

## A New Year message to get your teeth into

**W**hat are you looking forward to this New Year?

I have the delights of part two of my root canal treatment later this month. I'm told it's an exciting experience. As I asked Mary, my long-suffering dentist: "What exactly is root canal treatment? Everybody speaks about it with such affection."

As the good dentist that she is Mary duly described the procedure and at the end of a pretty-pain free session one, she gave me a colourful leaflet which explained it all, diagrams and all. I read it avidly on my return home. Barbara, not finding such things of any interest, left the room.

Apparently root canal treatment becomes necessary when the nerve inside a tooth dies usually through infection. It, along with any resultant, abscesses, has to be removed which involves drilling through the

tooth in the usual way then scraping out the guts of the thing; your dead tooth is then re-filled with new material to give it, er, body.

Now clearly there is an obvious parallel here with the Christian life, isn't there?



There we are scraping the bad, one might say necrotic, stuff out of our lives all that bitterness, jealousy, greed and so on but all too often we forget part two of the procedure, which is to replace the bad with good, with

something solid to give substance to our lives. Then lo and behold the 'infection' returns and we go through the whole process again.

Much as I find medical procedures of great interest I don't plan on repeating my root canal treatment. I, and I suspect you, am not so thorough about the treatment I give to my soul. Maybe there's a New Year's resolution there somewhere? After all, didn't Jesus say something similar about good and bad spirits?

*Fr Stephen*

## Grasping the nettle

*The first of two articles by Paul Baker about the process of becoming a priest*

I have had a calling nagging at the back of my mind to become a priest. It's not been a 'Road to Damascus' moment, but just something there: notices in my previous church in Croydon about joining the priesthood through conferences run by the Additional Curates Society, but I had not grasped the nettle. The ACS contacted me again through my membership of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament in 2012 so I thought, nothing ventured, nothing gained, and applied.

With travel sponsorship from Fr Stephen I visited St Stephen's House, a theological college founded in Oxford in 1876 by the Tractarian movement which remains in the catholic tradition of the C of E.

At St Stephen's I found Fr Richard Norman, originally from my old church in Croydon, as part of the welcoming committee.

Business started after tea with a conference-style welcome. Then a clever ice-breaker, initially talking one-to-one with the person next to

you, then three together, then six together. Organised and effective.

The mood then became devotional in the house chapel and led by Br Stephen from the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield. Evening Prayer, not like the traditional Evensong I am used to, was preceded by the Angelus.

This was followed by a drinks in the common room, and supper in the refectory.



The after-dinner talk by a local Oxford vicar discussed 'Life of a Parish Priest'. It was highly absorbing and interesting – every priest would tell it differently as every parish is different. It was also diverse – but so practical and down to earth. And well worth the applause.

What was important to take from this is that every minute of the waking day one is "on duty" and it is important to have one's quiet moments with God, both formally and informally, and also important to remember one's family as they are an integral part of you.

When the bar opened at 9.30 pm I didn't have the stamina for informal chats or the sing-song round the piano, so it was off to bed, exhausted but stimulated for the days ahead.

## More lunches at Bridges proposed

The Christmas Day lunch at Bridges, which attracted 25 people, was such a success that similar events could be held three times a year.

"All worked together well and there was never a cross word spoken," says Hilary Morgan, who was assisted by Jacquie Hill and Sue Sayell, who worships at the URC, and a team of helpers. "Even though the kitchen in Bridges is not that large we all were able to do our bit and leave space for others.

"Finishing touches included tiny Christmas cakes made by Jacquie and her daughter Katie and were much appreciated. We also made 'nibbles' and a non-alcoholic punch which meant that as soon as people started to arrive they had something to eat.

"Even a Russian gentleman who was worse the wear for drink and required an ambulance, delaying our departure for three hours, didn't dampen the good feeling."

Although £260 was budgeted for the

costs, thanks to donations of the turkey, ham and puddings, just £96 was spent.

Hilary says that a debriefing meeting recommended that three such lunches are organised each year, at Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

## Lent Groups 2014

This year these ecumenical groups will run for five weeks following Ash Wednesday on 5 March in various house groups.

These are a great way to prepare for Easter alongside other Christians, including some from the other churches in the Edenbridge Churches in Covenant (ECC). Watch out for further details and the opportunity to sign up.

*Bernard Oldfield*

## Christingle services

Despite the weather and a reduction in numbers attending the Christingle services we were able to raise £668.61.

Thank you to everyone who helped to organise these services. They are only a success because you are prepared to give your time.

*Hilary Morgan*

## Jane Corcoran RIP

We regret to announce the unexpected death, at the age of 52, of Jane Corcoran, wife of John, mother of Kirsty and daughter of Bill and Mary Elliot, on Monday 30 December.

Jane was for some 15 years our parish administrator and worked closely with Fr Stephen serving the needs of our community.

Week by week she produced the pewsheets and other material and she was also responsible for much of our liturgical material. She was often the first point of contact with the parish and her good humour and inexhaustible patience will be missed by us all.

The funeral service is being held on Wed 15 January at 1.30pm. May she rest in peace.

## Massed choristers sing with the Bishop of Rochester

A massed choir sang with the Bishop of Rochester at the Deanery Advent Service held in Edenbridge Parish Church in December.

With a welcome by the Rev'd Dr Stephen Mitchell, the service was the climax of a week of visits to the area by the Rt Revd James Langstaff who joined more than 50 singers from church choirs in Edenbridge, Crockham Hill, Tonbridge, Hever and Leigh organised by Rural Dean Rev'd Mark Brown, and managed by Director of Music Simon Roberts and Assistant Choir Director Fiona Henderson.

Taking time out from singing with the choir to address the congregation Bishop James talked of how the Biblical prophecies anticipating Christ's birth were related in readings and music, adding that the Church in West Kent was in "better heart than the media would have us believe".



*Bishop James (centre left) with the choristers at the Deanery Advent Service*

## Finance news

In 2012 it cost £2,477 per week to keep the church running.

In November 2013 our average weekly income was £2,236, of which £1,898 came from our regular planned givers (including Gift Aid receipts), £170 came from loose plate collections and one-off donations and £168 from other income such as fees and dividends, etc.

The annual accounts are currently being prepared and next month some points of interest that are emerging will be published here so watch this space.

*Jane Cain, PCC treasurer*

## Diary dates

### Sunday 19 January

6.30pm ECC Epiphany Carols

### Sunday 2 February

6.30pm Festal Evensong

Candlemas

### Wednesday 5 March

Ash Wednesday

### Sunday 30 March

Mothering Sunday

9.30am Eucharist

### Thursday 17 April

8.30pm Maundy Thursday

### Friday 18 April

2.30pm Good Friday service

### Sunday 20 April

6.00am Easter Vigil

9.30am Easter Sunday Eucharist

6.30pm Easter Festal Evensong

Compline services will be held at 9pm on Sat 29 March, Sat 5 April, Sat 12 April, and Mon to Wed 14-16 April

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