

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

Did you see, "The Da Vinci Code?" the film of Dan Brown's novel. And how did you feel about the portrayal of Mary Magdalene? For those who believe the Christian story, Mary Magdalene was the first person to see the risen Christ. And yet for many she was also another figure: the repentant prostitute forgiven by Christ (a scarlet-clad figure in paintings). The Gospels speak of her as a follower of Jesus (out of whom he is said to have cast out 'seven demons' and who then ministered to him in Galilee, see Luke 8.2); later, she stood by his cross at his crucifixion (Mark 15.40), then with two other women discovered the empty tomb and heard the angelic announcement of His Resurrection (Mark 16.1) and was granted an appearance of the Risen Christ early on the same day (Matthew 28.9 and John 20.11). But tradition has identified her with "the woman who was a sinner" who anointed the feet of Jesus in Simon's house (Luke 7.37). Does it help us to think of her as a sinner, a fallen woman, reminding the sinner that it was his or her sins, as well as her own, that had put Christ upon the Cross? Or may we remember that, although it is hard to find evidence that she was any form of leader, or a teacher, she was, as the Gospels tell us, one among other faithful female disciples of Jesus. We celebrate her feast day on July 22nd. One date, like so many others in the Christian year, which points towards those who have gone before us, setting us an example of believing and who was called by Jesus by her own name. Like you or I!

P A S T M O N T H ' S N E W S

The bells heralded an early morning communion service for Ascension Day and the theme of Ascensiontide was thoughtfully explored on the following Sunday evening during a reflective service of Nine Readings and Hymns.

Due to an uncertain forecast the Summer Fair was held in the Dorothy Parkes Centre and not in the Vicarage garden as planned. The event was opened by Sandwell Mayor Councillor Joyce Underhill and despite the changeable weather

crowds flocked to enjoy the many stalls, games, refreshments and a lively performance from the choir of Uplands Manor Primary School.

An inspiring evening of prayers and songs from Taize was appreciated by regular and visiting members of the congregation. The unique style of the service gave people an opportunity to experience a small element of monastic worship. The Old Church bid a fond farewell to Wayne as he completed his placement of ten weeks.

PRAYERS AND SONGS FROM TAIZE

The Prayers and Songs from Taize services originate from a monastic community in the Burgundy region of France. Brother Roger founded the community in August 1940 and there are now approximately 100 Brothers from both Catholic and Protestant denominations reflecting the ecumenicalism of the community.

Thousands of young people make a pilgrimage to the community each year to seek space with God, commune with Him and share fellowship with people from all over the world.

The style of singing from Taize uses a line from the bible or a theological saying which is sung repetitively for a few minutes. This gives time for the words to move from the head down to the heart.

Within each service there is a period of silence, usually for about ten minutes, giving individuals the opportunity to be alone with God whilst alongside others.

**A short blessing from 'the celtic vision'
edited by Esther De Waal**

**May the King shield you in the
valleys,
May Christ aid you on the
mountains,
May Spirit bathe you on the
slopes,
In hollow, on hill, on plain,
Mountain, valley and plain.**

Q.I.... "ORDINATION"

- The ministry of the church traces its beginnings to the Lord's commissioning of the twelve disciples (Matthew chapter 10 verses 1-5; Mark chapter 3 verses 13 - 19 and Luke chapter 6 verses 12 - 16) and the seventy (see Luke chapter 10 verse 1).
- The Book of Acts speaks of "elders" or presbyters and chapter 20 verse 28 talks of bishops and deacons (priests came later in church history).
- According to traditional Catholic theology the gift of Order is a sacrament instituted by Christ and as conveying the Holy Spirit.
- Like baptism "Order" is held to impart an indelible character (a cleric if degraded does not lose the gift of Order and on restoration is not "re-ordained")
- Traditional theology holds that the sacrament of Orders can be validly conferred only by a consecrated bishop, acting as the minister of Christ.
- The purpose of Ordination is to qualify a person for office in the Church (bishop, priest or deacon).



JULY

Saints' Days in July include: 3rd (St Thomas), 11th (St Benedict), 15th (St Swithin), 19th (St Gregory and his sister Macrina a deacon), 22nd (Mary Magdalen), 25th (the apostle St James), and 26th (Anne and Joachim, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

- 9th 4.00 pm **Wedding** between Shirley Durkin and Edward Wynn: we pray for their day and their marriage.
- 11th 11.00 am **Songs of Praise** at Penmakers' Court
- 14th Smethwick Chapelry Trustees **AGM**
- 18th St Matthews' **PCC** meeting
- 18th 4.00 pm **Wedding** between Rosie and Iman. We pray for their day and their marriage
- 19th **Deanery Synod** meet at St James'
- 22nd End of **School Year**: we pray for all teachers, staff and children for their summer holiday.
- 28th 2.30 pm **Praying** together in The Old Church.
- 30th **Joint parish bus trip** to Shugborough Hall, National Trust.

BAPTISMS AND CONFIRMATION

During the past month Isabella Marie Caulder-Terry and Iman Azizi Gandomkari were welcomed into the church family through baptism. Iman was later confirmed by Bishop Andrew at St Hilda's Church which enabled him to receive communion for the first time. If you have any questions concerning the sacraments of baptism or confirmation please have a word with the Vicar.

Walk with me, oh my Lord

Through the darkest night
and brightest day.

Be at my side, oh Lord

Hold my hand and guide
me on my way.

EXTEND AT THE DOROTHY PARKES CENTRE

EXTEND classes provide recreational movement to music for men and women over fifty and for less able people of all ages. The aim is to promote health, increase mobility and independence, improve strength, co-ordination and balance and is a great way to meet people and make new friends, thereby enhancing the Quality of Life.

The class held at the Dorothy Parkes Centre meets each Thursday at 1.30 pm for one hour and is led by Sonya, who is a member of the Sandwell Health Authority. New members are always welcome. More details from Judith Eynon