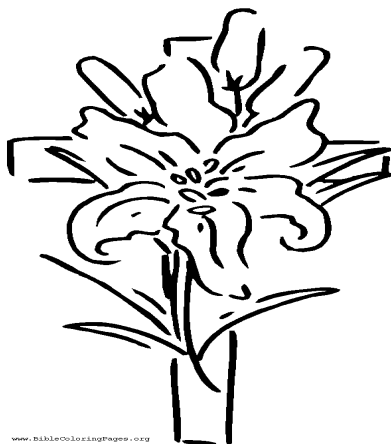


## From the Manse

### Dear Friends,

Lots of schools are finding the early Easter this year an inconvenience. If they take their full holiday at the end of March (which the school on the Islands is doing) it means a really long summer term. Several on the mainland are having a couple of days either side of Easter and then their full holiday later in April. It's almost as if Easter has been postponed.



But, postponing Easter is not an option for Christians. In our songs and hymns week by week we sing about the death and resurrection of Jesus – the central acts of our faith. This ought to be the one festival of the year that all of us should celebrate. It has always puzzled me, therefore, that the service on Good Friday is always so, relatively, poorly attended. If we sing, week by week, that 'Jesus died for me/the world', shouldn't we join together to give thanks to God for the mystery of that event? On Good Friday this year at St. Mary's we will be holding a service at 10.00 a.m., I hope that all of you will come along, or, if you live on one of the off islands, to go along to the service at the Anglican Church where you are.

Beyond the Cross lies the Resurrection. How good it is to celebrate with Christians around the world the new life made possible for all by God's power over death. If you are on St. Mary's, on Easter Day you can come to Buzza Tower at 6.30 a.m. for the dawn service or the all-age celebration at 10.30 a.m. when our cross – made from the Christmas tree – will be decorated and carried into Church. On St. Martin's there will be a service, with Holy Communion, at 3.00 p.m. and also Communion on St. Mary's at 6.30 p.m.

Easter may be early this year, but let us not be late in celebrating all that it means for the world.

Every blessing, David.

**A postscript to David's letter.** I hope that as many of the St. Mary's folk as possible will come along on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> at 10.00 a.m to help clean the Chapel. We plan to do this together once a month or so.

### Lent Lily

This is the wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*). It gets its name from the fact that it blooms in early spring and the flowers are usually dropping before Easter. It used to be very common until about the middle of the nineteenth century when it went into decline. It can still be found in some places, notably the West Country, the Sussex Weald, the Lake District, Farndale in Yorkshire and the Hereford/Gloucestershire border. Here they are particularly profuse and at one time were picked and sent to markets in South Wales for Mothering Sunday and Palm Sunday when traditionally the old custom of 'flowering the graves' occurs.

'Tis spring; come out to ramble  
The hilly brakes around,  
For under thorn and bramble  
About the hollow ground  
The primroses are found.

And there's the windflower chilly  
With all the winds at play,  
And there's the Lenten lily  
That has not long to stay  
And dies on Easter day.

And since till girls go maying  
You find the primrose still,  
And find the windflower playing  
With every wind at will,  
But not the daffodil.

Bring baskets now, and sally  
Upon the Spring's array,  
And bear from hill and valley  
The daffodil away

That dies on Easter day. A.E. Houseman - *The Lent Lily* (From A Shropshire Lad)





## News From St. Martins

There is very little to report from St. Martin's since the February edition of In Touch. However work has started on the Sunday School room and we are looking forward to improved accommodation, once remedial work and decoration are complete. The impetus for improvement of this part of the building, has been the planned exhibition of old photographs, which will be on view from Easter onwards. ( See Chris Hensleigh's note below.)

When Neil Didlick led worship on February 10<sup>th</sup> he was joined by Rose, Lily, Mervyn, Steph and Adele. Mervyn and Rose played, and altogether we learnt two fresh hymns with some vocal help from Rose. Our thanks to them for supporting Neil in this way.

It is good to be able to report that Valerie (Thomas) and Celia (Ashford) are making a steady recovery from their orthopaedic problems. Also, Terry's eyes have improved sufficiently for him and Jackie to be able to take their annual holiday before the season starts.  
Heather

## ST MARTIN'S CHAPEL- LIFE ON AN ISLAND

A photographic exhibition, from Easter onwards, in the Chapel Schoolroom. The members of the chapel have been sorting through photographs of life on St. Martin's: the people, building, events, school, farming, weddings and many more topics.

Refreshments will be available during the Easter period and at various times throughout the summer. There will be something of interest for all.

Please support our effort. **No admission charge but donations appreciated.**

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU.

## Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent and has been celebrated since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is a day for giving thanks for all the things our mothers do for us. It was also known as 'Refreshment Sunday' because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed in honour of the feeding of the five thousand.

About four hundred years ago people who lived in small villages went to their nearest big church or 'mother church' on this day. They were said to have gone 'a-mothering' and it was an opportunity to meet members of their families who they probably hadn't seen for twelve months.

Young girls (and boys) who were in service were often only allowed one day a year to visit their families (usually Mothering Sunday). Often they were allowed to take gifts of food or flowers with them or they would pick wild flowers on their way. The favourite cake to take was Simnel cake which is a fruit cake with two layers of marzipan – one in the middle and one on top. It is decorated with 11 balls of marzipan representing the twelve apostles (Judas is not included). Often sugar violets would also be used for decoration.

I'll to thee a Simnell bring  
'Gainst thou go'st a mothering.  
So that, when she blesseth thee  
Half that blessing thou'lt give to me.  
Robert Herrick (1648)

In some parts of the country the fourth Sunday in Lent is called Simnel Sunday.

Anne Gurr

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## **When Mothering Sunday is a day of pain**

Mothering Sunday can be a very difficult day. Some parents have lost their children to disease or accidents. Other people desperately want children - and can't have any.

Care for the Family offers a Christian internet support service, as well as some practical advice for any of us who know bereaved parents, or grieving would-be parents.

If you know any bereaved parents, and are not sure what to say to them at this time of the year, be open - say 'You must be missing X'- and use the child's name, or say, 'I've been praying for you.'

Don't worry about reminding them of their lost child! They're thinking about their lost one all the time anyway.

Don't 'preach' by quoting Bible verses at bereaved parents. When they feel able to read the Bible, the Holy Spirit will bring verses to their attention in his own way and his own timing.

Don't say trite things about heaven. Only the parents can say 'they are in a better place' - YOU can't.

Don't say 'at least you've got other children'. Children are not replaceable. We are grateful for the others, but we miss the one.

As for couples, who want to conceive, but can't and who find this too painful - well, it's okay NOT to come to church on Mothering Sunday.

There is no special virtue in attending a service that will only make you feel worse. Stay at home, or go out and enjoy yourselves somewhere, instead.

Care for the Family offers internet support at [www.careforthefamily.org.uk/supportnet/](http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/supportnet/)

Some of our articles, like the one above, are from the Parish Pump a website for those editing magazines. We thank them for this service to the Church.

## Pilgrimage

Life is a journey and if it is a journey of faith then it is a pilgrimage.

Steven Runciman wrote in his book *History of the Crusades* that the desire to be a pilgrim is deeply rooted in human nature. To stand where those we reverence once stood, to see the very sites where they were born and toiled and died, gives us a feeling of mystic contact with them and is a practical expression of our homage. If the great men of the world have their shrines to which their admirers come from afar, still more do men flock eagerly to those places where, they believe, the Divine has sanctified the truth.

On the Islands we have our annual pilgrimage to St. Helens and this was always a special time for us when we were visitors. It inspired me that Elid came to these islands and lived simply amongst its inhabitants preaching and teaching the word of God and, reputedly, leading Olaf to faith. If Elid could do that here then there was no reason why I couldn't do the same where I lived.

Another pilgrimage was to the Holy Land as part of a choir arranged by the BBC. This was to record the Daily Service from the places where Jesus lived and worked. It was a great spiritual journey as we had time at all the venues to be quiet and reflect on the life of Jesus, as well as to sing his praise. Many people dismiss the opportunity to visit the Holy Land because they believe that the Holy places will be spoilt by commercialism. It is true that the people of Israel, often the Palestinian Christians, sell their wares but they are often poor because of their faith and have to rely on pilgrims to purchase their goods. However if you want to see the Holy Land and discover its blessings then you will surely do so. I shall never forget my visit to the land of the empty tomb.

Another pilgrimage was to Oberammergau in 1990. It came about because my sister in law Isobel wanted to see it whilst she lived in Germany. She didn't want to go as part of an organised party as she already knew much of the country. So it was decided that we would travel independently. This was easier said than done as she soon discovered that most of the tickets were sold to travel companies already. It was not until April of 2000 that she rang the ticket office in

Oberammagau and to our joy we were provided with tickets to see the play. I flew out to join her and we travelled down for our two night stay - that is all you are allowed to stay in the village – by train. I found the whole journey exciting as we travelled through the valley of the Rhine and then, on a very small train, to the village itself.

The play was electrifying in its beauty, from the tableaux, illustrating scenes from the Old Testament linked to the life of Jesus, to the music. We were deeply moved by the sincerity of the performance and through this Isobel took another step in her search for faith in Christ.

So what makes holy places holy? Surely it is because they have been chosen and used by God in the story of our redemption. There, familiar incidents and stories come to life with fresh significance. But there can be a danger that the pilgrim spends all his time lifting up old stones as if to seek the living among the dead. There needs to be an awareness that the events that have taken place within these sacred places continue to have a reality in our daily lives through the Spirit of the living Christ. Holy stones must be converted into living stones.

### **Pilgrimage to Oberammagau**

An opportunity for you to see the Passion Play in 2010 is available through John Prestage (Gwen's brother) who is booking seats through Saga. If you are interested then please phone him immediately. His number is 01474 822 088 or by email [janda.prestage@virgin.net](mailto:janda.prestage@virgin.net) It is probable that it will take place in June. John and his wife Ann are organising this in association with Geddes Place U.R.C.

Please pray for all who visit that they will be inspired and find faith through this event.

Mary Ratcliffe

## Thoughts on the cross

### He showed them his hands and his side

If we have never sought, we seek Thee now;  
Thine eyes burn through the dark our only stars;  
We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow,  
We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.

The heavens frighten us; they are too calm;  
In all the universe we have no place.  
Our wounds are hurting us, where is Thy balm?  
Lord Jesus by Thy Scars, we claim Thy grace.

If when the doors are shut, Thou drawest near,  
Only reveal Thine hands, that side of Thine;  
We know today what wounds are, have no fear,  
Show us Thy Scars, we know the countersign.

The other gods were strong: but Thou wast weak:  
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne'  
But to our wounds only God's wounds can speak,  
And not a god has wounds but Thou alone.

*Edward Shillito (1872 - 1948)*

The face of Jesus must be very near our own when the thorns from his crown of suffering are pressing our brow and hurting us. *Anon*

Of all the things that will surprise us in the Resurrection morning, this I believe, will surprise us most: that we did not love Christ more before we died. *J C Ryle*

The cross is the centre of the world's history. The incarnation of Christ and the crucifixion of our Lord are the pivot round which all the events of the ages revolve. - *Alexander MacLaren*

The crosses we bear are not supposed to be heavy enough to crush us, but they are heavy enough to bend our knees.



The cross is the resting place for sin, the tomb for self and the throne for our fears.  
*Harold St John*

Christianity is a religion about a cross.  
*Leon Morris*

**Your love covers the multitude of my sins.** So when I am fully aware of my sin... then you are the only person to whom I can escape. If I try to cover myself against the guilt of sin and the wrath of heaven, I will be driven to madness and despair. But if I rely on you to cover my sins, I shall find peace and joy. You suffered and died on the cross to shelter us from our guilt, and take upon yourself the wrath that we deserve. Let me rest under you, and may you transform me into your likeness.  
*Sore Kierkegaard*

### **NCH Action for Children**

We have received an appreciative letter from NCH thanking us for the cheque our treasurer Len, sent them recently. It was for no less than £993.70! What a challenge to make it £1000 this year!

The total was made up as follows:-

£512.23 Carol Service;	£138.82 Christmas Day Service,
£297.60 Coffee Mornings;	£19.05 Personal Collecting Boxes; £36.00
Sale of Books.	

So, if you have contributed in any way to this support, money largely collected in Autumn 2007, very many thanks. We rely on you to keep up the good work for NCH, the Methodist charity, in this current year 2008.

The letter reminds us of the valuable work the organisation carries out for children and young people in this country.

*"Originally founded to house and care for homeless children on the streets of London 130 years ago, NCH has developed the range of its services to meet the changing needs of children over the years. The charity now runs nearly 500 projects in Britain, helping more than 178,000 children, young people and their families."*

Gwen Clarkson NCH Representative

## **Joint Churches Action Group-** report held over from last month.

An amazing £825 has been sent to WATERAID thanks to the generosity of many people. This event was organised by the Group.

At the last meeting on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January it was proposed to invite Marion Bennett to talk about the Esther Benjamin Charity after Easter. Plans were also made for the Lent Lunches which were planned to begin on Ash Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February. The first three being held in the Church Hall and the following three in the Methodist Hall.

More details about the Esther Benjamin Trust next month.

## **Lent Lunches For Christian Aid**

The lunches have been well attended so far, if you haven't been to one yet there is still time to do so, on Wednesday March 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>

## **St Mary's Choral Society**

The choir will be singing in the Parish Church on Good Friday at 8.00pm a Requiem by John Rutter and a setting of the Benedicite by Ralph Vaughan - Williams. This follows many rehearsals ably led by Len Michell.

O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord: praise him, and magnify him for ever.



If you are unable to come on Good Friday, there will be a second performance later in the Spring. (NOT on Easter Monday.)

## Daily Prayer List

A new daily prayer list is available, this time including members of St. Martin's. Len Michell tells me that on the day he and Sylvia are remembered he thanks God and prays for all of you. I think this is an idea worth passing on. Thank you Len. You will note that previously we have named some of our regular visitors, please don't forget to pray for them. Their special day is on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Mary

## Alpha

It has been a great encouragement to us all to attend this course as essential preparation for the future. On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February we had a contemporary service in the morning ably led by Neil with a talk by Geoffrey Thorpe who was with us for a month last year. His theme was "There's more" This was followed by lunch at Sage House. The afternoon was led by Geoffrey leading us in a discussion about the Holy Spirit following a video presentation by Nicky Gumbell, assuring us that there are far more blessings that God is waiting to give us through His Holy Spirit

-  
gifts which will bring blessing to each of us, and to the fellowship.

Our thanks to Sabine, for making us welcome and feeding us so well, and also to Stephanie for suggesting this venue. We thank Geoffrey and Mary for their ministry amongst us. May God bless them always.

## Thoughts on Evangelism

I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls for Christ. *David Brainerd.*

If we would win some we must be winsome. *Anon*

A crowd is not an achievement, only an opportunity. *W E Sangster*

## Going for Gold

Saja is 22 years old and lives in Kobar, a small village north of Ramallah. One of ten children, she grew up in very poor conditions and like many disabled people in the Middle East, she was neglected by society. Four years ago her life began to change as she started to attend Star Mountain Centre, an overseas partner of BibleLands.

It was here that Saja discovered she was particularly gifted at athletics. She was selected as one of only 16 sports men and women to represent Palestine at the Special Olympics in Shanghai in October 2007.

She competed against around 7,000 athletes from 167 countries in this worldwide event. The principle behind these Olympics is not so much to win, but to participate, network and share abilities on the basis of equality, inclusion and tolerance which can then be taken back to each athlete's home country.

What started a dream for Saja became a reality when she won the 200-metres event and received a gold medal! Saja is now the pride of the Star Mountain Centre, her family and the whole village community. She is now at the centre of local news and a whole number of celebrations.

The Star Mountain Centre was set up in 1985 and serves around 25 local children, aged 5 - 15 years. The Vocational Training Centre offers up to 16 young adults with special needs the chance to learn practical skills. Among the villages surrounding Ramallah, the Centre serves a population of about 20, 000 and helps disabled people to be integral and fully respected members of their community.

Saja's story is a powerful example of how the lives of many young people have been transformed by the Star Mountain Centre. The Star Mountain Centre is supported by BibleLands across Israel and the Occupied Territories, Egypt and Lebanon. To find out how you can support BibleLands visit [www.biblelands.org.uk](http://www.biblelands.org.uk) or phone 01494 897950.

## Slide shows

These will be happening once again on Monday and Friday evenings throughout the summer. Now that we have a multi-media presentation it is without the hazards of slides being shown upside down, or in reverse, but we still have a need for willing helpers to make the evenings possible. Two people are needed on each evening. June arranges the rota and I know she needs more help to maintain this. This coming summer the rota will lose two of its helpers, so that makes the need for new volunteers even more necessary. I can say that it has been a great joy to meet and share the beauties of the Islands with our visitors, a joy that you too can share, if you feel that you cannot speak you can always sit at the receipt of custom !

**Please phone June today (422404)**

## Leap Year Dinner

By the time you read this we shall have enjoyed a special day at St. Mary's Hall raising funds for our charities, Eldoret and Shelter Box.

We thank the events committee for arranging this. The next event will be a film night on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March.

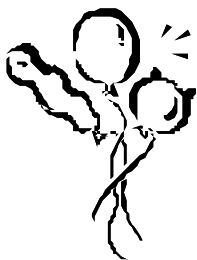


### Nathan's Diary

It was a great joy for William and Tricia when two days before Christmas Nathan walked in!, They were just expecting to speak to him on SKYPE- some internet gizmo. He returned to Singapore 3 weeks later where two of his best friends joined him for his 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday. Another friend Sebastian is now travelling with him for, God willing, another 7 months. Nathan will by now have flown to Bali, and hopefully learnt to surf 40 foot waves. He is enjoying reading Christian books, among them some by Billy Graham's daughter Anne Graham Lotz, as he seeks God's will for his

future life.

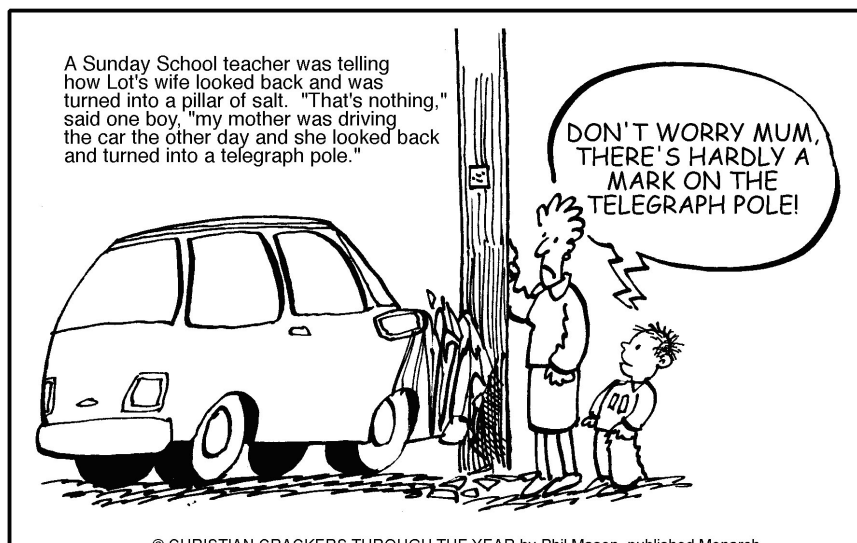
## Happy Birthdays in March



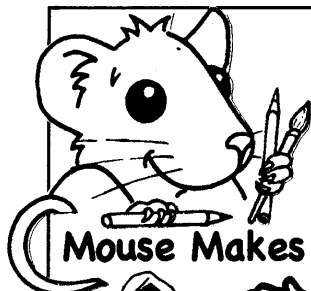
We send belated greetings to those who only have a actual birthday once in four years. These include Beryl and Keith Guy, Sonia's grandson. February birthday's also included a special one for Barbara James. Children's birthdays are always very special this month Lily Didlick, Barbara's granddaughter is 4 on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Others with birthdays this month include Alistair McNicol, Claire Jenkins, Meg Camp, Alan Terry, Len Michell, Margaret Smith, Steve Burrows and Val Parker.

Gwen is still collecting birthdays so if we haven't included your name, and you have a birthday this month, please feel included in our best wishes and prayers.

Happy Birthday to you,  
to Jesus be true,  
God bless you and keep you,  
Happy Birthday to you.



© CHRISTIAN CRACKERS THROUGH THE YEAR by Phil Mason, published Monarch



**Mary** talked to Jesus by  
the empty tomb.

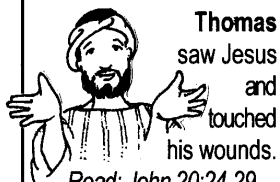
*Read: John 20:10-18*

**Cleopas**

walked with  
Jesus on  
the Emmaus road.



*Read: Luke:24:13-35*



**Thomas**  
saw Jesus  
and  
touched  
his wounds.

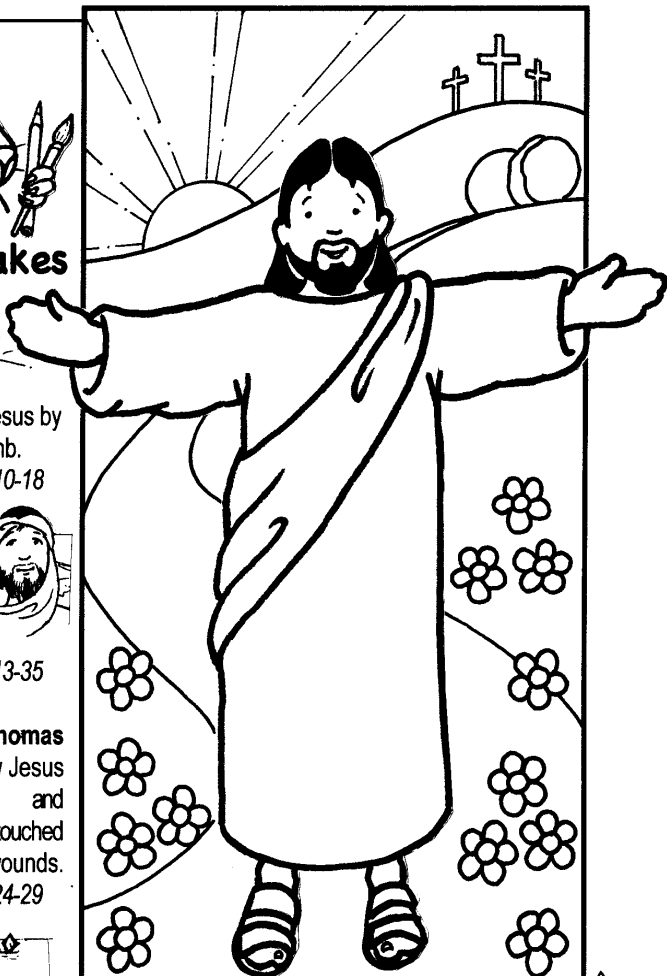
*Read: John 20:24-29*



**Peter** ate with Jesus by  
the Sea of Galilee.

*Read: John 21:1-14*

Thank you Jesus for  
being my Saviour  
and my friend.  
**Amen**



## Jesus is alive!



Colour this picture  
then carefully cut  
out. Glue onto card to  
make an Easter  
greetings card or a  
window hanging.



Mar08

## **Diary Dates**

### **March**

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> Mothering Sunday

Friday 7<sup>th</sup>

Women's World Day of Prayer 2.00pm Methodist Church

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> Chapel Cleaning 10.00am *Please note change of date*

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> Lent Lunch in Hall 12.00 – 1.15

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> Len Lunch in Hall 12.00 – 1.15

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> Open Day and St. Mary's Gift Day at the Manse  
10.00-12.30; 2.00-4.30.

Finance Meeting 7.00pm

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> Saturday Seekers

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> St. Martin's Fellowship

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> Flowers – preparation for Easter

Good Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March Service at 10.00am

8.00pm St. Mary's Choral Society at the Parish Church

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Opening of Exhibition on St. Martin's

Friday 28<sup>th</sup>. Film Night

### **April**

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> 6.30pm Meal, kindly given by Barbara Hasler,

followed by Annual Church Meeting

9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Fellowship Week, "Healing" led by Revd. Martin Broadbent