

# CHURCH NEWS APRIL

## Happy Easter

On any grounds it is an enthralling story. At the beginning of the week it has a triumphal beginning: the entry into the capital city with a hysterical crowd acclaiming him as king and prophet and strewing his path with palm branches to lessen the impact of the cobbled streets. Five days later, the situation has dramatically altered. Charged with attempting to overthrow the government and committing blasphemy, the baying mob now calls for his crucifixion. In between there is a supper, celebrating the Jewish Passover with the command to eat 'my body' and drink 'my blood', followed by betrayal and a skirmish in the garden of Gethsemane where one of the high priest's servants has his ear cut off but immediately has it miraculously restored. Before death finally relieves his agony, the guilty man has been spat upon and had a crown of thorns placed on his forehead by the Roman soldiers guarding him. Finally, he is beaten and made to carry his heavy cross to the place of execution on the hilltop of Golgotha. An unfortunate visitor to the city, Simon of Cyrene, is dragged out of the crowd and forced to help with the carrying. By this point most of his close followers have deserted him, one notably denying any connection on three occasions. The final torture is to be nailed to the cross rather than tied with rope as are the two criminals who are crucified on either side.

But two days later all has again changed. Buried in haste, because of the impending Sabbath, a group of women who have come to complete the burial rites find the stone of the tomb rolled back and no dead body inside. At first, thinking that it has been stolen by his enemies to prevent the tomb becoming a shrine and a place of pilgrimage, the women are thrown into confusion when the risen victim appears to them and this is then followed by further appearances to other followers.

This story of Jesus' death and resurrection lies at the heart of the Christian faith. This idea of sacrifice, giving up one's freedom or even risking death for the sake of others, is very much a part of our human history, irrespective of our particular beliefs. In recent times, however, the term sacrifice has also been used by those committing atrocities such as suicide bombers of innocent crowds. Their motive is not to help others, but rather a belief that they will gain personal rewards in the next life. As I write, we have a spectacular example of true sacrifice in the behaviour of the policeman in the city of Carcassonne who took the place of a woman hostage and paid with his life for this courageous act.

Those who believe in this heroic form of sacrifice often turn out to be very modest individuals who deny that they differ from their fellow citizens. "I didn't think," they often say. "I just did what anyone would have done if they'd been in my shoes." However, there are probably few of us that would have acted like that brave policeman. This Easter tide all of us should spare a moment's thought, and if minded, say a prayer for those willing to make the genuine forms of sacrifice on behalf of the rest of us.

Maurice Galton

## Church Services coming up...

### APRIL

#### ***St Andrew's Owston***

Sunday 1<sup>ST</sup> April EASTER DAY 9.30am Holy Communion  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 9.30am Holy Communion

#### ***St Peter's Knossington***

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April EASTER DAY 11am Holy Communion  
Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April NO SERVICE  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 11am Holy Communion

#### ***St John the Baptist Cold Overton***

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April NO SERVICE  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 9.30am Holy Communion

#### ***St Peter's Tilton on the Hill***

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April EASTER DAY 11am Holy Communion  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 11am Holy Communion

#### ***All Saints Lowesby***

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April EASTER DAY 8am Holy Communion

#### ***SUNDAY 29<sup>th</sup> APRIL***

***"Parishes Around Launde" service of Holy Communion***

***10am ILLSTON ON THE HILL***

## **STOREHOUSE**

We are still collecting for "The Trussell Trust" food bank in Oakham, which supplies high quality non-perishable food and toiletries as a free gift for those who are most in need.

Please bring your donations to the porch of **St Peter's Church in Knossington** where you will find a large collection box in the porch.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to date!

*For more information about church services and events please call*

*Sue Sills on 01664 454 584 or email [susan\\_sills@hotmail.com](mailto:susan_sills@hotmail.com)*