

Saturday 3 April Diocesan Day of Prayer at Guildford Cathedral, 10.30 - 4 pm
Monday 5 April Men's Fellowship: Canon Peter Bruinvels
Wednesday 7 April Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by lunch
Thursday 8 April Maundy Thursday Supper in Church Hall
Friday 9 April Good Friday
Sunday 11 April Easter Day
Saturday 17 April Monthly Parish walk in the Surrey countryside
Wednesday 21 April Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Saturday 1 May Verdi's Requiem performed in church, 7.30 pm
Wednesday 5 May Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by lunch
Thursday 6 May Anchor: John Alpass on Playing the Organ
Sunday 9 - 15 May Christian Aid Week
Monday 10 May Men's Fellowship Annual Service, AGM and supper, 7.30 pm
Saturday 15 May Monthly Parish walk in the Surrey countryside
Saturday 15 May Supper for those who attend the 6.30 pm service, 8 pm
Monday 24 - 28 May Annual Week of Prayer
Sunday 6 June Trinity Tea (5 pm) and Songs of Praise (6.30 pm)
Monday 7 - 11 June Senior Holiday at Pilgrim Hall
Sunday 18 July Confirmation Service at Christ Church Esher, 6 pm

April 2004

Free distribution

"THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST"

in Jesus and the good news of His offer of forgiveness to all people. Why not go A film about the last twelve hours of the life of Jesus of Nazareth has just been released in the UK. Already in the States huge crowds have gone to see Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* and it promises to draw big audiences here.

Two concerns have made it controversial. First, it is extremely graphic. It is the most brutal portrayal of the death of Jesus in cinema history, claims Dr Mark Stibbe, who has done research on the Passion narrative in John's Gospel. While the violence is both lengthy and extreme, Stibbe argues that it is good that the film does not portray a celestial and other-worldly Jesus who ends his short life on earth on a comfortable cross. The film reflects the reality of the suffering of a crucified criminal but does not glorify or glamorise the violence.

The second concern is of anti-semitism. There is no doubt, writes Stibbe, that the Jewish leaders of Jesus' day are seen in a bad light. But it is the leaders, not the people, who are condemned here. Mel Gibson has deliberately cut from the subtitles the most offensive and largely misunderstood statement in Matthew 27.25 and it needs to be remembered that it was the Roman government of the day who carried out the execution of Jesus, not the Jews. Gibson himself has declared that anti-semitism is contrary to his beliefs and a letter in *The Times* on 24th February from Martin Blackshaw said: 'those who have seen this film have been moved to tears, to prayer, to silence and to conversion. None that I am aware of has yet been moved to anti-semitism'.

There is nothing more important at Easter than to think again about the death of Jesus, why He died and why He gave His life. This film is a good way to do just that and my prayer is that it will awaken a fresh interest and see for yourself?

REGULAR SUNDAY SERVICES

	8 am	10 am	6.30 pm
1st Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Evening Prayer
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Holy Communion Ord. 1
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	All Age Service	Evening Prayer
4th Sunday	Holy Communion BCP	Holy Communion Ord. 1	Evening Prayer
5th Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Evening Prayer

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monthly on a Wednesday (see diary above): Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 2 pm: Toddlers' Praise (in the Church Hall)
 Every Wednesday, at 7 am: Prayers for 30 minutes (in the Quiet Room)
 Every Thursday, at 3.45 pm: Intercessions (in the Quiet Room)

Monthly on a Thursday, at 11.45 am at Wingham Court: Holy Communion
 4th Thursday in month. at 11.30 am at the Dav Centre: Holy Communion

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 YOUTH WORKERS: ASA HUMPHREYS, STUART WRIGHT

Have you been confirmed in the Church of England?

There is to be a service of Confirmation on 18th July, in Christ Church Esher but serving too other churches in the surrounding area. After Easter, Julian will be starting a course for adults who have not previously been confirmed, covering many aspects of the life of a Christian.

The course will be on Wednesday evenings starting on 5th May. Joining it will not oblige you to get confirmed at the end of it but might help you to decide whether you wish to be. If you are interested please

Time to think of....

There is a feeling of spring in the air. The gardens and verges are full of daffodils. Time to turn to thoughts of.... the annual parochial church meeting.

In each parish, there must be a meeting every year before 30 April. The purpose is to receive reports on the work of the parochial church council and the deanery synod, the parish's accounts, the fabric of the church building and many other aspects of parish life, as well as to elect people to serve on the PCC. Every person whose name is on the parish's electoral roll is entitled to attend, speak and vote.

Holy Trinity's APCM is on 21st April at 8 pm. New PCC members will need to be elected, since five members have completed their terms, though 3 of those are eligible for re-election. Do try to be there!



ANCHOR

Anchor will not meet in April, encouraging its members instead to attend the Maundy Thursday supper in the Church Hall. On 6th May John Alpass will be speaking about playing the organ. That meeting will take place in

Parish Walks

Once a month, on a Saturday morning, a group leaves by car from the Hare Lane car park near Somerfield to go walking in the Surrey countryside. We usually expect to undertake a circuit of about five miles, nothing too gruelling.



If you would like to join us for this enjoyable and healthy activity, you would be very welcome. The next two walks are on 17th April and 15th May, and John or Maureen on 01372 466047 would be happy to tell you more.

Men's Fellowship

Peter Bruinvels, former Conservative MP, Member of General Synod, Church Commissioner and Lay Canon of Guildford Cathedral, will be the speaker at the Fellowship's next meeting, on Monday 5th April at 7.45 for 8 pm, in the Church Hall.

CONCERTS IN HOLY TRINITY

SATURDAY 1 MAY at 7.30 pm

VERDI'S REQUIEM

Verdi's majestic and operatic Requiem comes to Holy Trinity on 1st May, performed by Claygate Choral Society, soloists and the orchestra Musica Academica, conducted by Martyn Daldorph.

Tickets cost £12.50, and for advance booking telephone 01372 841046.

200 spend weekend away from Claygate

Over the weekend of 12th to 14th March, around 200 adults and children went away together to a conference centre in Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire. Apart from the difficult journey around the M25 on the Friday, everything seemed to go like clockwork. Catherine Winchcombe and Julia Benns did a truly magnificent job on the administrative side, the children's leaders who joined us were excellent and inspirational and Bob Key, who addressed the adults with four talks, got it just right. He spoke from the Bible with conviction, relevance and humour and the tapes of his talks can be ordered from John Spooner on 463561. The Barn Dance on the Saturday evening was a huge success, involving both young and old, a really good family event.

Back in Claygate David King's father, Philip, took responsibility for the services at Holy Trinity and we are so grateful to him for helping us. Already I have received an email expressing appreciation for Philip's ministry here that day. Thanks also to Julian Coy for leading the 10.00 am service.

So there is much to be thankful to God for and we continue to pray that those 48 hours away from Claygate by some will have a beneficial impact on the whole life of God's Church at Holy Trinity.

Julian Handerson

Pathfinders fast for charity

The Pathfinders, Holy Trinity's group for 11 - 14 year olds, have been experiencing famine - but just for 24 hours - as a way of raising money for the international Christian charity World Vision. It looks as if they are on course for a four-figure sum by the time they finish at the end of March.

Leaders get together

All those responsible at Holy Trinity for the various areas of ministry which make up the church's work - no fewer than 26 different people - are meeting later this month to share experience and review progress.

A HAPPY EASTER TO ALL OUR READERS

Christian Aid Week

9th to 15th May

In six weeks' time, collecting envelopes for Christian Aid Week will be slipping through your letter boxes. Last year, the house-to-house collection around Claygate organised by Holy Trinity raised £4,389. Your support and generous giving towards help for the poorest people in the world was appreciated then, and will be again this year.



'Soul in the City' - not forgetting the suburbs!

Thousands of Christian young people are hitting the city of London this summer for a clear up London project. They will be working hard in the day doing jobs like: picking up rubbish, cleaning off graffiti, painting public toilets and community centres, helping the older members of the community with gardening and shopping etc... and in the evening having great celebrations where everyone is invited to hear about God.

We in Claygate are also getting involved but at a local level. We have teamed up with some other local churches and will be doing a mini version of it here - more like "Soul in the Suburbs".

During the last week in July (26-30th) young people will hit Claygate in the afternoon doing different kinds of practical community based jobs, sharing the love of God through practical help.

Then in the evening there will be great celebrations on West End Recreation Ground, Esher. The celebration is for adults as well as youth and will be from 8 pm until 9:30. In the marquee in the day there will be a kidz club and 'Daytime Live' for mums and dads from 10 am until 11:30, with refreshments provided.

If you have a young person who wants to be involved or want to help in some way then contact Stuart Wright on 07867 888999. Or just come along to the evening celebrations and have some fun and get to know God

But not just on special occasions

Children and young people get a warm welcome at Holy Trinity week by week. There is a full programme of activities for children of different ages, from a crèche for the under 3s to Pathfinders for the 11 to 14 year olds, during the 10 o'clock service

Easter activities for young people

Easter camps have become a treat to be looked forward to by many young people within or somehow associated with Holy Trinity. So much so that the New Hall Easter camp, a popular fixture for many years, is now already full.

As *Insight* goes to press, however, some places are still available for young people at the 'Destiny' camps this Easter. The dates and age ranges are these:

Destiny A:
April 3rd-6th (School years 7-9)

Destiny B:
April 7th-10th (School years 7-9)

Destiny C:
April 13th-16th (School years 10-13)

All these camps are taking place at Reeds School in Oxshott.

What more can we tell you? Perhaps this gives a flavour: "With more madness and mayhem than you can shake a hidden camera at, Destiny 2004 will not only be an opportunity for you to prove your bungee-tastic talents but will be a chance to question what's important and what's not. We'll also be chatting about Jesus, who he is, and why he chose to make his home on this little planet!"

If interested contact: Megs at Educate on 01372 373707 The Theatre Church Street

every Sunday morning, Toddlers' Praise happens in the afternoon of the second and fourth Wednesdays in the month, and the older young people have a range of things to get involved with on Sundays and during the week. Do ask for more details!

Who was this Patron Saint of ours?

We celebrate St George's Day on 23rd April and the Claygate Scouts will be parading for a St George's Day service on 25th April. The flag of St George has become more common in recent years, but who exactly was St George?

St George may be the Patron Saint of England, but he was no Englishman. He was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred in Palestine about the year 300 AD - supposedly 23rd April. Over the years St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages, of whom remarkable deeds were reported.

In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine gave St George a handsome write-up. The story runs thus: One day, St George rode up to the heathen city of Sylene in Lydia, where he found the citizens in great distress. A dragon had forced them to surrender two sheep each day for its dinner and, when the sheep gave out, two of their children; and now they were about to sacrifice the King's daughter, dressed as if for her wedding. St George encountered the little party by a stagnant lake, and persuaded the sobbing Princess to tell him why she was so miserable. At that moment the dragon appeared, looking inexpressibly revolting. The Saint



charged, and drove his spear into the gaping mouth. To everyone's amazement, he tumbled the monster over and over.

Then St George borrowed the Princess' girdle, tied it round the dragon's neck, and persuaded her to lead it back to Sylene. The sight of her approaching with the

befuddled dragon on its makeshift lead emptied the town. When the inhabitants timidly crept back, St George promised to behead the dragon if they would all believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised.

It was a most effective form of evangelism, for everybody said 'yes' at once. So 15,000 people were baptised, and four carts were commissioned to remove the dragon's body.

St George thus became a symbol of the war against evil, and is usually portrayed trampling the dragon of sin under his horse's hoofs. The Crusaders had a vision of him helping them against the Saracens at Antioch, during the first Crusade, and so brought the story of St George back with them from Palestine. His day was declared

All Fools' Day

In years gone by, the rules surrounding April Fool were this: between midnight and noon on 1st April, everyone is 'fair game' to be made a fool of. It is the morning of the practical joke. But the aim is not just to discomfort the victim: he must be tricked into taking action himself, sent on a 'fool's errand'. And so children would be sent to the dairy for a pint of dove's milk, or to the bookseller for *The Life of Eve's Mother*. Practical jokes on a

bigger scale were played: in 1860 a vast number of people received an official looking invitation to the Tower of London that read: 'Admit the Bearer and Friends to view the Annual Ceremony of Washing the White Lions.' The same trick had been played in 1698. On the stroke of noon, April Fools is finished. If anyone attempts devilry thereafter, even while the clock is still striking, it recoils on his own head. A child would then race through the sing-song formula: 'April-Fool-Day's-past-and-gone-you're-the-fool-and-I-am-none!'

At the time of writing in mid March there's an escalating concern for security and safety in the aftermath of the bombs in Madrid. The Metropolitan Police Commissioner has warned that it is not a matter of 'if' but 'when' there will be a terrorist attack in Britain. Headlines in the papers say it is 'inevitable' and the Government are sponsoring a publicity campaign about reporting suspicious or unattended items.

Such language and precautions create a culture of fear and uncertainty. When it seems, in the words of the Chancellor in his budget speech, that Britain has never had it so good, we are in fact faced by a whole set of new concerns that have the potential to undermine and destroy our freedoms. Legislation, cautionary measures, searches, bureaucracy, growing numbers of CCTV cameras on our streets, alarms in our homes and cars, and the list can go on, are considered increasingly necessary to protect the public from those whose behaviour can be antisocial, evil and dangerous.

So how do we cope?

First, while we might need to exercise greater care, we ought not to stop living life to the full. To react by shutting down and retreating is to give in to the demands of those who are adopting wrong means to achieve their ends. Life needs to go on.

Secondly, those who pray should pray for those who perpetrate evil and wicked atrocities, asking that God might turn their hearts around and lead them to new and better ways. We should never underestimate the power of prayer.

Thirdly, we should see the world we live in in the light of the cross and resurrection of Jesus. The first Good Friday and Easter Day are the most significant days in the history of the world. No situation or person is beyond redemption. What appeared to be the most terrible tragedy was in fact the most positive triumph. While it was obvious that Jesus was crucified and died, it was not obvious that His death was achieving and providing for the greatest need of man, the forgiveness of his sins. God is in the business of making things new. Where we make a mess of things, He delights to offer fresh beginnings, but on a different basis from how it was before. A new start with Him involves putting Him at the centre, rather than keeping Him on the edge of our lives.

Fourthly, we can trust God for the present and the future. That does not mean we shall not come to any harm. Faith in Him does not protect us from danger, illness or difficulties. But we can be certain of His presence and His strength with us in those times. He promises to never leave and forsake His people, even in the valley of the shadow of death. For ultimately, as the cross and resurrection foreshadow, good will triumph over evil and God's purposes for His world will come about. At that time He will wipe away every tear, for there will be no more death, or mourning, or crying or pain. The old order of things will have passed away (Revelation chap. 21)

May the Good Friday and Easter events and their message bring hope, peace and confidence to our lives this Easter time.

With my best wishes and prayers,



From the Parish Registers

We welcome into the
family of the Church:

Gus Harvey Taylor
Emily Lauren Meares
(Both baptised on 21st March)

We offer sympathy to the
relatives and friends of:

Evelyn Joyce Meek
(21st February)
Gordon William Barilli
(10th March)

Paddy Beresford

Paddy, the former Minister of Esher Green Baptist Church, came to Holy Trinity on 24th February to speak about and sign copies of his new book. Entitled *Angels on your Doorstep*, it discusses the subject of hospitality. Copies are on sale on the Church Bookstall in the foyer of Holy Trinity, price £6.99.

Brian Prothero

is to be the new Vicar of St James Weybridge, one of the churches in the Emly Deanery of which Holy Trinity is also a part. Brian will be inducted at a service in St James at 8 pm on Thursday 22nd April, and our good wishes go to him.

Insight
If you would like to receive the
Parish Magazine every month
please call Merle Liddiard
on 01372 465038.

Parish Personalities

Valerie Bagley, our Lay Minister, faces the Insight Inquisition.

Where were you brought up?
In East Grinstead.

How long have you lived in Claygate?
Two years.

What do you like most about it?
The community life.

And if there was one thing you could change? I'd love everyone to know Jesus for themselves.

Where would you locate your ideal home?
It can only be Heaven!

What is the least welcome part of your daily round? Ironing (not that I do it daily!)

Which personal trait do you struggle most to overcome? Procrastination.

What food are you most partial to?
All kinds of things!.

And leave on the side of your plate?
Almost nothing - but then I've never had tripe or jellied eels.

What do you watch on television?
Morse, Frost and the ups and downs of the Trotter family.

What would your desert island book be?
Margaret Silf's *Taste and See*, a simple and practical book on prayer.

What is your favourite music?
Live opera.

And your favourite hymn?
"How great thou art".

Which passage of the Bible is most telling for you personally?
Galatians 2.20.

Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?
To see Jesus - which I know I will one day.

A Moment to Meditate

The extent to which Jesus suffered before he died on the cross has been attracting great media attention because Mel Gibson's new film *The Passion of the Christ* emphasises it in a way that other portrayals of the story have shied away from. A brutal episode it certainly was, and Mel Gibson's filmed version brings that home in a way that is far more graphic than the written gospel accounts.

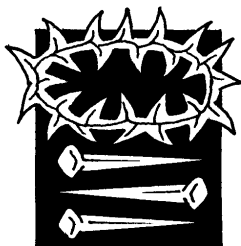
Was this an ordeal from which Jesus was incapable of escaping? Some of the mockery that Jesus received from the rulers of the time asked why he could not save himself when he had done so much to deliver other people from suffering. It was a recognition of the extraordinary powers that Jesus had been exercising in the course of his ministry, and which had led many people to regard him as the Messiah, no less than the Son of God.

It was also reminiscent of the temptations that Jesus endured during his forty days in the wilderness at the start of his ministry. Then he was invited by Satan to accomplish apparently great and miraculous things which would nonetheless have undermined the purposes for which he had come. He resisted the temptation. Now, on the cross, he hears the religious leaders say, according to Matthew's account, that if he comes down from the cross, they will believe in him. It is another temptation.

"He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One."

Luke, chap. 23, verse 35

Yes, Jesus could have saved himself. How much more comfortable it would have been to have avoided the scourging, the crown of thorns, the crucifixion, the agonising death. But on the Mount of Olives immediately before he was arrested, Jesus had prayed "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done". So once again, on the cross, he resisted the temptation.



What Jesus was doing was taking on the power of death, and overcoming it. He died, but emerged triumphant on the other side of death. And his purpose in doing that was to blaze a trail for us to follow, so that, as the Apostle Paul was later to write to the Corinthians,

"in Christ all will be made alive". This, he said, fulfilled the prophecy that "Death has been swallowed up in victory", no doubt a reference to Isaiah 25, which promises that the Lord "will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples.... he will swallow up death for ever". Death has lost its sting.

Yes, Jesus could have extricated himself from that dreadful fate. But he stuck it out. And he did so for our sake, in order to conquer death's power over us and to secure our path towards life with the eternal Father God. What a great gift it is that Jesus chose not to save himself, but instead to persevere to the end with his mission to accomplish our salvation. When we consider his ordeal in that way, how glorious to our ears are those final words

Jesus has forced open a door that had been locked since the death of the first man. He has met, fought and beaten the king of Death. Everything is different because he has done so. - CS Lewis
aren't

As one finishes, we plan the next....

The latest in Holy Trinity's very successful series of Alpha courses is finishing as this issue of Insight is being distributed. Twenty-one people took advantage of the latest ten-week course, which is designed to introduce people to the basics of the Christian faith and answer those questions which might have been nagging away in people's minds about the meaning of life.

The next course is planned to start in September. We have not yet decided on which day of the week to hold it or what the start date will be. But if you think it is time you got round to joining with others in exploring religious truths, it is not too early to register your interest, by calling the church office on 463603. You might even persuade them to hold the course on the evening most convenient to you!

...and the same goes for parenting

Two parenting courses run at Holy Trinity, one for the parents of pre-school children and the other for parents of teenagers, have just finished.

These courses are designed as a service to everyone in the local community, not just for members of the church, and if you would like details of future courses, which are not available at present, please have a word with Valerie Bagley on 464243.

Support in difficulty

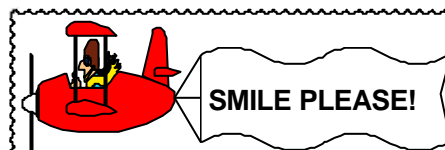
This is a reminder that Holy Trinity has both a support group for those who have been bereaved, which meets fortnightly on Monday afternoons, and people who will visit those who find it difficult to leave home and would welcome someone to talk to. Please call Valerie Bagley on 464243.

Men organise an interesting day out

A Men's Fellowship outing to the Dulwich Picture Gallery and to the Red House in Bexleyheath was much enjoyed by all who were able to go on 20th March.

Numbers were restricted for this visit because of the limit on the size of the parties who tour the Red House, and we filled two of the guided tour slots. Before that we had looked around Britain's oldest public picture gallery, with many Old Masters (including Canaletto's painting of the old Walton Bridge) and its current exhibition about the Crystal Palace. The Red House is the home built for William Morris and other members of the Arts and Crafts Movement in 1859. Although it is a comparatively small house (which is why the National Trust have opened it since last July only to pre-booked groups), it is steeped in interest, and our guides had no trouble filling 75 minutes even with only a handful of rooms.

Although we entered via the kitchen, it was good to be able to leave by the front door, and to benefit from the Latin inscription which William Morris had had put above it, from Psalm 121.8 - "The Lord bless your going out and your coming in"



A Wife's Prayer

*Dear Lord,
I pray for Wisdom to understand my man;
Love to forgive him;
And Patience for his moods.
Because, Lord, if I pray for Strength,
I'll beat him to death.*

Secrets of a TV photographer

An entertaining and enlightening evening was had by the Claygate Men's Fellowship and its lady guests last month. Joan Williams came to give an illustrated talk about her career as a photographer with BBC Television, and lifted a veil on why a stills photographer is so essential in what seems the very different world of television.

But how else would those photographs of the stars appear in the title sequences of such programmes as *Birds of a Feather*, *As Time Goes By*, *House of Elliott*, among others? Where would the family photographs be found to adorn the mantelpieces of the sitcom living room? Who else took those pictures of the bloodied victim which the police study in the murder series - or those nude photographs which turn up when the death of a model is being investigated (yes, we too were a bit startled when they were flashed up on the Church Hall screen)? And how else would set constructors maintain consistency in the appearance of cluttered rooms throughout a long series, or make-up artists ensure that their elaborate creations (as in *Dr Who*, for example) always look the same?

Some tasks demanded more trickery. In the televised biography of Nancy Astor, the famous portrait which hung on the stairs had clearly to resemble the actress rather than the original subject. And you might remember that the camp commandant in *Colditz* had on his desk a photograph of him shaking hands with Adolph Hitler....

Then, of course, there were all the publicity shots which an entertainment medium calls for, from unco-operative *Blue Peter* cats to *Top of the Pops* to *Eastenders*. Having taken the last photograph of Noel Coward and found Sammy Davis Jr much more generous with his time than had been projected - her montage of pictures of him made the cover of *Radio Times* - Joan had a fund of interesting stories to tell (now, just why had Sammy Davis' first request been for a tumbler of gin.....?)

On being a Pastoral Assistant at Holy Trinity

Last month ANCHOR members had a most enjoyable evening with Margaret Mathew and Liz Richardson on the subject of becoming a Pastoral Assistant. Liz gave us a broad outline of the course and how it is structured. She assured us that, although it was stimulating and interesting and gave much food for thought, there was nothing frightening or difficult to understand. Margaret told us about the retreat that took place at Ladywell convent near Godalming and that they both felt that they had grown in their spiritual lives and confidence.

They explained the duties of a Pastoral Assistant; Liz assured us that it is very much what many people are doing already, visiting people in need, caring for friends and neighbours, in addition to duties connected with the church. She has recently moved to another parish and has joined a church which is completely different from Claygate with only a small congregation. This is a new challenge but the basic training as a Pastoral Assistant and the experience she has had will stand her in good stead. We wish them both well for the future.

Did you realise?

Holy Trinity is one of the hundred largest Anglican churches in the country, in terms of the size of our congregations. That means that over 99% of Anglican churches are smaller than we are.

Only 100 churches in the country see around 400 or more adults and children at their Sunday services (though the national figures are based on 1998, when Claygate congregations were smaller than they are now). Among the top ten are Holy Trinity Brompton, All Souls Langham Place and St Saviour's Guildford.

An eleventh commandment?

The satirical Christian website shipoffools.com is offering prizes of camera phones for the best five commandments it receives to supplement the Ten Commandments. The competition, which is being run in association with the Methodist Church, is inviting both serious and tongue-in-cheek contributions. But if you are tempted to enter, hurry - the deadline is 31st March.

We've had the Ten Commandments for over 3000 years, say Ship of Fools, so isn't it about time for the 11th Commandment? Last month they distributed three quarters of a million postcards and drinks mats in cinemas, colleges, students unions, pubs and bars across the UK, hoping that people will spend a few minutes thinking and maybe talking about what they'd like to be the 11th Commandment.

The complications of modern life lead to us being subjected to plenty of exhortations which some might regard as new commandments - things like "Never divulge your PIN number", "Always back up your computer files", "Don't leave your car unlocked", "Remove packaging before eating" - no doubt you can think of a dozen more in similar vein, and they might even figure among entries which Ship of Fools have already received.

For the less moral and more cynical, "Don't get caught" has long had the status of an 11th commandment. But if we are really looking for a serious way of supplementing the Ten Commandments received by Moses from God, shouldn't we consider what they say first, before we wonder what gaps they might leave in modern times?

So, here goes.... Er.... well, how many of the ten can you name? Yes, we thought so: tricky, isn't it? Many older churches had them written on wallboards, but they are rarely to be seen in modern churches, and they will not often be heard even in church services, let alone in more secular surroundings. But, writes John Drane, this collection of moral rules "have been

enshrined in many national law codes since Old Testament days, and in many respects form a charter of fundamental human rights". So they have had a deep and lasting influence on human society.

But if you have trouble in remembering all ten, where do you go to refresh your memory? The Bible certainly, but many people might flounder in finding the right page. To make it easier for you, they're in chapter 20 of the book of Exodus. And to make it even easier, here's a modern summary:

1. Worship no god but me.
2. Do not make or worship idols.
3. Do not misuse God's name.
4. Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.
5. Respect your father and mother.
6. Do not commit murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not accuse anyone falsely.
10. Do not covet what belongs to another.

Modern experience tells us that nothing enacted by Parliament seems capable of lasting more than a few years. By comparison, the Ten Commandments have done astonishingly well, but perhaps it would be interesting to discuss whether, after 3000 years of change in human life, any- thing else needs to be added to the list.

But hold on a moment. Haven't we already heard about an 11th commandment, from Jesus himself? In chapter 15 of John's Gospel, he said to his disciples "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you." Could any other commandment be necessary, if human society worked by the principle

least two in the churchyard, the large purple, white or striped *C. vernus* which has its source in the European Alps and the yellow *C. aureus* from Greece. At a recent meeting of one of Holy Trinity's many home groups, our attention was drawn in Julian's study notes to a passage from Isaiah 35 where it was prophesied that a time would come when all would be well. Among the many signs of rejoicing, Isaiah notes that "the desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus it will burst into bloom."

Shortly after our meeting it was time for the first-Saturday-in-the-month churchyard working party. We were enjoying a coffee break (just the one, you understand) and admiring the bulbs that had suddenly pushed up, thanks to the lengthening days. Various coloured crocus were among these, showing up in some abundance, and this, and the memory of Isaiah's phrase, prompted the idea for another in this occasional series on the plants of the churchyard.

You may quite rightly say that the Holy Trinity churchyard is far removed from a desert (wilderness at times, perhaps!), whereas the Isaiah quotation indicates a 'bursting forth' from dry, parched soil. The principle is the same though, a reawakening after an inclement period, whether it be heat and drought in summer or the cold of winter.

There are crocuses that can deal with both these sets of conditions, around 90 species in all, and most of them native to the Mediterranean region and Middle East. Some do, in fact, burst into life as soon as the cool autumn arrives, the flowers often appearing before the leaves emerge, while

others wait until spring. The peoples of the biblical lands would have been very familiar with this annual cycle as the bulbs of autumn sprang into life, heralding the greatly anticipated rainy season. One may question whether the crocus of the Bible is the same as the plant we know today by that name, for translations of plant names from ancient writings are notoriously difficult. However, in this case there has been much research and there is little doubt, due to one crocus in particular. This is *Crocus sativus*, the one which provides us with that expensive spice, saffron.

The two words, saffron for the spice (dried stigmas) and crocus, referring to the plant itself, have been used for thousands of years. Saffron appears with only slight modification in a host of languages, probably derived from the Arabic *zaferan*, and the ancient Greek *krokos* is thought to have come from the Hebrew *karkom*. Their use can be traced to at least 500 BC and it is likely that it is this plant that is referred to in the Song of Solomon, dated to nearly 1000 years before the Christian era. The Minoans of Crete, some 1500 years BC, knew the saffron crocus for it is depicted clearly in their frescoes. In the biblical lands there are about 10 species, several of which are capable of providing a natural source of saffron.

We have planted some *Crocus sativus* in the church garden, so far with no lasting success, but the spring-flowering species thrive. There are some of the autumn-flowering ones have also been planted in the churchyard, so if we have a warm dry summer like last year's, do watch out for them as they 'burst into bloom' and remember the meaning behind those words of Isaiah.

Brian Mathew

EASTER AT HOLY TRINITY

MAUNDY THURSDAY, 8th APRIL

At 8 pm, remembering the Last Supper and Jesus' command to "Do this in remembrance of me", we shall join in a simple meal in the Church Hall, including in it a short form of Holy Communion. Supper tickets will be available from the Church Office.

GOOD FRIDAY, 9th APRIL

10 am: We assemble in Claygate Station car park for a Walk of Witness through the Village to Holy Trinity, in time for

10.30 am: All-Age Service in the Church

12 Noon: Three Hour Meditation

(You need not feel committed to the whole 3 hours - it is divided into segments between which you can come and go)

EASTER DAY, 11th APRIL

6.30 am: Sunrise Service on Telegraph Hill

8 am: Holy Communion (traditional language)

10am: All-Age Holy Communion (modern language)

11.30 am: Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

6.30 pm: Holy Communion (modern language)

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Holy Trinity stretches out a hand to Ukraine

The political history

Once part of the Austrian-Hungarian empire, this region came under Czechoslovakian control before being ceded to Poland. Germany overran the area during World War 2 and the Soviets took control after the war, making it part of Ukraine. The fall of the Soviet regime brought religious freedom, but economic collapse, with unemployment running as high as 70 per cent and galloping inflation.

Separated from the rest of Ukraine by the Carpathian mountains, the villages to which we are going look more towards Hungary, and speak Hungarian, not Ukrainian.

Holy Trinity Church is planning a ten-day summer visit to two villages in the Transcarpathia region of Ukraine.

Michael Webb-Peploe, who made a preliminary visit last month, reports on the situation there and what members of the Holy Trinity team might be able to do.

Preparing for the main visit

At the time of writing, a team of about 25 people (including two doctors and a dentist) are planning to spend nine days in Ukraine at the end of July. We have an offer from five teachers we met in Berehove to help in interpreting. We would really welcome another doctor, a nurse and a pharmacist to join the team to help with the medical side. And we shall be needing resources to equip the Language and Medical work during those nine days, and general gifts for those with particular needs, so that the visit brings the greatest benefit possible to these two isolated villages.

What we have found so far

In November 2003, four church members (including two fluent in Hungarian) paid a preliminary visit to the region. When the collective farms there were broken up, villagers were each given a strip of land, just sufficient to support the family's own needs through subsistence farming, but not large enough to farm commercially. Tractors are rare, and the fields are worked by horse and man-power. The villages have electricity, but indoor plumbing and central heating are the exception, with most village houses having a privy in the garden, water drawn by bucket from a well, and only two adjacent rooms heated by a wood-fired stove built of heat retaining bricks covered with glazed tiles in the dividing wall.

That first experience suggested that even a short visit by members of Holy Trinity Claygate to two villages would be welcome. Akli (with a population of 400 - pastor Atilla Lorincz) and Gyula (population 1400 - pastor Jenő Kadar) both have Hungarian Reformed churches with perhaps 50 per cent of the villagers having some connection with the church, and 15 - 20 % attending church on a regular basis.

On 28th February, Julian Henderson, Andrew Tarcy (who organised the trip, acted as our interpreter and drove with remarkable skill over the appalling roads in the Ukraine) and I paid a two-day flying visit to the two villages to confer with the pastors and church councils so as to explore how best to combine the skills and enthusiasm of local and Claygate Christians during the summer visit. Julian preached at the morning services in both villages through an interpreter, we

visited a number of families, toured the schools, looked in on the medical facilities, met with the local mayors and heard many heart-warming and heart-rending stories. Everyone we met encouraged us to pursue the idea of a visit in the summer and offered their backing and support.

In our discussions, three aims emerged:

1. To share in the life of the church in the villages, helping them in their task of serving the wider community. The realisation that a common Christian faith cuts across geographical, political and linguistic barriers would have a major impact and create new opportunities for the churches there to grow and develop. For the churches to host a team of people from England will boost their morale, enhance their standing in the local community and strengthen faith. In the goodness of God it might also help others to believe in Him.
2. To run an English language school for both children and adults. English is a language of growing importance for those keen to go to university, to get work, and to encourage tourism. In the school at Gyula (approximately 180 children in 9 grades - aged from 6 to 15 years), Hungarian is the mother tongue, but the children also have to learn Ukrainian (with its Cyrillic alphabet). English is taught from the second grade onwards, but there is only 1 English teacher (and her degree is in Hungarian history and literature, not English). In the entire school, there is 1 Ukrainian (not Hungarian) - English textbook, and the English in it has had to be extensively corrected by an English friend of the teacher. Having the

opportunity to speak with a native English speaker is an invaluable learning experience.

3. To offer medical help. One of the greatest needs of the people is affordable medical care. We visited the government "medical centres" in Akli (staffed by a nursing aid) and Gyula (manned by a Ukrainian doctor who spoke no Hungarian and two nurses), and saw that facilities for diagnosis and treatment are rudimentary. In the village pharmacy, some drugs are available, but at a cost well beyond the means of most. Insulin for a diabetic, for example, would account for two thirds of a teacher's salary. Most of course do not have paid jobs. Heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes are common, as is alcoholism. Tuberculosis is a major problem (especially in the cities), with an estimated 4 Ukrainians dying daily from the disease. We visited the District General Hospital in Berehove. Its decaying buildings date back to 1935. Budgetary constraints mean that in the children's wards there is 1 nurse to 25 children. Although in theory their services are free, most doctors (poorly paid by the government) will expect a fee "under the table". If the patient cannot find the money, they get little or no care. It became quite clear that any medical team going out to the Ukraine would have to be self-sufficient in terms of simple tools for diagnosis and would have to take its own pharmacy.

So far, you might be forgiven for thinking that the traffic will be all one way - aid from us to them. But they have a great deal to teach us. Their practical care for each other both within their own families, the church and the wider community, the steadfastness of the church under persecution during Communist rule, the warmth of their love and welcome to