

# The Old Church News

O P E N T O A L L - O P E N T O G O D

## VICAR'S VOICE

Let's talk about LOVE!!

This month Saint Valentine is upon us - so, yes, let's talk about "Luve!!"

Although actually, let's get our facts straight first: Valentine, after all, was a Roman priest who was imprisoned during the reign of the Emperor Claudius II for assisting his fellow Christians throughout their persecution. He refused to renounce his faith, was beaten with clubs and was beheaded (in about the year 270 AD).

And the custom of sending cards? Well it's probably nothing to do with that Valentine - the name wasn't that unusual at that time. It could be, rather, that there was an old belief that February 14th was the day when birds chose their mates! Who knows!!

Anyway - Love!

*"Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,  
guilty of dust and sin. But quick-ey'd Love,  
observing me grow slack, from my first entrance  
in, Drew nearer to me .... "You must sit down,  
'says Love, 'and taste my meat. 'So I did sit and  
eat."*

Lines taken from the poem by George Herbert.  
And LOVE? God is Love. Jesus showed Love.

And we? Surely as His disciples - learning from and following Him - we must Love: even those we might find difficult.

"Faith. Hope and Love - but the greatest of these is Love wrote St Paul to the Christians in the city of Corinth (see I Corinthians chapter 13).

How difficult is that? Really, as Christians! Called by the God of Love. Surely not - not with His grace to strengthen us.

After all: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.



## PAST MONTH'S NEWS

During January we celebrated the season of Epiphany which included a quiet and reflective service of hymns and readings.

Chloe Maureen Dwyer was welcomed into the church family during a service of Baptism. We continue to pray for Chloe, her parents and Godparents.

Later in the month Thrifties invited all to join them for an evening's entertainment at the Barlow Theatre in Langley. It was a first visit there for many of the group and everyone enjoyed the Oldbury Rep's excellent production of the pantomime Cinderella.

The Discoverers met in the Harvester on the Hagley Road and shared a pleasurable meal.

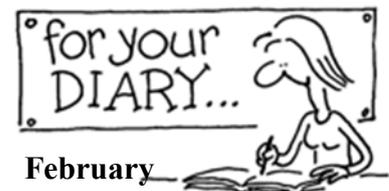
Towards the end of January Thrifties held a planning meeting over an evening meal at the Wernley on the Wolverhampton Road. Suggestions for the forthcoming year include an evening of Murder and Mystery; Come Dine With Me; Caribbean night; Craft evening and Swap Shop. Thrifties extend a warm welcome to women of all ages and their female friends to come along to any or all of our social events. For further information have a word with Wendy or Rosie.

## QI.... “Apostle/Disciple”

- “Apostle” is a Greek word
- And is the title given to the twelve disciples of Jesus (see Matthew chapter 10 verse 2, Luke chapter 22 verse 14, and Acts chapter 1 verse 2)
- After the suicide of Judas Iscariot, his place was taken by Matthias and the title is applied to him (as well as to Paul and Barnabas in the Book of Acts)
- Apostolic succession - it is through the original twelve that grace and authority descends from Christ and from them to their lawfully appointed successors.
- “Disciple” - all who follow Jesus
- Included the apostles—Jesus’ first disciples (Andrew, James, John )
- Oxford English Dictionary - “one who attends upon another for the purpose of learning from him; a pupil or scholar”
- A close relationship of learning
- Not discipline, for discipleship is freedom, laughter and joy (said Donald Coggan Archbishop of Canterbury 1974 - 1980)
- Bearing fruit, Love and mission and evangelism - Go make disciples, baptize and tell and share with them the Good News (the Gospel)

### PLEASE NOTE

Ash Wednesday this year falls on 9th March and the season of Lent begins: What are you giving up for Lent? What should we be taking on (an extra) for Lent this year? Holy Week begins 17th April with Easter Day on Sunday 24th April.



### *Footprints in the Sand* by Mary Stevenson

**One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonging to him, and the other to the Lord. When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life. This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, You said that once I decided to follow you, You'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me." The Lord replied, "My son, My precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I Carried You."**

- Tuesdays 10.00 am Holy Communion in The Old Church in The Uplands followed by tea and coffee and social fellowship: Come and see!
- Thursdays 10.00 am Holy Communion in St Matthews' Windmill Lane followed by tea and coffee and social fellowship: Come and see!
- 17th Discoverers visit the Pen Museum in Birmingham followed by lunch. Please see Christine or Judy
- 23rd 2.30 pm Light Reading at the Sisters' house - see Judy Eynon for details.
- 24th 2.15 pm Praying together in The Old Church - an invitation for us all (see Rosemary Guest for further details and prayer requests)

### SPOTLIGHT ON LOVE ...

It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing.  
It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.

~ Mother Teresa ~