

At the end of the Morning Service coffee and biscuits are provided by a stalwart group of volunteers in the Parish Hall. Donations will be given to charity.

COLLECTION TOTALS

Week ending	Gift Aid Envelopes	Non-Gift Aid & Misc Cash	Standing Orders	Total
5 TH Oct	555.00	114.53		669.53
12 th Oct	226.00	20.50		246.50
19 th Oct	289.00	38.50		327.50
26 th Oct	238.40	59.65		298.05
TOTAL	1308.40	233.18	725.00	2266.58

2015 DATED ENVELOPES

Boxes will be in church (see magazine rack) from the beginning of December. You may find you have a new number so please DO NOT use any envelopes from your existing box after the end of the year. If there is anyone who hasn't a box and would like one, please let me know – my contact details are in the magazine. Thank you.
Donald Henderson



MOTHERS' UNION



“A Christmas Quiz”

Wednesday 10th December at 2.00pm

ALL ARE WELCOME SO PLEASE DO JOIN US!

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Christmas Coffee morning, Saturday December 6th, 10.00am - 12.30pm.

We are looking forward to as many as possible supporting this, the proceeds help enormously with the Church finances. **The Barnby Choir will be singing in the candlelit church at approx. 10.45am and at approx.11.45am. Following this there will be Wine and Mince pies.** Look forward to seeing you and your friends.

We are planning a lunch outing with the tea party people and anyone who would like to join in on the 28th January, 2015. We are planning to go to the Wilmslow Garden Centre. It is felt there is plenty to look at on a winter's day.

If anybody would like to join us please let me know.

At Christmas we shall be doing wine and mince pies following the Carol Services.

If anybody can offer help it would be great.

In the New Year we plan to hold our usual **Bridge Drive on Mon February 9th.**

It will be at 1.30pm in the hall, Tables will be £26.00. Please support this if you are able. The proceeds will go to the Church funds.

The Coffee following morning service is being well supported now. **Do pop in!**

Any monies raised from this goes to Charity. **Offers of help would be good.**

Please contact me. A Happy Christmas to you all!!!

Janet Adamson Tel: 01625 583320

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP

Saturday 3rd January – 10.00am start prompt

Walk: A ramble around Lymm

Starting Point: Starting point: Car park just off to the right after 50 yards having turned into Crouchley Lane off the A56.

Grid ref: SJ 684 867

Map: Explorer 276 Bolton, Wigan & Warrington

Length:4 miles, easy



Further info: Please note earlier start time due to leader's afternoon commitments. At the end of the walk there is The Church Green Inn just around the corner for those who would like a light lunch before returning home. Contact **Will Ablett (01625 585180)** with any questions

CAROL SINGING

We have arranged our annual Carol Singing for the nights of Tuesday 16th and Monday 22nd December and as usual we will be visiting three or four pre-arranged venues on each of the nights.



Our two charities this year will be 'The Childrens Society' and the N.S.P.C.C and all the proceeds will be split equally. Last year we raised a grand total of £1070 over the two evenings!

Our happy band of 'singers' (all age groups) consists of any members of the Choir, Congregation and any 'Friends' of St.Mary.

Anyone wishing to join us should meet in the Church car park at 6.45pm (prompt). We are usually finished by approximately 10.00pm.

Further details: Jenny Youatt 01625 585226

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer turns 75

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, a stock character in extra-biblical Christmas stories, is younger than you might think. He did not come on the Christmas scene until December 1, 1939 – 75 years ago.

His first appearance was in a children's colouring book written by Robert May and given away by Montgomery Ward stores in the USA. The illustrator had to fight for him because the store owners were worried that the red nose might be associated with drunkenness.

The story of Rudolph is one of triumph over adversity: Rudolph, who was initially scorned by his fellow-reindeers, was chosen by Santa to haul the sleigh because his nose lit the way on a dark night. The story was so appealing that it spawned a hit song, written by Johnny Marks, brother-in-law of Rudolph's creator. Gene Autry's recording of it sold 25 million.

Preachers have found elements of discrimination, epiphany, redemption and mercy in Rudolph's story. Dutch scientists in 2012 found reindeers do have red noses, or at least a dense network of blood vessels which "help to protect them from freezing during sleigh rides and to regulate the temperature of the reindeer's brain – factors essential for flying reindeer pulling a sleigh under extreme temperatures".

NETHER ALDERLEY 200 CLUB

October draw winners

1 st prize	Mrs I Jamieson
2 nd prize	Mr D Mogg
3 rd prize	Mrs J Davis

Congratulations to all the winners

Next draw, 7th December 2014

Oasis

At Christmas it would be wonderful if we could provide each family with a Christmas Treat in the form of some festive biscuits , chocolates or any other Christmas confectionery.

If you could add a small gift to your weekly shop between now and December 5th it would be 'The Icing on the Cake' for these families.

IVY COTTAGE TREE FARM

Racecourse Road , Wilmslow
Tel. 01625 531609

Enjoy the fragrance of a real Christmas Tree
Christmas Shop for trees, decorations etc. is open
from 22nd November

They supply (with a generous discount) the Christmas trees for St.Mary's and donate the Christmas tree greenery for the decoration of the Church for Advent and Christmas.

Please support them, it's a magical experience



Organ Notes

Sponsoring a Pipe Appeal

Notes from the Chester Cathedral make interesting reading in the light of St Mary's Organ Appeal 10 years ago. The Cathedral Organ is as old as St Mary's – about 150 years.

It is described as the Grand Organ and one of the world's finest....but is in desperate need of repair. Events have been organised to raise the sum of £1m by 2019!!! Some of these events are as follows:

Grand Organ Marathon, when 17 enthusiastic organists, including Nigel Ogden, played non-stop for 12 hours.

Grand Organ Experience – special 2 hour tour of the Organ up close and personal at a cost of £300...

Battle of the Organs on 31 January 2015, when Organists will play the Cathedral Organ, two electronic organs, and a chamber organ to fill the Cathedral with sound in a wide-ranging programme of organ classics.

Sponsor a Pipe in which the public can donate from £50 to £1000 for the very small to the largest pipes (5000) and stops (71), for which the Sponsor will receive a Certificate and details of the pipe or stop sponsored.

Grand Organ Supporter which is simply a donation of £25, for a signed Certificate.

This is a quite remarkable project and the supporters of the recent St Mary's Tower and Organ Appeal can feel proud that the end-result at our Church is now thrilling those who visit the Church and hear the Organ played so brilliantly by John Pyatt and other guest organists.



Is you wish to support Chester Cathedral's Organ restoration, contact

Friends of Chester Cathedral on 01244 324756.

Philip E Webb

The Christmas Truce 1914 / 15

On December 7th 1914, Pope Benedict XV suggested a temporary truce for the celebration of Christmas. The warring countries refused to create an official cease-fire, but some of the soldiers had other ideas!

The Berkshire Regiment faced the XIX Corps of the German Army. The XIX's were from Saxony. The Saxons started to put up small conifers on the parapets of their trenches - akin to our Christmas trees. The Berkshires could see many of them lining the tops of the XIX's trenches. Groups of the Berkshires and the Saxons met in No-Mans Land and officers from both sides turned a blind eye to this fraternisation which broke military law.



During the next 24 hours, impromptu cease fires occurred throughout the Western Front. The British High Command - stationed 27 miles behind the trenches - was horrified but little could be done.

Troops on the front line had already got into the festive spirit as German troops had received Christmas trees and gifts and the British troops had received a Christmas gift from Princess Mary, the daughter of George V. The king had also sent a Christmas card to the front with the message "May God protect you and bring you home safe."

On Christmas Eve many sectors along the Western Front did not experience any fire or very little when compared to the previous days in December. Christmas carols were sung between trenches. In the dark of night time, groups of German and Allied soldiers met in No-Man's Land.

Christmas Day itself started with unarmed German and British soldiers collecting their dead from No-Man's Land. This has been a pre-condition for a cease-fire. On Christmas Eve night, when the soldiers from both sides had met, they had done so among the bodies of their fallen comrades. In one burial service, German and British dead were buried alongside each other near Lille. With this task over, both groups of men then exchanged gifts - primarily food. Sauerkraut and sausages came from the Germans while chocolate was given in exchange. In some sectors, it was reported that both Germans and British got together for a communal hunt for hares so that Christmas Day could be celebrated with fresh meat. The regimental records of the 133rd Saxon Regiment also records a football match which they won 3-2.

As midnight on Christmas Day approached, men from both sides drifted back to their trenches. Pre-arranged signals had been decided on to allow the men to get back. The use of a flare was enough to warn men to get back and that the cease fire was over. On Boxing Day, the shooting started again.

The story behind the hymn: O Come, All ye Faithful

Nobody knows who wrote this well-loved Christmas carol. It was originally a Latin Christmas hymn, 'Adeste Fidelis'. It seems to have first 'surfaced' in English due to a John Francis Wade, who lived in the 18th century, and who made his living copying manuscripts and, sometimes, music by hand. Wade was a Roman Catholic, and all services in the church at that time were conducted in Latin, and so he knew the language well.

The story goes that in about 1750 he slipped this hymn into a manuscript he was copying for the English Roman Catholic College in Lisbon, Portugal. 35 years later, in 1785, it turned up in the Portuguese Chapel in London, where it became known as the 'Portuguese Hymn'. From there the hymn appears to have 'travelled' across to the Margaret Chapel in London's West End. Young William Ewart Gladstone, who later became British Prime Minister, greatly appreciated the services at this church. He said that the congregation were "the most devout and happy that I have ever seen." The minister at that time was Frederick Oakley, one of the leaders of the 19th century Oxford Movement, who was later to convert to Roman Catholicism. Oakley believed strongly in the power of religious symbols and fine music, and before he bade farewell to the Margaret Chapel, he introduced this hymn to the congregation. Having started as 'Adeste Fidelis', and been for a while 'The Portuguese Hymn', this hymn soon became known – and loved worldwide – as 'O Come, All Ye Faithful'.

Thank Dickens for Christmas as you know it!

Ever wonder where many of our Christmas traditions come from? A surprising amount can be traced back to the well-loved story of 'A Christmas Carol', by Charles Dickens.

When you read 'A Christmas Carol', you discover almost a template of the 'ideal Christmas' which we still hold dear today. Dickens seems to have selected the best of the Christmas celebrations of his day (he ignored some of the odd excesses) and packaged them in such a way as to give us traditions that we could accommodate and treasure – more than a century later.

So, for instance, in A Christmas Carol, Christmas is a family day, with a family-centred feast. In a home decorated with holly and candles the characters enjoy a roast turkey, followed by Christmas pudding. They give their loved ones presents. Scrooge even gives donations to charity (!). And all the while outside, there is snow and frost, while church bells ring, and carol singers sing, and hope for mulled wine. In 'A Christmas Carol' there is even a Father Christmas – in the shape of Christmas Present. Only the Christmas tree itself came later, when Prince Albert imported 'a pretty German toy' that won the heart of the English court, and hence the rest of Victorian society.

On why Carol Services are so dangerous

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

So: you are excited about being invited to plan your first Carol Service. The dangers involved are only slightly less than being invited to judge the best cake made by the Ladies' Group. You seem to have no idea of the lifelong offence you will inevitably cause. In decades to come when you will either be a seasoned old clergyman – or more likely a double glazing salesman – you will be remembered as “the Curate who offended Mrs Smith.”

First, you have to decide which groups are going to be represented to give the readings. If the Brownies were asked last year, then it has to be the Cubs this time. But don't forget that every third year, the Boys' Brigade must be asked, or they will take their revenge and get their flag tangled in the nave chandelier come Remembrance Sunday. If someone represents the choir, then over a four year period, all four voice parts must be called on – and if the organist isn't asked on the fifth year, then all hymns subsequently will be played at double speed and with one verse missing. Should one person have been invited to read for two successive years, then their annual appearance thereafter will be taken as an inalienable right for the rest of their lifetime – and probably longer than that. To drop them may well invoke legal proceedings,

Then there is the batting order to be considered. Someone from the church council will take it as a deliberate slight if they are placed lower in the order than a representative of the Men's Fellowship and so self-respecting bell ringer would voluntarily follow a brass cleaner.

If you do not specify where they should read from and how the readings should end, then a form of ecclesiastical inflation will happen. If the first reader speaks from the chancel step, the next one will go to the lectern; after the sanctuary and pulpit have been utilised, the final reader will probably ask you to move so he can take your place. The variations on “Here endeth”, “This is the Word of the Lord”, and “Thanks be to God”, are endless and will increase in length as the Service progresses. The final reader will probably end with a lengthy exegesis on what he thinks the passage means, correcting whatever you said in your sermon.

I once made the mistake of not telling all readers which Bible translation to use. One, an Old Testament expert, therefore decided to read in Hebrew. Not to be outdone, another read her Gospel passage in Greek – apologising beforehand that it may not be a perfect rendering, as she was spontaneously translating it from the English. And some say Christians are not competitive.

You have two alternatives: either repeat last year's Service without any alteration, saying that it could not be improved, or design your own – and then take Christmas off. Your loving uncle, Eustace

ROTA FOR DECEMBER 2014
LADY SIDESMEN / SIDESMEN / LECTORS

DATE	TIME	SIDESMEN	LECTOR
7 th	9.45am	Mr J Stephenson & Mr S Welsh	Mrs W Liddle
	6.30pm	Mr P Bean	Mr P Bean
14 th	8.00am	Mrs B Essayan	
	9.45am	Mr A Claridge & Mrs C Stephenson	Sophie Vardon
	6.30pm	Mr A Dodd United Choral Evensong Evensong	Mrs A Dodd
21 st	8.00am	Mr H A Wright	
	9.45am	Mr R Akester & Mrs G Beeley	Nine Lessons
	6.30pm	Mr G Barrie & Mrs A Cobb	Nine Lessons
24 th	3.00pm	Mrs A Robinson & Mrs G Beeley	
	11.15pm	Mr G Woolley & Mrs R Dyas	Mrs F Robinson
25 th	8.00am	Mr R Akester	
	9.45am	Mrs J Adamson & Mrs J Martin	Mrs J Lee
28 th	8.00am	Mr P Bean	
	9.45am	Mr M Stonehewer & Mr J Ratchford	Mrs S-J Wilkinson
	6.30pm	Mr A Dodd	Mrs A Dodd
Jan 4 th	9.45am	Mr G Hilton & Mrs J Martin	Mrs E Jackson
	6.30pm	Mrs A Robinson	Mrs F Robinson

FROM THE REGISTERS

Christenings

Sat. 15th Nov Sebastian James Peel and Oliver Morley Peel

Funerals

Wed. 19th Nov George Naismith Wednesday

FLOWER ROTA

Dec. 7th Advent

Dec. 14th Advent

Dec. 21st Advent

Dec. 28th Advent

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

The deadline for the next magazine is **Thursday 11th December 2014**
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