

FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS

FORDINGBRIDGE AND RINGWOOD PARISH MAGAZINE

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Fr Paul Says.....



This year, Ash Wednesday falls on the 5th March and our Lenten journey towards Easter and Pentecost begins. During these forty days we prepare for the celebration of the Lord's Paschal Mystery which is his death and resurrection, and we shall not be alone.

We are blessed this year as we have a person preparing for reception into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil in Fordingbridge. Please keep him and our other enquirers (those thinking about becoming Catholics) in your prayer. He will join us in our Lenten observance.

All those preparing to become Catholics will attend the 'Rite of Election' at the Cathedral in Portsmouth on Saturday 8th

The Thirty-Nine Steps



John Buchan wrote the novel and Alfred Hitchcock made the film (Didn't BBC do it too?) but this was a little different. We saw it at the Salisbury Playhouse.

The story goes that Richard Hannay, John Buchan's hero, holidaying in London meets a young woman who declares herself a spy, divulges secret information to him and is then horribly murdered. Hannay is arrested for the crime but makes a thrilling getaway to Scotland, hoping to solve the mystery of the thirty-nine steps of the title, and break the spy ring. Thus starts a series of adventures involving Hannay on the run, alarms and excursions; evading capture, being captured, falling in with a pretty girl and, finally, finding a solution to the mystery in The London Palladium whose memory man holds the key to the thirty nine steps required for the production of a revolutionary aero-engine.

So, a spy-thriller then? Well, no, because the four-person company present over a hundred and fifty characters and do it as a fast-moving comedy in the manner almost of Keystone Cops. It really did work very well with the actors moving swiftly from one scene and character to another, and stage props being used creatively to represent a variety of locations: a flat, a street, a train – inevitably, I suppose, a bedroom where Hannay and his love interest find themselves manacled together, and, finally to the stage of The London Palladium for the denouement. There was a group of South Wilts Girls in one corner of the auditorium, and they were in hysterics, so it must have been good!

We enjoyed it anyway. It was presented by Wiltshire Creative in collaboration with The Octagon Theatre, Bolton and The Mercury Theatre Colchester and adapted by one Patrick Barlow.

We are lucky to have such an excellent local Theatre and one which has always enjoyed a fine reputation. I even remember the old theatre, but the modern one with its semi-thrust stage is a big improvement. We went on the first night and it was quite

March. They will meet Bishop Philip, and he will invite them to become Catholics at the Easter Vigil.



Here are some of the words Bishop Philip will use as part of his invitation:

“During the period of their preparation, they have reflected on the mystery of their Baptism and have come to appreciate more deeply the presence of Christ in their lives. They have shared the company of their brothers and sisters, joined with them in prayer, and endeavoured to follow Christ’s commands more perfectly”

As we enter the spirit of Lent, these words to intending Catholics apply to us as well who may be well seasoned members of the Catholic Church. None of us, no matter how old we might be, have actually ‘made it’ because the journey continues for us all. We may feel that we know all about our faith and that we keep the ‘rules’ but there is far more to it than that. Each day of life brings with it the opportunities to grow and develop in our ability to be aware of Jesus Christ and his risen presence in our lives. This gift of ‘spiritual sight’ is a gift of the Holy Spirit to which we must be open in gratitude. That openness is marked by the kind of love that Jesus has for us, by generous daily prayer and by a continual willingness to change and to become more like Jesus.

Lent, then, is a ‘joyful season’ in which we make a special effort to “reflect on the mystery of our Baptism and come to appreciate more deeply the presence of Christ in our lives”. Our Baptism, which may have happened a while ago, is not a past event, but a living and dynamic reality. Baptism brings about a relationship with Jesus because we become a member of his risen body. A membership which continues each day, and which eventually will bring us through the change of death to a share in the life of God. It is prayer that will bring an appreciation of the presence of Jesus which will be a source of joy and transformation. The Bishop’s words at the Rite of Election speak about ‘sharing the company of our brothers and sisters and joining them in prayer’. Sharing the company of another is enabled by the Holy Spirit who is the source and principle of unity. It is why we must work for the kind of unity among ourselves which reflects the unity of the Trinity in whose image we are created. And we must join in prayer, which has its sharpest focus in the celebration of Sunday Mass. That is why the Church expects us to attend Mass every Sunday. I know that some feel unworthy about coming to Mass but the Lord extends his love to all of us no matter how unworthy we might feel.

full, but there was space available. Do support our local theatre! On into March.

(Chris Basham)

Seconds out

SECONDS OUT.....

No, not a boxing match but the latest word on the Bell!



Thanks to the sparkling generosity of many parishioners, we now have £1400 banked to pay for the restoration of the church bell at Our Lady of Sorrows.

We have one final fund-raising effort lined up to cover the outstanding cost. It's a music event - on **Saturday 12th April** - featuring a band now well-known to our community but going out for one night only as 'The Bellboys'! They'll be playing a couple of sets of music - newish and not quite so new - with additional support from some special guests.

There will be a fabulous draw (please let me know if you can donate a prize) and a Bell-Specific competition with its own top prize.

Above all, it's another excellent opportunity

to demonstrate we are a live and thriving parish. Tickets will be available soon. If you would like to assist us with this event in any way please don't hesitate to let me know using the contact details below.

Best wishes,

(Larry Bartel)

Synoptic Gospels



In earlier editions of *Forty Days and Forty Nights* I explained how the three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) were written at different times, some years after the death of Jesus and intended for different audiences and how there was most probably a further gospel, known as Q, which has disappeared. In this article I plan to explore two great Biblical events and see if the three gospels say the same thing, or if different, by how much.

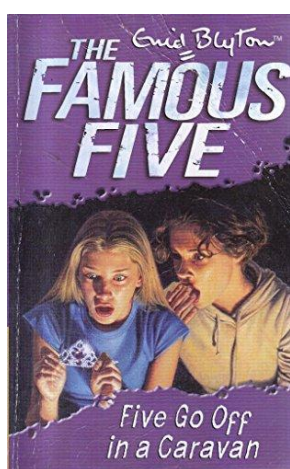
Probably the most important Biblical event for most of us is the institution of the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist. Here Luke contains a long preamble to the main event when he says:

He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” Then took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, “Take this and divide it amongst yourselves, for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine

And “We endeavour to follow Christ’s commands more perfectly.” Lent is a time for the kind of change which removes obstacles to love and to becoming the person God created us to be. The change and renewal of Lent can take many different forms: it could be reviewing our life of prayer to make it more generous and committed and praying that we might see the obstacles which hinder our progress; it could be about renewing our commitment to Sunday Mass; it could be about using the Sacraments of Healing (Confession and Anointing of the Sick) more frequently; it could be about using our resources for the good of others, especially those who are deprived of the basic necessities of life. Happy Lent to all and I look forward to seeing everyone at the Easter Triduum.

(Fr Paul)

Reading Recommendations

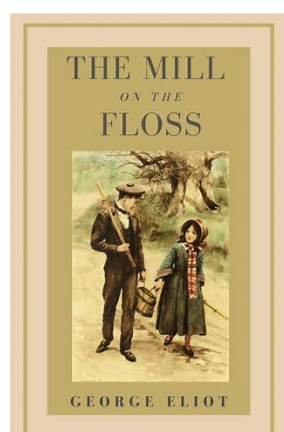


Reviewed by Gabriel Gamble

The Famous Five are Dick, Julian, Anne and their cousin Georgina (who likes to be called George), and their dog Timmy. Their parents let them go away for a holiday in two caravans, which were pulled by horses.

After a long journey they go up a hill where they find a circus. But two men from the circus are villains and steal jewels and money. The children befriend a circus boy called Nobby who has a chimpanzee called Pongo. The two men (Dan and Lou) have been cruel to Nobby and beaten him up. Together they find out where the jewels and money are hidden, but Dan and Lou capture them and lock them up. The rest of the story is about how they escape and get the police who arrest the men.

I liked this story because it is very exciting, but it turns out alright in the end.



until the kingdom of God comes.” (Luke 22: 15-18).

After that the three gospels all say something very similar.

Mark

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, “Take, this is my body.”

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

(Mark 14: 22-25)

Matthew

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: this is my body.”

Then he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying. “Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

(Matthew 26: 26-29)

Luke

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”

(Luke 22: 19-20)

(John Elliot)

(My apologies to John who set out the three texts as a table so you could compare them across. Unfortunately, my format refuses to accept tables, so I have had to put them in consecutively. I do try to do as little violence as possible to what you give me!)

Welcome to Worship



A hundred and ten of us assembled for ‘Welcome to Worship’ in St Joseph’s Church, Christchurch for this event. The organisers praised the Lord because they were only expecting about sixty!

St Joseph’s, built in 1992, is hexagonal, and I felt the layout of the seating with wide rows, but not many so that no one was sitting very far away from the front, was conducive to worship.

Richard Martin led, and, after some preliminaries, the worship opened with prayer and songs – first traditional ones, then a beautiful worship song written by the man himself. The Bible reading was, ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God.’ A very competent worship band accompanied us.

Then Richard Martin spoke about a man who had a burden for those living in poverty abroad, so he thought he should serve God overseas. Then he felt a burden for the homeless in this country - so thought was his calling to care for rough sleepers? It was then suggested to him that he should serve God here, where he was. So, the subject of this talk was, ‘How is the Kingdom of God already present, and what are we called to do differently?’

The dreary month of February is excellent time for re-reading a classic and it is many decades since I read *The Mill on the Floss*. But before you yawn and let your eyes slide over to the more interesting article in the next column, I urge you to give this novel (in my mind the most readable of all George Eliot's books) a try.

Affluent mill owner, Mr Tulliver, (no first name is given to him), lives a comfortable life with his wife and children, Tom and Maggie. The son and daughter, as was the custom then, were educated to take up different roles in life; the son Tom was sent to live in a clergyman's house to learn Latin and Greek and algebra to prepare him for a career in a profession; Maggie (spirited, affectionate and far more intellectually gifted than her brother) was to contract a good marriage.

Disaster strikes when Mr Tulliver loses a lawsuit conducted by his enemy the lawyer Mr. Waken, and is ruined. Mr. Waken buys his mill.

Maggie develops an affection for Mr Waken's disabled son (referred to as 'deformed' in the book) who is wildly in love with her; but, in a development which must have shocked Victorian readers, Maggie falls for the dashing Stephen Guest and, well, I won't reveal any more.

This is a complex novel, and George Eliot (an early feminist) illustrates the position of Victorian women of a certain class. Social class and the relations between the classes is also a preoccupation. But the language is beautiful and gentle to read (though the sentences and paragraphs are long, a challenge for our titchy twenty-first century attention spans), and she has a sensitive and forgiving understanding of the human heart and its foibles and its small vanities.

I really love this book, and would recommend it to anyone who has quite a bit of time to spare!

(Penny Sharp)

Poetry Please!

To Keep a True Lent

Is this a fast, to keep
The larder lean
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep?

Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragged to go,
Or show
A downcast look and sour?

Following the address, was an extended period of prayer which took the form of visiting 'prayer stations' which were laid out around the church. I went to be prayed for, then to the cross, where you wrote on a stone about things that came between you and Jesus, and left it at the foot of the cross. Someone I noticed, had written 'greed.' Yes! That as well, I thought.

I then took a scripture from some pigeon holes with rolled up pieces of paper with scriptures on. Mine said, 'Do not seek what you are to eat or to drink, nor be worried...(Luke 12,29)

That gave me so much to reflect on that I deliberately missed the other stations! One was 'gifts and fruit' where people were writing on a 'fruit' and hanging it on a tree. The prayer time was beautiful – everyone walked around silently and reverently taking part. No couples consulted each other – it was our individual response.

When this came to an end, three contemporary worship songs by Matt Redman and Hillsong Worship followed. The singing was hearty and worshipful, and people raised hands. The Nigerian priest, Father Paul, gave the blessing which was almost the only part of the service which would identify it as Catholic or Anglican.



Is there a future for church unity? On the basis of that, there certainly is! I commented to Helen, John and Maggie that the service would have been eminently suitable for a Christian of any denomination!

Refreshments ended the meeting and just one extra thing to be glad about - the Gluten Free cookies were much more to my liking than conventional biscuits!

The meeting was a great blessing and also made me think back to when I attended Mass as a teenager - no music - and it seemed, oh dear, so deadly dull. It used to sound like a chore. Such a joyful celebration as we had just enjoyed would have been unthinkable. Richard Martin says that is attributable to the Holy Spirit. Hallelujah! So now I look forward to 'Stay Awake'.

(Susan Hammer)

Two Perspectives

The Supper at Emmaus appears only in Luke (24: 30-31), though some mention of Christ having made an appearance 'in another form' appears in Mark (16: 12). It tells the story of how Jesus appeared to two disciples while they were walking on the road to Emmaus, and it is generally accepted that one of these was Luke (hence its inclusion in his gospel). You may care to look up these two biblical extracts.

The subject was popular during the 1500 and 1600s and was painted by Caravaggio in 1601. This version is now in London in the National Gallery.



Caravaggio was born in Milan and named after a nearby village from which his parents

No: 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife
From old debate
And hate;
To circumcise thy life.

To show a heart grief-rent;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin:
And that's to keep thy Lent.

(Robert Herrick, provided by Fr Paul.)

The Force that through the green fuse –

This is one of Thomas's earliest poems. It makes me think. Although Welsh, he lived at Blashford with his wife Caitlin and was friends with Augustus John at Friars' Court.

The force that through the green fuse
drives the flower
Drives my green age; that blasts the roots
of trees
Is my destroyer.
And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose
My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

The force that drives the water through the
rocks
Drives my red blood; that dries the
mouthing streams
Turns mine to wax.
And I am dumb to mouth unto my veins
How at the mountain spring the same
mouth sucks.

The hand that whirls the water in the pool
Stirs the quicksand; that ropes the blowing
wind
Hauls my shroud sail.
And I am dumb to tell the hanging man
How of my clay is made the hangman's
lime.

The lips of time leech to the fountain head;
Love drips and gathers, but the fallen blood
Shall calm her sores.
And I am dumb to tell a weather's wind
How time has ticked a heaven round the
stars.

And I am dumb to tell the lover's tomb
How at my sheet goes the same crooked
worm.

(Dylan Thomas)

It makes me think! (Ed)

Garden Plants Sale

Its that time of year again when my sister Sue and I are getting ready to bring plants to you for sale to raise funds for CAFOD. The "getting ready" is almost all Sue at the moment, who is busy in the greenhouses

came. His father died when he was just six years old. When he was sixteen, he was sent to Rome to work in an artist's studio, where he learnt the basic skills that were to underlie his later output. Aged about twenty he moved to Rome and worked in various artistic studios, and developed a real skill at painting heads, flowers and fruit which formed the basis of still life images within his later paintings.

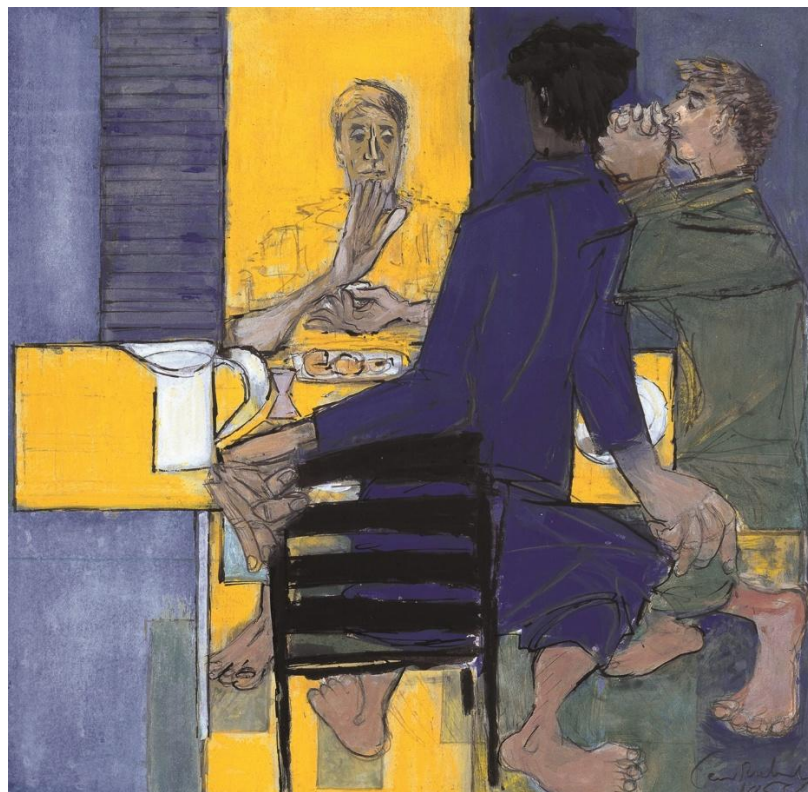
He was poor until he started to attract the attention of a number of wealthy collectors, many of whom were high-ranking members of the church. His real breakthrough came in 1599 when he was commissioned to produce painting of the Calling of St Matthew and the Martyrdom of St Matthew for the Contarelli Chapel in the church of San Luigi dei Francesi. These paintings were made for Ciriaco Mattei who, along with his brother Asdrubale, was an enthusiastic patron and protector of Caravaggio. The brothers commissioned three works from him in just two years (1601–2). The reviews of this work caused Caravaggio to be much sought after and in 1601 he was commissioned by a Vatican cardinal to produce the Supper at Emmaus.

The image is carefully constructed to emphasise the Christ and the amazed reaction of the two disciples, while the waiter looks on without recognising anything is happening. It is cropped at knee level to concentrate attention on the upper bodies and cropped at the side to heighten a sense of focus. The table has on it the usual artefacts of the eucharist or Last Supper – bread and wine – plus grapes and a basket of fruit and a rather intriguing chicken.

With fame came problems. In 1603 Caravaggio was sued for libel because of what he had written about another painter; in 1604 he assaulted a waiter; in 1605 his landlady sued him for non-payment of rent and in 1606 he was accused of committing a murder and fled to Naples, then Malta, Sicily and Naples again. On his way back to Rome with many paintings, the boat he was on stopped at a harbour, he was robbed of all his paintings and the boat left without him. He started walking to Rome but caught a fever and died aged just thirty-nine.

His sexuality was also not straightforward and hence the chicken which can represent homosexuality. For a painter who relied upon commissions from senior clergy there was a possible conflict of morality. Being rejected personally by the church he paints the chicken as a central feature of the still life and places the bowl of fruit overhanging the edge of the table as an artistic representation of this conflict and of his own precarious position with the church.

The subject was painted again by Ceri Richards in 1958 and hangs in the chapel of St Edmund Hall, Oxford.



Here the depiction is very different with a modernist approach, a limited pallet of blues, yellows and green, and significantly less symbolism.

The key symbolism in the Ceri Richards painting is connected with the large feet that the two disciples have. The modern interpretation of this is that Richards was suggesting that as Christ had ascended to heaven it was now up to those of us who remained on earth to work at proclaiming Christ's message of love. The painting was used regularly by an ex-Bishop of Oxford – Richard Harris - in his sermons.

(John Elliot)

and in the “seed loft”... otherwise known as the annexe, which has very useful Velux windows as well as a large south facing window....giving great conditions for seed germination.

What are we growing for you this year? Tomatoes, vegetables, flowering perennials and annuals, shrubs from cuttings... all grown on in Sue’s Dorset garden. This year we are 100% peat free, have re-used pots (carefully sterilised) or sourced pots made from recycled materials. So as green as green can be, we think.

What am I doing? Well, I shall be helping at the sales table and at the moment I am supplying advice and encouragement. So this is your advance warning of our plant sale this year: after the relevant Mass at Fordingbridge and at Ringwood on Saturday and Sunday 26th and 27th April with the more hardy and forward of the plants. And we will be with you again on Saturday and Sunday 7th and 8th June with more stock.

Looking forward to seeing you then.

(Sheila Wade)

Lent Talks

I’ve probably said this before in earlier years, but I’m not much good at giving up anything, but I’m not bad at doing something positive which I wouldn’t do otherwise, and I usually try to do something educational or creative every year. Last year, I went to a series of talks in Salisbury Cathedral and I’m going again this year. The speakers are excellent and the topics are interesting. The talks are in the Cathedral, open to all, and take place in the North Transept. I recommend them. Wrap up if you come, we need more sun to warm the stones! Here are the details:

This year’s Lent course explores the Psalms, the so-called songbook of the Bible. The Psalms are songs of the soul. Through a series of engaging talks, we will consider their place in Christian spirituality and their value as a resource for personal and corporate prayer. All are welcome to these sessions, which will incorporate time for questions and discussion, and end with the beautiful service of Compline. A traditional choral service interspersed with short addresses, Compline dates back to medieval times drawing on prayers of ancient Sarum Rite.

Mondays, 7:30-8:30pm, North transept, followed by Compline at 8:40pm in the Quire

(You don’t have to stop for Compline, but it is a simple and moving service, and you get to sit in the misericords in the quire Ed)

(Salisbury Cathedral)

Fabulous Forest

“It’s a long cold lonely winter” up in The Forest still. We haven’t had much rain recently, but water is still a dominant feature endlessly running of the hills and turning the valleys into bogs. I know, bogs are a special feature of the New Forest, and I can find some time looking for cotton grass and sundew in the Summer, but not in the dreary days we have had lately.



I did drag myself from the fire on one not-too-dismal afternoon and had a go round Ashley Walk. Above is the view from Hampton Ridge

And below is a little spot where I used to picnic with my girls. There used to be a plank bridge you could bounce on and sunshine. All gone now! I could have edited a bit more sun into these pictures, but decided they tell the story better without enhancement!



So, squelch back to the car. The little red one was out briefly. It has passed its MoT. Hurray! Roll on Summer!



(At least the gorse continues to bloom! Chris Basham)

Gardeners’ Corner

My gardening article this month is pretty much nil due to the weather. Every day I hope I will be able to get out but haven’t been lucky. My shed is in disarray and the mice have been busy making holes in my compost bags!

My gardener did manage to have a bonfire and burned a lot but it was put out by – guess what – RAIN. He is now on a cruise to the Bahamas lucky man!

My ski trip was a huge success with a week of sun and good snow so that has kept up my morale. In fact I skied all day, down all slopes, so all the exercises I have been doing were very worthwhile. I will make up for this boring article when the weather improves; my prognosis is that I will be moaning about having to water!

The bed I look after in the car park certainly needs attention and maybe the first I tend to because it will be the first to become workable.

(Jill Coke)

Simple Pancakes

- 100g plain flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 250ml milk
- 2 tbsp melted butter, cooled
- a knob of butter, for frying



1. Sift the flour into a bowl with a pinch of salt and make a well in the centre. In another bowl, whisk the eggs with the sugar, milk and melted butter, to combine, then pour into the well. Using an electric hand whisk (or balloon whisk), whisk the liquid into the flour until you have a smooth batter.
2. To cook the pancakes, heat a teaspoon or so of butter in a

Old Friends!



There are not many of you who will remember Francine Mee but for those of you who do, I am sure you would like to know she celebrated her 100th birthday in Salisbury last week accompanied by about thirty friends. She and her husband, Tony, lived in Fordingbridge for many years and Francine went to daily Mass and was a strong supporter of the parish. They had two sons, Stephan and Laurence. Sadly, Stephan died a few years ago but Chris remembers serving Mass with him.

After Tony died, Francine remained here for several years but, being French, she eventually felt the urge to return to France to the picturesque village of Gerberoy in Normandy. Ever since, she has spent the summers in France and her winters in Salisbury. Though in stature she is no longer the ramrod figure she once was, her brain is in full working order and she is still the same person we all knew.

I have asked for a Mass to be said for her intentions here at the evening Mass on Saturday, 8th March. Many happy returns of the day, Francine.

(Jill Coke)

Peregrine Falcons

The Peregrines are back at Salisbury Cathedral. I've seen them! At the moment, they are just wheeling round the spire and making their characteristic screeches. We have cameras on the nest boxes and they have, I'm told, briefly looked in. We have every reason to hope that they will soon, as in previous years, settle down and nest. Last year they had and hatched four eggs, so we hope for something similar this year.



Peregrine Falcons, I'm reliably told, are the fastest creatures on earth, being capable of two hundred mph dives onto their prey, usually a pigeon, which is then devoured at the nest.

When the birds settle we will post the view from the cameras on the Cathedral website, so watch out in the next few weeks.

(Chris Basham)

small frying pan until hot and foaming, a 16-18cm pan is ideal. Add 2-3 tablespoons of batter for each pancake, swirling it around the pan as you add it. The batter should make 10-12 pancakes in total.

3. Cook each pancake for 1-1½ minutes, then flip over for a final minute on the other side. As the pancakes are ready, layer them between sheets of nonstick baking paper.

(Waitrose, on line)

End Bits

That's it – issue sixty-one finished!

It is nice to hear of Francine Mee. I remember her from my childhood and did, indeed, serve Mass for Fr. Tracey with Stephan. Must have been in the 1950s!

'39 Steps' in Salisbury is on, I think, until 8th March, so still time to go.

As always, many thanks to all contributors. I need more because I am not holding anything now for next time.

Meanwhile the sun is shining, I'm off to Brunch with some friends who have promised me dinner to in return for conducting them up the Cathedral Tower!

Chris