

St. James' Christleton



Parish Magazine
DECEMBER 2005

30p

Countdown to Christmas

Fri	2	6.30 pm	Choir Practice
Sun	4		The Second Sunday of Advent
		8.00 am	Holy Communion - Order 2
		10.30 am	Sunday School - Parish Hall
		10.45 am	Parish Communion - Order 1
		6.00 pm	The Crew Youth Group - Parish Hall
		6.30 pm	Evensong - followed by refreshments
			Prayer Link Road: Littleton Lane and By-Pass
			Neighbourhood Link: Judith Willacy
Mon	5	10.45 am	Holy Communion at Tarvin Court Nursing Home
		11.30 am	Holy Communion at Oaklands Nursing Home
		7.30 pm	College of Law Carol Service
Wed	7	10.45 am	United Communion - followed by refreshments
Fri	9	6.30 pm	Choir Practice
			NB: Last date for contributions to JANUARY Parish Magazine to David Bull (332234). Earlier if possible please.
Sun	11		The Third Sunday of Advent
		8.00 am	Holy Communion - Order 1
		10.45am	Family Toy Service - followed by refreshments
			People are invited to bring wrapped Christmas gifts of toys (labelled with the appropriate age and sex) to be given to less fortunate children in the Chester area.
		1.30 pm	Church Ramble leaves car park for Dinas Bran, Llangollen.
		6.30 pm	Evensong
			Prayer Link Road: Moor Lane
			Neighbourhood Link: Gwen Knight
Mon	12	2.00 pm	Advent Meditation in Church
		6.30 pm	First Meeting for Confirmation candidates Lady Chapel
Tues	13	10.00 am	Tuesday Ramble Group - Christleton
Wed	14	10.45 am	Holy Communion - followed by refreshments

Sun 18 The Fourth Sunday of Advent

8.00 am Holy Communion - Order 1
10.30 am Sunday School - Parish Hall
10.45 am Parish Communion
6.30 pm FESTIVAL OF CAROLS AND CEREMONY OF LIGHT
Prayer Link: Pepper Street
Neighbourhood Link: Pat Hodges

Mon 19 2.00 pm Primary School Carol Service
 7.00 pm Primary School Carol Service

Wed 21 10.45 am Holy Communion - followed by refreshments

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sat 24 7.00 pm Carols round the Tree
 Followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the Parish Hall
 11.30 pm Midnight Communion - Order 1

CHRISTMAS DAY

Sun 25 8.00 am Holy Communion - Order 2
 10.45 am Christmas Family Service
 11.45 am Holy Communion - Order 1
 Prayer Link Road: Plough Lane
 Neighbourhood Link: Jocelyn Platel and Janet Brown

Mon 26 9.00 am Holy Communion for St Stephen

Tues 27 9.00 am Holy Communion for St John

Wed 28 10.45 am Holy Communion for Holy Innocents



Our thanks to Phil Hodges for
his pen and ink drawing for
this years Christmas Card

The Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

Skellig Michael

This summer Fiona and I enjoyed a holiday in Ireland exploring Cork and Kerry. One day we took a boat from Portmagee at the end of the Kerry Peninsula. It was a small but powerful boat, and we travelled for 45 minutes out into the Atlantic on a, thankfully, calm day. We came to two rocky outcrops sticking up out of the sea. The first was Little Skellig, which is home to 20,000 pairs of Gannets. We were escorted by convoys of these impressive white birds with a six foot wing span which dive vertically into the sea from great heights to catch fish. But our destination was Skellig Michael, the larger island outcrop, reaching 700 feet up into the sky. Its two peaks give the appearance of wings, hence the name from the Archangel Michael. We landed, precariously, by jumping onto what does for a jetty. Then we climbed 500 steps cut into the steep rock face to the top. There we had to bow to go through a low archway, and emerged into a 'cloister' of monastic bee hive cells, dating back to the sixth century. It was an incredible and humbling experience. Here a small community of monks had built these cells, a small chapel and storage buildings, and hued out two cisterns to catch rain water. Incredibly there were three sets of steps coming up from the sea at different points so one would always be in shelter from the wind and the waves. Here the monks chose to live in harmony with God and his world at the mercy of the elements and cut off for months at a time, surviving on the bounty of earth and sea and sky – praying down the Christian centuries.

The word 'angel' means 'messenger'. It was the Angel Gabriel who gave the message to Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus. Perhaps Skellig Michael can give us a message as we prepare for Christmas. A volunteer conservationist on the top of Skellig Michael explained the lay out and history of the monastic community to the group of us who made it to the top. As we looked round there was one man who had landed with his friends from a private yacht, and was obviously 'well-blessed' in this world's wealth. He said to his friend what an incredible place it was, but he could not be doing with these monks who were obviously such misguided 'nutters'. 'How sad', I thought. Here you are with so much, yet no concept, no inkling, no beginning of appreciation of the spiritual reality which pervades that place. And in our secular society the majority will approach Christmas in the same way. It will be something there to enjoy as they indulge themselves, but the Christmas story will be, at best, a fairy tale to amuse the children. They will remain oblivious to the spiritual reality of God pervading our world, which alone gives it the meaning and purpose which endure. Perhaps we have to go to remote

areas like Skellig Michael now to escape the layers of secular materialism which have suffocated not only Christmas, but all our society. Certainly Advent is a time when we are called, like Mary, to hear God's message and prepare for his coming.

The sanctity of life depends on Christmas. If we leave God out of life do not be surprised if life becomes cheap and dispensable. As we are confronted by disasters like the earthquake in Pakistan, and the horrors of Iraq, what hope is there for our world? There are 20 million slaves in our world today, from the sex slaves in Asia and trafficked from Eastern Europe, to the child soldiers of Africa. At home cases of child abuse are prolific and horrific, and increasingly there is ignorance of any sense of morality. The challenge is immense and it is the challenge of Advent. The Gospel imperative to wake up before it is too late rings in our ears, and John the Baptist cries from the wilderness to make straight the way of the Lord. More than ever we need to hear the wake-up call of Advent, if the wonder of the Good News of Christmas is to be heard in our world.

"O hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing." A very happy Christmas to you all!

Yours sincerely

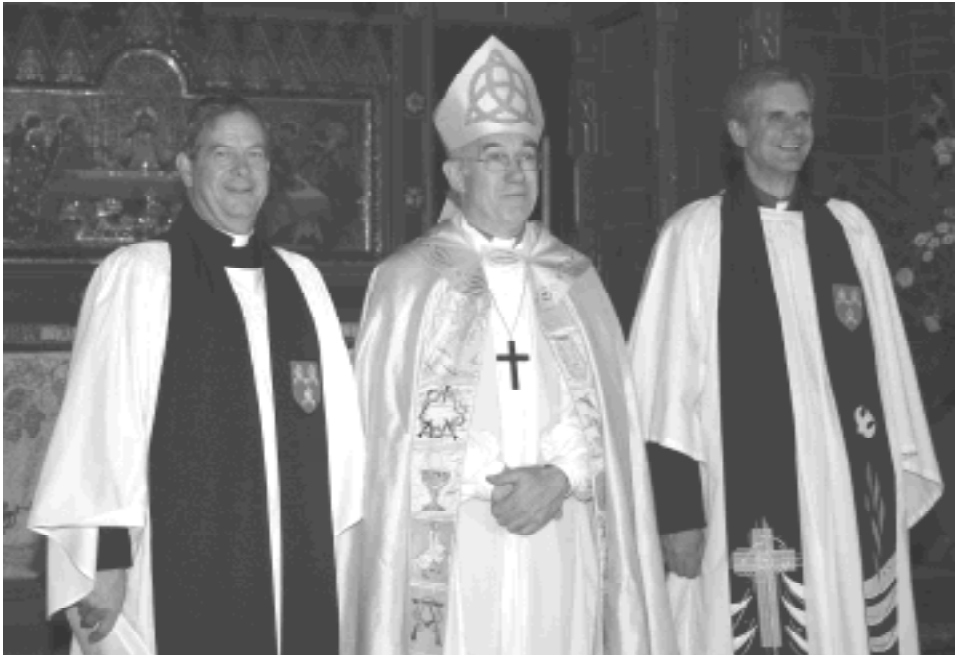
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Lee". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Prayer of the Month: *from "Advent Readings From Iona"*

*Christ of the cosmos, living word,
Come to heal and save.
Come from the depths of eternity,
unfolding the purposes of God.
Come from the dawn of time,
shaping the universe:
divine expression,
mystery made known.*

*In your quiet hidden way,
come to heal and save.
Incognito, in our streets,
beneath the concrete, between the cracks,
in ageing memories, in childhood wonder,
in secret ponds, in broken hearts,
in Bethlehem stable, still small voice,
Word of God, among us. Amen.*

Installation of Rector as Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral



On All Saints Day Tuesday 1st November, Rector Peter Lee was installed as Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral, in a very impressive and joyful ceremony, held during a Festival Eucharist, presided over by The Bishop of Birkenhead, with a sermon by The Bishop of Stockport. A large congregation, including many family and friends watched the procession, of Clergy, Choir, College of Canons, and Bishops enter the Quire. The service was sung by the Cathedral Choristers and the Cathedral Girls Choir, conducted by Philip Rushforth. The musical setting for

the Eucharist was from the Misa O Quam Gloriosum, T L De Victoria. The hymns were sung with great joy and included, For all the saints who from their labours rest, Let Saints on earth in concert sing, Light's abode, celestial Salem, and Ye watchers and ye holy ones. The collation and installation of Revd. K.Peter Lee of St. James'Christleton, and Revd. William Francis Martin Collins of Norbury, as Honorary Canons of the Cathedral, was conducted by the Dean, the very Revd. Gordon McPhate. He presented the candidates with mandates issued by The Lord Bishop of Chester, and

then installed the two ministers in turn into their seats in the Quire. The installation was followed by the Eucharist, and ended with a colourful procession led by the Choir. There followed the Verger, Diocesan Registrar, The Lay Canons, The Canons Ecumenical, The Honorary Canons, The Archdeacons, The Members of the Chapter, The Dean, The Assistant Bishops, The Bishops Suffragan, and the Bishop of Chester. The photograph of the Bishop of Chester Dr. Peter Forster and the two Honorary Canons was taken after the service in front of the beautiful main Altar.

David Cummings

MOTHERS UNION

Many thanks to our Leader, Margaret Renner, who organised a very successful Coffee Morning at her home on 27 October, when £220 was raised for Mothers Union funds.

On Monday 12 December, we will be meeting in Church for our Quiet Hour and then going over to the Parish Hall for Tea and Mince Pies. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Janet Brown

Dear Fellow Sidespersons

CHRISTMAS FAIR 2005

This year the Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 26 November 10 – 12.30 pm.

Gillian and I have been asked to man the Tombola Stall. As we are relatively new Sidespersons we have learnt that the Tombola Stall is always organised and supported by the Sidespersons.

Obviously by the very nature of a Tombola Stall, we shall require prizes for those people lucky enough to draw out a winning number. If you feel that you would like to contribute by donating a prize, that would be most welcome and appreciated.

Prizes can be left at the Parish Hall between 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm or 7.0 pm – 8.0 pm on Friday 25 November. Alternatively, if you ring Gillian (329346) or myself (336659), we will arrange to collect.

Edward Elliott
Cherry Trees
Plough Lane

THANK YOU

I would like to thank everyone who sent best wishes and cards to me on my recent birthday. They were very much appreciated.

CATHEDRAL LINK

Saints' Windows in the Cloisters

St Hugh of Lincoln. Son of William, Lord of Avalon, was born in 1135 in Burgundy, France. His mother Anna died when he was eight, and he was raised and educated at a convent at Villard-Benoit. He became a monk at 15 and a Deacon at 19. In 1175 he became abbot of the first English Carthusian monastery, which was built by King Henry II as part of his penance for the murder of Thomas Becket. He was made Bishop of Lincoln in 1181. He rebuilt Lincoln Cathedral, destroyed by earthquake in 1185. He denounced the mass persecution of Jews in England in 1190-91 repeatedly facing down armed mobs, making them release their victims. He was stricken with an unnamed ailment and died on 16 November 1200. He is buried in Lincoln Cathedral.

Hugh's primary emblem is a white swan, in reference to the story of the Swan of Stowe which had a deep and lasting friendship for the saint, even guarding him while he slept.

Patronage – sick children, sick people, swans.
Saints Day : 17 November

Help Needed

Do you have typing skills and

would you be willing to help on a voluntary, occasional basis with an exciting new project? Help would be needed over an extended period for an hour or two at a time and would involve working with the person engaged on the project.

Contact Janet Walker on
01928.733326

The 2006 Cathedral Lecture and Workshops

Unity and Diversity in the Church of the Apostles

Loveday Alexander, Hon Canon Theologian

Friday 20 January at 7.30 pm in the Cathedral

Admission Free

Workshops on Saturday 21 January in the Cloister Room

Pre-booking essential.
Contact Val Fisher at Retreat House on : 01244.321801

Where's the Dean? He's never here! We never see him! What does he spend his time doing?

I hear these comments, and I do understand them. When I first came to Chester three years ago, I naively thought I would simply be Vicar of a big city church, with plenty of time to be involved in
Christleton Parish Magazine

worship and pastoral care. But I soon discovered that being Dean of a major English Cathedral carries expectations far beyond what I had imagined! Nothing is commoner than for me to receive a letter from another Dean concluding with the statement : “dictated by the Dean, and signed in his absence”!

So I am hidden for many reasons. The Dean of an English Cathedral is expected to contribute to the institutions and fabric of English society, which involves making links beyond the Cathedral walls – in the Diocese, in the City and County, with the Armed Forces, and (in my own case) with Education, Medicine, and the Roman Catholic Church.

So what does this Dean do? Amongst other activities within the Cathedral – Chapter and Canons’ Meetings, Fundraising, Staff Events, General Synod, Deans Meetings, Church Courses, Governor of Kings’ School and University of Chester, Teaching at Liverpool University, Northern Ordination Course teaching, University of Chester teaching. Within Health and Medicine – General Medical Council, Hospice Support work, and wider links with City/Chester Councils, and events - Society of Ordained Scientists, Benedictine Monastery Links, Anglican Centre Rome, and Cheshire Regiment!!!

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Mr Bill Morley who will be 97 on 5 December and to Mary, his wife, who will be 88 in January. A real “Derby and Joan” couple.

RETAIL THERAPY EVENING

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the evening by either helping or supporting us on the night and, despite being let down by 2 contributors at the very last minute, (the famous store seconds and the candles), you will be pleased to hear that the final figure of £304 was raised and will go towards the Christmas Fair Charities.

Janet Milton

*A lot of money is tainted - It
taint yours and it taint mine.*

*A boiled egg in the
morning is hard to beat.*

*A midget fortune-teller
who escapes from prison
is a small medium at large.*

2005 COMMUNITY PRIDE COMPETITION

COMPETING UNIT CHRISTLETON

Judges' Comments:

We were most impressed by the very high standards that the community of Christleton has achieved. Our first impression, as we walked into the centre and saw the village green, was one of perfection! Everything that can be seen, in doing a 360 turn from this point, underlines this – the church, pump, village room and all other buildings very well maintained and all hanging baskets well tended and watered.

This evidence of care and pride extended to the local shops as well – clean, tidy and up-to-date local events advertised in the windows. All notice boards well maintained and, on one of our visits, this included a large banner in the centre of the village advertising the forthcoming village fete.

We then moved on to the pond and surrounding area – again perfection! Whenever we came here there were always people sitting and enjoying the view. There is plenty of seating provided in this area and we noticed that there is also seating provided at many points around

the village – all well maintained.

Whenever we visited Christleton there was never any litter to be found and the village assistant responsible for litter picking is to be congratulated for such diligence.

We have taken into account your comments concerning the scout hut and surrounding area but it would benefit from some maintenance and tidying up as there appears to be a playgroup meeting there during the week.

We enjoyed our visits and you should be justly proud of such a lovely village. Well done Christleton.

Christleton came second this year in our category of 1,001 – 2,500 population with Bunbury the overall winner.

Janet Brown

WELL DONE

Christleton came runners up in the 2005 Community Pride (best kept village) competition. Included in the marking was 20 out of 20 for the churchyard which has been maintained by Paul Gresty and son of Guilden Sutton, telephone 01244 300336. Thanks to Paul and his team for doing such a good job..

David Mercer

CONFIRMATION 2006

The Bishop of Chester will be coming to St James to Confirm candidates on Sunday 21 May 2006 at 10.45 am. There will be a first 'get-together' for 'junior' candidates (12+ at Confirmation) on Monday 12 December at 6.30 pm in the Lady Chapel when all will be welcome. If anyone is interested but cannot manage that time please contact the Rector (335663).

DEC 6TH ST NICHOLAS' DAY

Father Christmas is as old as Europe. Once he was Woden, lashing his rein-deer through the darkness of northern midwinter. Then he encountered the Church, and She transformed him into a saint, the much-loved Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (in south-west Turkey) in the fourth century. St Nicholas became the patron saint of children, and was given 6 December as his day. Since the 6th century St Nicholas has been venerated in both East and West, though virtually nothing is known of his life. Some believe he may have been one of the fathers at the Council of Nicea (325), imprisoned during the Emperor Diocletian's persecution. According to legend, Nicholas was an extremely generous man. He revived three schoolboys murdered by an innkeeper in a tub of pickles. He rescued three young women from prostitution by giving their

poverty-stricken father three bags of gold. (Hence the use of three gold balls as the pawnbroker's signs.) Over the centuries many, including children, sailors, unmarried girls, pawnbrokers and moneylenders have claimed him as their patron. Perhaps it was on account of S Nicholas' generosity that in recent centuries children began to write little notes sometime before 6 December, to tell him about the toys they specially wanted. These notes were then left on the windowsill at night - or else on a ledge in the chimney. But St Nicholas Day chanced to lie in the magnetic field of a much more potent festival.... and after awhile his activities were moved towards Christmas. Then in Bavaria the children still left their notes on the window sill, but they addressed them to Liebes Christkind - Krishkinkle as they knew him - and the saint's part in the matter was simply to deliver the letters in heaven.

The most popular result of the cult of St Nicholas has been the institution of Santa Claus. He is based on Nicholas' patronage of children and the custom in the Low Countries of giving presents on his feast. Santa Claus has reached his zenith in America, where the Dutch Protestants of New Amsterdam (New York) united to it Nordic folklore legends of a magician who both punished naughty children and rewarded good ones with presents.



The John Sellers Charity School

Last month I reported on the obituary of Canon Lionel Garnett, and published a detailed map of the old charity school in St James' churchyard in the magazine. By an amazing co- incidence, I came across a document which describes the meeting to raise the finance for that school building!. This is printed below with acknowledgement to the Cheshire County Record Office, and is from the Rev. Canon A.A. Guest Williams, Family Archive. The letter is signed by the Rector Thomas Mostyn, Robert Townsend Recorder of Chester, who lived in Christleton Old Hall, his son in law Thomas Ince, who built Christleton Hall (now the Law

College), and J W Hignett of Rowton.

The Trustees appointed by Mr. John Sellers Charity Deed dated the 23rd of December 1779, intend to meet in the vestry in Christleton Church on Sunday 24th June immediately after divine service, to nominate and fix upon poor children belonging to or inhabiting in Christleton or Littleton, to be instructed in reading English, Writing, Arithmetic, Spinning, Sewing, Knitting or other manual work, and also to appoint a proper person or persons to instruct the said Children, and to fix upon an allowance which is to be made for that purpose and to carry the charity deed into Execution. The surviving Trustees appointed by the

said Mr. John Sellers , the Right Honorable Earl Grosvenor, the Reverend Thomas Mostyn, Rector of Christleton, John Clegg, James Croxton & Thomas Ince Esquires and Gerard Townsend, John Hignett & John Cheers Gentlemen, and all other persons who now have or hereafter many have an estate of Freehold in Possession in Christleton or Littleton of the yearly value of twenty pounds or upward, above Reprises and all such other Persons as shall contribute the sum of five guineas or upwards towards the Building of a School & School House upon that Part of the Charity Lands which adjoins to the church yard in Christleton are also appointed Trustees of the said Charity, and all said Trustees whether Male or Female are empowered to vote in person by their proxies(to be appointed in writing) at all Vestry Meetings relating to the said Charities- It is apprehended that the Rents of the Charity Lands will be sufficient to pay for the yearly schooling of about ten poor children. Dated the 10th day of June 1787 Signed by Thomas Mostyn, Rector of Christleton. Robert Townsend, Thomas Ince and John Hignett.

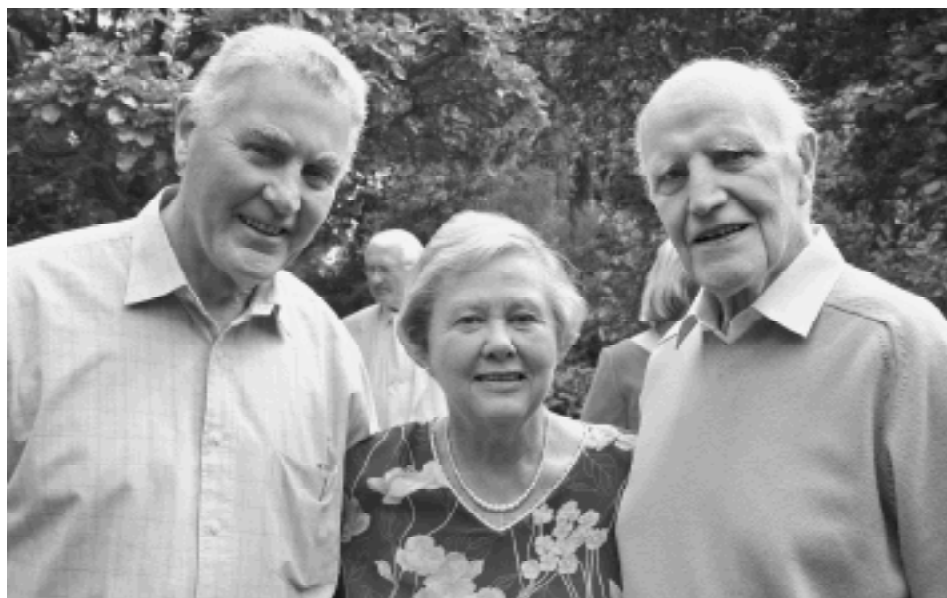
David Cummings



CARDS & WILDLIFE CHARITY CARDS

David Cummings has produced a limited number of Christmas cards showing St James' Church in the snow, to raise money for the three Christmas Charities, CATH (Homeless in Chester), The Church Urban Fund and the Mango Tree Trust. The packs are on sale priced £2 for 5 of the same design. They can be obtained from Church or from David on 332410.

He has also produced and donated 400 packs of unique wildlife letter cards to be used to raise funds for The Hospice of the Good Shepherd in Chester and Hope House Children's Hospices in North Wales and Shropshire. These cards in mixed packs of five can be purchased from him on 332410 or the Hospices, priced £2.00 per pack. The packs include photographs of a kingfisher, swallowtail butterfly, banded aragon damselfly, Christleton Swans doing their mating dance etc.



25th Anniversary of Mr. Les George's Retirement

Christleton High School Former Staff Association held a special Dinner on October 16th at the Cheshire View, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the retirement of the first Headteacher of the school, Mr Les George. A large gathering of former and present members of staff, were there to pay tribute to a fine teacher and a wonderful Head. Wherever you travel in the country or even in the world, mention the village of Christleton, and you will be asked "Do you know Les George?" He is respected everywhere, by former pupils and fellow educationalists as being an inspirational leader, one who set such very high standards, but with a great compassion for his students. His school, Christleton School was one big family, with incredible team

spirit, where everyone felt important, and was encouraged to achieve the highest possible standards whether in the academic, sporting, or dramatic fields. There was always a great deal of laughter, and from within this special school atmosphere he and his staff team had created, lifelong friendships were made. Among the guests were three of the founder members of staff from 1958, Les George, Philip Hodges and Beryl Griffin (Randles). * Pictured above. After an excellent meal, short and amusing speeches were made by John Davies Secretary of the Association and Phil Hodges, before the members spent the rest of the evening, remembering the happy times spent at the school.

David Cummings



Nature Notes

Christleton Pit Working Group.

The group has worked twice a week through the month of October, clearing islands of the excess amphibious bistort plant growing on the middle of the pond. This has resulted in a much larger area of surface water, and combined with the almost continuous rainfall (5 inches of rain) has considerably improved the water depth. Most of the work was done, by hand clearing the vegetation from the boat, and then using grappling irons attached to a long rope to remove it to the edges, where the material was put into ditches to decay naturally. We seemed to pick up huge swan mussels in every load, indicating

that there must be a considerable population in the Pit. The highlight of every Pit Group activity is warming refreshment supplied by Tony Gardner, who seems to sense exactly when aching muscles need some liquid sustenance. On one such occasion we were greeted with a wonderful display of small birds in the trees above our heads. Up to six long tailed tits tumbled in the foliage, while four tiny gold crest's fought territorial claims, a coal tit gave its distinctive call, whilst several blue tits twittered, calling others to feed, and larger black headed great tits made their presence known with their sharp piping calls. Fieldfare,

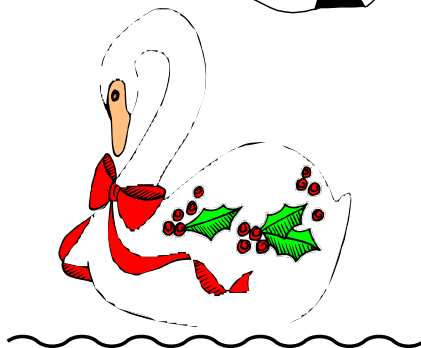
the large Scandinavian thrushes that arrive as winter visitors regularly flew over the Pit in groups that morning, and had devoured the berries at Hockenhull in less than a week. Numbers of the smaller thrushes, redwings are also around feeding in the village fields and hedgerows. Our swans and cygnets have now split up, but the pair seen at the Pit during October, were not our pair. They were CL06 CL07 ringed in Chester in July and were prospecting for a territory. One of our 2005 cygnets CL26 was seen in Southport in mid October, and the last report I had (Nov 5th) was that it is still there on the Marine Lake. The picture shows David Evans, Victor Parfreman and Eric Kenyon clearing the weed near the Alms Houses in front of an appropriate sign found abandoned in the Pit.

David Cummings

GIFT AID ENVELOPES

There is now a supply of salmon coloured Gift Aid envelopes for 'extra' or 'special' donations. They can be found in the pews and/or from the back of Church. If you pay tax and wish to gift aid your offer-tory but do not have the regular set of envelopes (or need an 'extra'), please put your donation in one of the envelopes and fill in your name etc. as specified. This enables us to claim an extra 28p for every pound you give. Many thanks.

A Very Happy Christmas



*Love is what's in the room
with you at Christmas if you
stop opening presents for a
minute and look around.*

The Christleton Parish Magazine team would like to wish our contributors, distributors and readers a Very Happy Christmas and All Good Wishes for 2006



LOCAL EVENTS DIARY

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Held in the Parish Hall from 10.30 am – 11.45 am each Sunday during term-time, except when Family Service is held at St James. For further details please contact Berenice Hogg, 336779.

CHRISTLETON LADIES GUILD

Held at the Christleton Methodist Church, commencing at 2pm, Tuesdays fortnightly, £1 admission includes refreshments. For further information contact Joan Webb, 335518.

ST JAMES' TUESDAY WALKING GROUP

Tuesday 12th December

Christleton. Ramble through Christleton Parish & Christmas Dinner.

6 miles [easy].

Depart Church Car Park at 10.00am (On foot)

Please contact David before Tuesday 5th December if you intend to walk, in order that the Christmas Dinner can be arranged.

CHRISTLETON

METHODIST CHURCH

We meet for Informal Prayers and a Simple Lunch on the first Thursday of each month at 12 noon. All welcome. There is no charge for the lunch but a donation to cover costs would be appreciated.

CHRISTLETON W.I.

Meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7.15 pm in the Parish Hall. Next meeting **14th December**
Christmas Meeting

CHRISTLETON W.I.

COME TO A CHRISTMAS MORNING
at The Old Farm

Saturday December 10th
10.00 am until 12 noon

In Aid of the ALZHEIMERS
SOCIETY

Cakes / Raffle / Books / Bring & Buy

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

The January magazine will be available for collection from Church on Christmas Day - 25th December



LOCAL EVENTS DIARY

CHRISTLETON WEDNESDAY GROUP

FESTIVE LUNCH

Wednesday 7 December 2005

12.00 noon

Christleton Parish Hall

In aid of the

Multiple Sclerosis Support Centre

Ticket £8, (including glass of wine)
available from members

CHRISTLETON GARDENING CLUB

The next meeting will take place on
12 December with a demonstra-
tion of "Christmas Table Decora-
tions" by Mrs Angela Haswell.

CHRISTLETON W.I. MONTHLY WHIST DRIVE

Meet in the Parish Hall on
the last Wednesday of the
month at 2pm. All welcome

CHESTER FLOWER CLUB

Meetings are held in Christleton
Parish Hall on the 3rd Wednesday
of the month at 1.30pm.
Details of any events can be
obtained from the Secretary,
Mrs Edna Ellis telephone
Chester 346497.

DECEMBER RAMBLE SUNDAY 11TH

Join us again for an exhilarating
pre-Christmas scramble up Dinas
Bran, Llangollen, and for mince
pies and mulled wine at the top. We
may try a different route this year
as we are extending our fitness!
Dogs welcome on leads, please
and can be a tiny bit slippery if wet!
Meet 1.30 in Church car park.

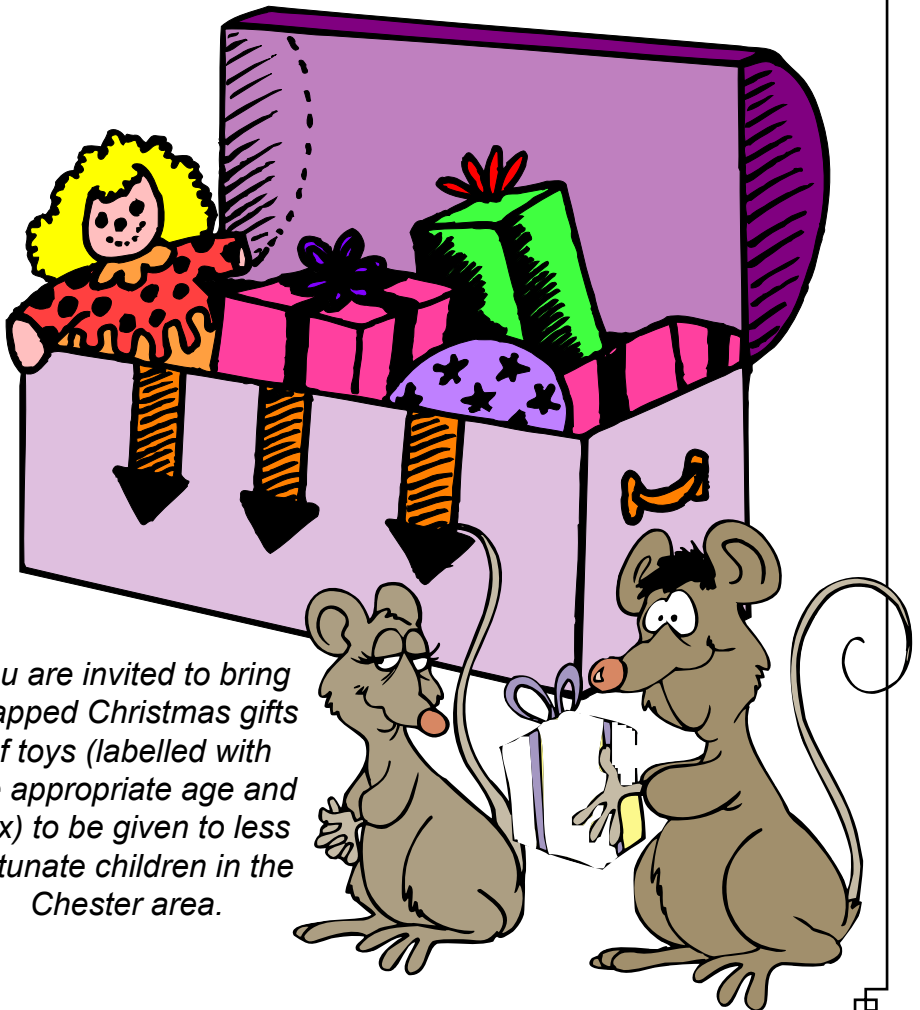
Liz McClure
Telephone: 409414

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

Please ensure all items for inclusion in the January edition are
sent to the Editor, David Bull, The Old Rectory, Plough Lane,
as soon as possible **BEFORE Friday 9th December.**

Family 'Toy' Service at St. James

Sunday 11th December
at 10.45 am



You are invited to bring wrapped Christmas gifts of toys (labelled with the appropriate age and sex) to be given to less fortunate children in the Chester area.

Nine leaders from six major faiths stand against euthanasia

In an unprecedented move, nine leading figures from the six major faith groups in the UK have joined forces to give a serious warning about any proposed change in the law to allow assisted suicide and voluntary euthanasia. The action came just a few days before the high profile debate in the House of Lords on the Select Committee report on Lord Joffe's Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill. The nine leaders, representing many millions of adherents, published an open letter - signed by them all - that was sent to all members of both Houses of Parliament. The religious leaders reminded Parliament that legalising assisted suicide and voluntary euthanasia would radically alter the moral basis of our society by severely undermining respect for life. They collectively re-affirmed their belief in the sanctity of human life which is underpinned by rapid advances in palliative care. These mean that suffering can be minimised - the arguments put forward by the pro-euthanasia lobby that assisted suicide is necessary to ease the sufferings of the terminally ill therefore lack any credible scientific evidence. The leaders also stressed the opposition of the vast majority of

medical professionals, including GPs, to any change in the law on intentional killing. They pointed to the serious problems being faced by countries that have legalised euthanasia or assisted suicide. In the Netherlands, 1 in 32 deaths now involves some element of legal or illegal euthanasia; a similar law in the UK could lead to 13,000 deaths a year. Furthermore Dutch pro-euthanasia groups are now campaigning for further relaxations, for example to include people suffering from dementia. They concluded with a warning that the so-called 'right to die' would inexorably become the duty to die and potentially economic pressures and convenience would come to dominate decision-making.

GROSVENOR MUSEUM SOCIETY

Wednesday 11 January 2006

"The first Duke of Westminster : his influence on Chester Buildings".

Lecture by Eileen Simpson in the Grosvenor Museum at 7.30 pm

Members : free. Non-members :
£4 payable at the door

Membership details from Ken
Holding – tel : 312689

What's so 'happy' about Christmas?

Donald Allister, Archdeacon of Chester, considers the way we celebrate Christmas. Many people won't have a happy Christmas this year. And they are not just the famine victims and the hurricane victims and the earthquake victims and refugees in far-off countries, or those who sleep rough in most British cities and towns, or even people who 'live' in hostels or bed-and-breakfast accommodation. These unhappy people will include many 'ordinary' English people who have enough food and a roof over their heads. Traditionally there have been strong pressures on us all to enjoy Christmas as a family occasion. Over recent years it has become more of a television time. This is rapidly altering Christmas-time in our pleasure-seeking society into a party opportunity. But those without families, or with family pains and pressures, or with recent bereavement, can find Christmas one of the worst times of year. Many are realising the emptiness of television (Christmas viewing figures keep falling, even including satellite and cable channels). And those who cannot cope with parties and bonhomie feel left out and lonely. Isn't it time that we re-evaluated how to celebrate, how to enjoy ourselves? No one is against families or parties, and television brings us real benefits. This is not even a plea to put Jesus Christ or religion back into Christmas (though a trip to church and a reading of the opening chapters of Luke's Gospel wouldn't do any harm). It is simply that

many of our ways of enjoying ourselves are actually destructive, bringing about more misery than happiness. What we often end up doing is worshipping the god of family or television or food or alcohol or sex. All these things are right and good in their place. All have a real part to play in most of our lives. But when we elevate any of them to the highest position then we experience a few days of selfish over-indulgence, followed by a time of miserable recovery, then an increased sense of emptiness and pointlessness as life begins again after the New Year. Why not get our priorities right? Learn to spend time in God's presence. Learn to receive his love and forgiveness. Learn to accept others as he accepts us. Learn to make our whole lives, not just Christmas, celebrations of love, goodness and generosity.

Chester Bach Singers

Christmas Carols by Candle-light

Tarvin Parish Church, Sunday,
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and
St. Mary's, Handbridge, Saturday,
December 17th.
at 7..30 pm
Tickets: £9 (concessions also)
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**Please note change of first
venue for this year only**

THOMAS BRASSEY



Thomas Brassey is one of the great unsung heroes of the Victorian age. He was born on the 7th of November 1805 at Bruera; the eldest child of John and Elizabeth Brassey. The family can trace their ancestry back to before the Norman Conquest and they have farmed in Cheshire for hundreds of years. There are Brasseys buried in Christleton graveyard. In 1817 Thomas was sent to 'The Boarding School' in Vicar's Lane, Chester, from where in 1821 he went to work for Mr Lawton, a land agent and surveyor who seconded him to work on the A5 road then being built by Thomas Telford. Later he established a brick works in Birkenhead and built the road from Tranmere to Bromborough. Many years later he was to become a multi millionaire and feted by the Emperors of France and Austria, yet he is now almost forgotten. Who was this enigmatic man?

In 1827 George Stephenson was building the Liverpool – Manchester Railway and went to buy stone from Brassey who was working the Storeton quarry on the Wirral. He inspired Brassey to try his hand at building railways. Brassey's first job in 1834 was to build the Penkridge viaduct south of Stafford which is still used today by trains travelling at 90 miles an hour. From this beginning, Brassey never looked back.. During his life he built one third of all the railways in Great Britain and a twentieth in the whole of the world – France, Spain, Norway, Austria, Germany, Denmark, Italy, India, Mauritius, Australia, Poland, Russia, South American and Canada where he built the 540 mile long Grand Trunk Railway. He employed up to 80,000 navvies – the largest industrial army in the world - yet he had no office or secretaries. Along with Peto and Betts he sent out a 14 mile double track railway and saved the British Army in the Crimea. It is said that this railway saved more lives than did Florence Nightingale. He was so loved by his navvies, an uncouth muscular rabble, that when he lay on his deathbed many of them travelled great distances to see him and to weep. He also built docks and warehouses, harbours, a major part of London's sewers, major drainage schemes, housing, mines and much more. By honest means he became the wealthiest commoner in the 19th century and left an estate valued at £5,000,000. Not bad for a farmer's

Christleton Parish Magazine

son from just down the road of whom most of us have never heard.

Thomas Brassey's Bicentenary was celebrated on Sunday 6 November. It culminated in an evensong service at Aldford Parish Church where he was christened. His parents' tomb is outside the door of the Church and a lantern was set on it. A great, great, great niece, Caroline Brassey, was present at the service. Mr John Whittingham, dressed as Brassey, read the Old and New Testament readings taken from Wisdom of Solomon, Chapter 6, and St Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, Chapter 4. County Councillor Douglas Haines gave a eulogy.

There is a Brassey tomb in our own Churchyard.

Margaret Croston

I Will Keep Christmas

I will keep Christmas in the cold hedgerow,
With red, shining holly and winter snow.

I will keep Christmas far from any town
On the frosted side of the windswept
down.

Stars will be candles of sweet silver fire,
Swinging at midnight over tree and spire,
Waves will be booming bells and break
the air,

With glory and greeting and winged
prayer.

I will keep Christmas alone and away,
Praising the Lord of all on Christmas Day.

P A Ropes

Vicars and stickers at board game launch

Getting saved is a dicey business in a new board game recently launched at the Scottish Christian Resources Exhibition, Edinburgh. In Salvation Challenge, each player has to land on the Calvary square, wear a Jesus Saved Me sticker on their forehead, then give 'kingdom cash' to Christian missionaries. In an ironic twist on the classic board game Monopoly, Salvation Challenge is won by the first person to give away all his money. 'There is a serious side to Salvation Challenge,' say its inventors, Glory to God Games. 'It can be a great tool for evangelism.' The game is now on tour in America.

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NEWS FROM THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH

Debbie Simpson is from Northern Ireland and has spent time training for her laboratory work in Hopitaly Vaovao Mahafaly 'Good News Hospital' in Mandritsara, Madagascar. She writes:

Throughout the course of one week, there are many times when I say to myself, **"This never happened to me in N. Ireland!"** One such event occurred very recently. Myriam and I had invited a couple of Malagasy friends round for dinner after church one Sunday. We had spent a lot of Saturday in preparation for our visitors and had made what can only be described as the best mango pie ever! It was to be the perfect ending to our dinner. On Saturday evening I placed the pie inside a sealed freezer bag and put it in the fridge. On Sunday, when the time came for the desert, I went to the fridge and carefully pulled out the mango pie and carried it to the kitchen. I almost cried because the freezer bag was crawling with ants - inside and out! Once my emotions were under control, I opened the bag and brushed off the ants. Thankfully it was a sealed pastry crust pie and no ants had managed to find their way inside. So since we had nothing else to serve up as dessert, I put a slice of pie on each plate and prayed that no one would discover a wandering ant,

and took the plates to our guests thinking **"This never happened to me in N. Ireland. It's a Mandritsara Moment!"** I just cannot imagine what would have been my response to that situation had I been in the UK. Would I have excused myself and run out to the nearest corner shop and bought a cake? Would there have been a frozen pie in the freezer that I could have used instead? The thought of going ahead and serving the pie would probably not have even crossed my mind! **The battle against the bugs has not been an easy one recently because of the electricity cuts we've been experiencing since mid-May.** What we would call the 'fridge' in Ireland has been nothing more than just a white cupboard for the past 4 months. It has been frustrating to say the least. Yet, it has taught me to better appreciate the things that I do have, luxuries which my Malagasy colleagues for example do not have in their homes: running water, flushing toilet, oven etc. **Although it may seem trivial to some, I know that I would really appreciate your prayers for little, every day things - including ants!** Please share with us in Madagascar and pray that I will learn the 'secret of being content in any and every situation,' so that my Christian love for the Malagasy people does not suffer as a result.

Debbie / Gwen Knight

DIXON'S ALMSHOUSES

A vacancy exists for an upstairs flat at Dixon's Almshouses. Priority will be given according to the terms of the Trust. These state that they should be for residents of the ecclesiastical Parish of Christleton (Christleton, Littleton, Rowton, Cotton Edmunds and Cotton Abbotts) who do not own any property. If there are no applicants who fulfil these criteria priority will be given to applicants who come closest to meeting them. The present Trustees are the Order of St John Care Trust based in Lincolnshire, but there is a local committee.

For further details phone the Rector (01244 335663) or Mr Nigel Bromage (01244 336119). Applications, indicating ways in which the applicant meets the terms of the Trust, should be sent to the Rector.

Jewish fathers

A Jewish father was troubled by the way his son turned out, and went to see his Rabbi about it. "I brought him up in the faith, gave him a very expensive bar mitzvah, cost me a fortune to educate him. Then he tells me last week he has decided to be a Christian! Rabbi, where did I go wrong?" "Funny you should come to me," said the Rabbi. "Like you I, too, brought my boy up in the faith, put him through University, cost me a fortune, then one day he, too, tells me he has decided to become a Christian." "What did you do?" asked the father. "I turned to God for the answer" replied the Rabbi. "And what did he say?" pressed the father. "God said, 'Funny you should come to me...'"

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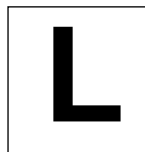
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CHRISTMAS STAR

There are stars everywhere we look at Christmas time, on trees, cards or decorations. But the star only appears in one version of the Christmas story in St Matthew's Gospel (chapter 2, verses 1-12). Modern astronomers say that it wasn't a new star, or a meteor or comet. What was unusual in the heavens was that the planets Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were close together forming a triangle in the group of stars known as Pisces. The wise men who saw the 'star' and followed it would have interpreted this as the sign of a great event in the land of the Jews.

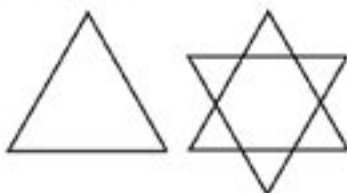


Many countries still celebrate the Christmas star in special ways. The 'Festival of the Star' is held in Poland after the evening meal on Christmas Eve, when the village priest, as the 'Star Man', asks the children questions about their religion. In Alaska, children carry a star-shaped figure around the houses and sing carols, hoping to be given Christmas treats.

STAR WRAPPING

Make some really smart wrapping paper for your presents this year. Use plain brown paper and print it with stars (cut a star shape out of half a potato and use yellow poster paint).

Or use a gold or silver pen to draw stars all over the brown paper. Can't draw stars? Yes, you can! Draw a triangle, and then draw another triangle upside down on top of the first triangle. Easy!



Knock, knock

Who's there?

Wenceslas.

Wenceslas who?

Wenceslas train home?



Knock knock

Who's there?

Wayne

Wayne who?

Wayne in a manger.

LEPROSY MISSION

Stamp out leprosy!

Please donate your used stamps so that money can be raised for Leprosy Mission. Stamps should be trimmed to quarter inch border around the stamp, and can be left at the back of Church.

PLEASE TELL US...

If you know of any special birthdays, anniversaries or anyone celebrating a special occasion, who is a Parish Magazine reader, please inform the editor, David Bull.

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years until school age are accepted. Please contact the Supervisor, Carole Penny, on 336586 for further details.

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The van calls weekly: alternate Thursdays all day and alternate Fridays in Quarry Lane 11.15 am – 12.45 pm. For further details of when the van is next in your area, please telephone Upton Library on 380053.

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Saucy Punchline

Reading this space last month left you in mid air owing to the lack of an ending. So here we go again.

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup to come out of the bottle. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her four-year old daughter to answer it. "It's the minister, Mum," the child said to her mother. Then she told her caller: "Mummy can't come to the phone right now. She's hitting the bottle."

Parish Registers for October 2005

The Wedding Service.

1st Simon Paul White 6 Oaklands Guilden Sutton and Victoria Emma
Champken
9 Croft Close Rowton.

"Those who God has joined together, let not man divide."

The Funeral Service.

5th Janet Elizabeth Douglas 10 Woodfield Grove, Hoole, Chester (Burial of
Ashes)
7th Rachel Mary Barrow 1 Haslin Crescent, Christleton.
10th Sheila Jane Abbott "Avondale", Whitchurch Road, Christleton.
13th Lilian Cluett 1 Rowan Park, Christleton.
27th Gwen Rees Iddenshall Hall, Clotton.
31st Doreen Murray 11 Cross Green, Upton by Chester.

"Rest eternal grant unto them."

Offertories

October	Cash	CSE	2005	2004
2nd	271.40	696.05	967.45	789.75
9th	325.82	915.00	1240.82	1197.74
16th	235.95	635.00	860.95	788.15
23rd	150.35	568.00	718.35	820.83
30th	174.08	621.50	795.58	908.55
Totals			£4,583.15	£4,505.02

"Of your own do we give you"

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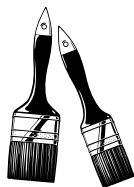
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	10.45 a.m	Parish Communion	1st & 3rd Sundays
		Family Service	2nd Sunday
		Mattins	4th & 5th Sundays
	6.30 p.m	Evensong	1st, 2nd & 3rd Sundays
		Evening Communion	4th Sunday
		Songs of Praise	5th Sunday
WEDNESDAYS	10.45 a.m.	Holy Communion	
SAINTS	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	

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