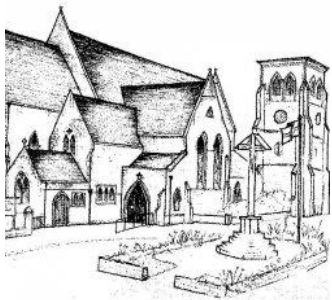


And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

1 Peter 5:10



St Mark's Parish Magazine

January 2021

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Your Views & Contributions

Next issue will be available from Sunday 7 February 2021
All contributions to the editor by Monday 18 January 2021

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LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear Friends,

Backwards or Forwards?

A New Year! As ever we wonder what the new year will bring but perhaps this year more so than in previous years. I am sure that most of us are more than happy to see the back of 2020. However, no doubt, in the future we will look back at the Year of Covid-19 through the rose-tinted glasses of hindsight and remember some of the positive aspects of it. Clapping for carers brought neighbours together, as did looking out for the lonely and vulnerable. Carbon emissions dropped as we stayed at home to work, and instead of driving all over the place to attend meetings, we sat in our homes and "Zoomed". We appreciated our friends and families more when separated from them – absence makes the heart grow fonder. Hopefully, we shall learn some lessons as we look back on the year, appreciating those small actions that we previously took for granted: a handshake, a hug and a chat over coffee. We will probably decide to carry on with some aspects of the restrictions, continuing to Zoom meetings (other platforms are available!), appreciating those we take for granted, and being kinder to those around us.

It is interesting, and part of our necessary development, to look back, but we should also, at the change of the year look forwards. Thanks to the work of scientists and volunteer testers, we should have the ability to vaccinate against the virus in the first half of the year. I know that as soon as I get the call, I shall be there with my left sleeve rolled up! Life for all of us will then return to something approaching normality and I look forward to resuming activities again. Going on holiday, meeting family and friends, meeting properly in church without the need for masks, social distancing and being allowed to sing!

I hope that we can look upon 2021 with confidence. We do so with the added understanding that we have not been and will not be alone as both the Church and its Creator are with us at all times whether good or bad.

With best wishes for the coming year.

Martin



Happy New Year

Author: Catherine Pulsifer

Happiness depends upon your outlook on life – Find the good in all situations.

Attitude is just as important as ability – Keep your attitude positive.

Passion find yours this year! – Do what you love and you will never work.

Positive thoughts make everything easier – Stay focused and stay positive.

You are unique, with special gifts, use them – Never forget you have talent.

New beginnings with a new year.

Enthusiasm a true secret of success.

Wishes may they turn into goals.

Years go by too quickly, enjoy them – Wisdom from your elders, listen.

Energy may you have lots of it – Take care of yourself.

Appreciation of life, don't take it for granted – Live each day.

Relax take the time to relax in this coming year – Keep a balance in your life.

Communication

I suppose the trouble began with speech. Grunts became meaningful. Then there was writing: signs chipped in stone, scratched parchment and then paper. So it all developed via the quill pen through computers to the internet, emails and mobile phones. No, you cannot say finally because no one knows what is next.

When I used to pick-up the phone I dialled three letters and four numbers and got the person I wanted. Sometimes there was a switch board manned by a human being. Now there are area codes making a long series of numbers well beyond the memory. When you get through today there is normally some message about training purposes, though it has never improved my experience. This is often followed by a statement that everything will be better if you use the web followed by a long web address at such speed that no one could possibly get it down in the time. Then comes a menu, sometimes of considerable length, where every eventuality is catered for except the one I need. Next comes the message that the line is busy. Better to call later or better still to try the internet again. Finally, and I mean finally, I am played eternally repetitive

music. I wonder what I have missed. Sometimes I get the impression they just want me to go away!

So let's try the computer. Naturally you need to assemble a number of requirements but when you find the website you can be fairly certain that having disclosed your email address there will be a password required. For security a password should be different for each occasion but not written down and just now I have a senior moment. Sometimes a helpful website will ask for the answers to data you provided some years ago and the name of your first cat is now confused with the name of the dog or was it the maiden name of my wife's mother? Anyway it's not to hand and I only want to make a general enquiry which requires no breach of the Official Secrets Acts.

The Revenue and Customs, which naturally requires special security otherwise someone else could access your file to discover the income you admitted to last year. For those of uncertain memory such as Trump, this is not something readily disclosed. The Revenue appreciates the need for security not so much because Adam Smith pronounced that "this pernicious tax will make liars of us all", and he deserves high marks for his perspicacity, but because they themselves are always seeking what others do not disclose. So, after a busy afternoon getting registered and answering questions from a most polite mature, perfectly articulating, lady who understands well the difference between yes and no, as well as the distinction between right and wrong, but not much else, your voice may be accepted as unique and you will be told to start again after receiving an email to establish that you are real and not the invention of some miscreant.

I do wonder about my voice. It's not distinctive and since I left the Department some twenty seven years ago, I cannot think there is anyone there who remembers me. Indeed after the first fortnight of my retirement I doubt whether anyone gave me so much as a second thought. So, I do wonder how they can validate my dulcet tones. Such is the wonder of the computer.

Then there is language. Besides languages within a large area there were things called accents further distinguishing those of a particular location. Many of these have now disappeared though their attachment to some has cause huge expense to try to retain them. Ta ma gama, connes toi toi," that is Irish. I used to enjoy the Scottish accent but now find its rich variation an impediment to understanding. Take Welsh for example. Welsh children suffer to learn a language they will rarely use but tax returns and other official documents all have to be translated and made readily available in both languages so that those proud of their language shall not be upset.

Many languages have given pride of place to English. Although we have left, it will remain the official language of the EU. There is much to be said for this. After all English is a simple language which just flows off the tongue. Even as a child I had little difficulty with it. On the other hand, surely French has come to the end of its useful life. All that accent on sex: "La petite chat; le grand chien," we all know that these animals come in both sexes. And the connotations are often positively sexist:

"la belle femme!" I wonder the modern woman has not revolted. No, it's high time the French were satisfied with a simple, neutral language like English.

Even within a language its actual pronunciation can give rise to problems. On the phone, the young lady makes it abundantly clear that she is there to help me, "give me your number for me to help YOU." This is done in a way which puts me firmly on my knees with supplicant hands. And the delivery is at machine gun speed so that much flies over my shoulder so that I begin to wonder if I now have only the intelligence of a moron. Always the reaction to my apology that I am somewhat deaf is very polite. Never has anyone enquired why my hearing aids do not cope.

However, there is only a fifty percent chance that the speed of delivery will falter. Then there are the written words. Whenever I buy something I find the warnings on health and safety pretty boring. Would anyone other than a baby insert a screwdriver into an electric point? However, the technical information I need is shrouded in a curious language and the bits I really need are missing. Perhaps this is because the writer has English as a second language. You would never think these writing have been pored over by a team of lawyers. Whatever happened to that revolution in writing which hit the Civil Service some seventy years ago called "Plain Words!"

It is natural, that language should develop with new words but why the attribution of new meanings to old words? Thus when I told my grandson that the tea he had made was cool, he took it as a complement. If I said, "I 'woke' this morning" I shudder to think what he would make of it. My wife tells me she has "apps" on her mobile. This apparently is not some encrustation through leaving the phone on an exposed window ledge, but some technical addition which helps her spend even more time on it.

Which brings me to mobile phones. A short time ago there was a radio story on the development of the phone with a couple of men who were involved at the time. Apparently, they were instructed that the intention was to capture as much time as possible from the users. Well, you only have to use your eyes to see that at least that target was well exceeded. How long before we have mobile phone implants?

Now there is a thought. Implants. I can see it now. A remote trigger will result in all employees getting out of bed at the same time, dress and breakfast, walk to the station, admittance by face recognition instead of ticket, same at other end, in the office, then wake up by signal, and so to work. Some way to get a good night's sleep! "Darling, you forgot to signal the au pair; she is still fast asleep. I have only woken up by accident and the children have gone to school. I do hope they will wake up for lessons. Whatever can I do?" "Well," he replied tersely, "I imagine, what you are doing now," and he put the phone down. Then the thought struck him. I must be careful what I say or I shall be up before the Department for Inappropriate Communication. Is my implant bugged?

So, has communication improved with time? Well, it's certainly different, but as for the rest, I leave it to you.

Harry Ingram

Church News

National Lottery Grant

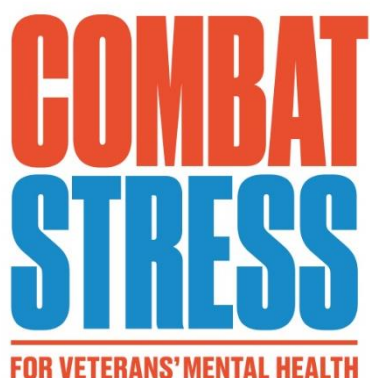
At St Mark's we received an early Christmas present at the beginning of December when we received the news that we had been awarded a grant for just over £9,000. This was from the National Lottery Covid-19 Fund and was awarded for the purchase of computer



equipment and other items including large screen televisions. The equipment will be used in a variety of ways including the improvement in the way we record and live-stream our services. We will also launch a new scheme in which we can be a centre to train those with little or no computer skills to be able to do basic things including using the internet and YouTube. We will be able to loan out equipment for people to try at home. St Mark's has already been appointed a centre for people to complete the 2021 Census online – more information about this next month!

Christmas Charities

Over Christmas we supported 3 charities: The Children's Society, Renewed Hope Trust (supporting the homeless locally) and Reigate Samaritans. We also donated toys to Reigate Women's Refuge. At the time of printing, it is too early to report how much has been raised for these deserving charities, all of which have struggled financially during 2020. If you have not yet made a donation and would like to, it's not too late – please contact the Parish Office to make your donation.



During November we supported Combat Stress and a total of £366.25 (including Gift Aid tax to be recovered) was raised. Combat Stress, based in Leatherhead, provides specialist mental health treatment and support for ex-service veterans.

News from the Church of England

What is the future of our church buildings?

An interesting article on the Guardian website poses an interesting question about the post-Covid-19 role of England's churches.

The Church of England has successfully adapted to the challenge of worship during the pandemic with 17,000 services posted on a Church near you website (the Church of England website puts this at over 50,000). Questions about churches to Amazon Echo's Alexa rose from 75,000 in 2019 to more than 250,000 this year. The church's Easter social media content was seen 3 million times, and the Time to Pray podcast has had 200,000 downloads so far this year¹.

However, the Guardian suggests, "some (church buildings) will succumb to the high street disease". As post-Covid-19, the convenience of watching church services on demand rather than getting dressed in our Sunday best and driving to church will change behaviour for good.

According to the Guardian, "The clerical response to this is fierce. A church is not an event but a family, and at a time such as this it is a boon to its community. Some 90% of churches have been involved in food banks and deliveries, in caring for vulnerable and elderly people, in organising visits and phone conversations. The local church is a neighbourhood bond and a bulwark against loneliness. As Archbishop Justin Welby said last week, in normal times it answers to the 'human hunger for touch and affection'. You don't get hugs online."



At the time of writing tier 4 restrictions are still in place and so for now, the online resources from St Mark's have been a source of comfort and entertainment for the family (particularly the Family Remembrance activity and the Crib & Christingle service). But one day I hope we will see each other again and continue to enjoy collective worship. There is no substitute for the experience of sharing communion and the peace. But will St Mark's and its purpose change over time. That is for God to decide.

- 1) <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/dec/26/church-of-england-worship-online-historic-buildings-congregations-churches>

Environmental News

Veganuary

January is the month of Veganuary so we will explore what it is and why people are turning to a plant-based diet for one month and beyond.



Veganuary was launched in 2014 to drive awareness of the benefits of veganism. The vision is to encourage as many people as possible to move away from animal products and all the issues associated with it. The founders also work with companies and the media to create more products to support a vegan diet and also to build awareness of its benefits. In 2020, 400,000¹ took part in Veganuary which is a 31-day challenge to eat vegan for one month.

There are 3 main reasons why people choose to adopt a vegan diet;

- 1) Personal health – eating an animal-based diet has been linked to increased risk of heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Athletes who have a plant-based diet have been shown to perform better than their meat eating competitors.
- 2) The environmental impact – the meat industry contributes to 18% of greenhouse gases, takes up 30% of the earth's land surface and uses 15,000 litres of water per kilo of meat produced². With demand for meat increasing it represents an inefficient and unsustainable source of food.
- 3) Animal welfare – with food production becoming more intensive with demand. The animals which provide food are suffering more and more during their short life. Chickens for example are being fed and bred to the point where their legs can no longer hold up their bodies and they are becoming lame or their hearts are failing.



If this is not enough, Vegans spend 8% less on groceries as a Vegan meal can be up to 40% cheaper than a meat based dish³.

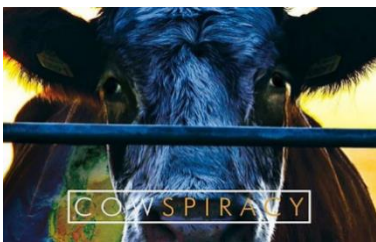


Giving up meat does more for the environment than switching from a gas guzzling SUV to a hybrid car⁴. The government is legislating on one but not the other.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Vegan movement. Here are a few documentaries/ series which are quite eye opening on the subject:



Available on Netflix. This documentary looks at the athletes turning to veganism to improve their performance but also at the everyday health benefits.



This documentary looks at how the meat industry is hiding the full environmental impact its behaviour and how the current rate of growth is unsustainable.



The Rotten series covers more than just animal based products but really looks at the controversy in our food chain. The first episode is about bees.



Down to Earth covers more than just the sustainability of the meat industry. It looks at the issue of sustainability across the world, including food. One of the two presenters is a vegan and wrote a book about healthy living.

- 1) <https://veganuary.com/>
- 2) <https://theconversation.com/five-ways-the-meat-on-your-plate-is-killing-the-planet-76128#:~:text=Livestock%20farming%20has%20a%20vast,produced%20greenhouse%20gas%20emissions%20worldwide>.
- 3) <https://veganuary.com/vegan-meals-cost-40-percent-less-than-meat-fish/>
- 4) <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2008/sep/07/food.meat>

Teenagers by the river

During and immediately after the war my mother and father were living in a bungalow by the river Thames in Staines. My parents had moved there to escape the bombing in Orpington and we never returned to their former house. I understand a flying bomb had nonetheless been dropped and exploded in a field nearby. The bungalow was wooden and somewhat run down and it had a pleasant wrap around veranda on the side facing the river. There was an outhouse at the back opposite the entrance to the kitchen where Paul, my brother and I were to sleep. It was a bit like our own caravan with our 2 beds and a small area to play, but to get to the house we had to cross the yard in all weathers. The heating in the house was minimal, being largely heated by a cylindrical paraffin heater that rose from the floor like a two foot tower. After our occasional bath we could dry in that one room that was warm. I remember once as I was rubbing myself dry in the nude backing onto the top of that hot tower thus burning my bum. There was a large garden around the house, including a grass tennis court that had seen better days. My father was renting the property and had hoped to buy it from the owner but this was not possible.

The river frontage had a diving board from which we could plunge and swim in the river. However there was a constant fear that my sister Mary, aged 2, might fall in the river so the bank was fenced off and as soon as Mary learned to talk she was taught to pray each night, "Keep me away from the river and the road." Imagine how hard it was for my father to teach Mary to swim, with him standing in the cold water and trying then to get her to lose the fear of the water – but he did it, and Mary learned to swim at an early age.

We had a wooden duck-punt to row which was called "PIM", being the initials of Paul, Ian and Mary. This lasted many years and only met its end at Heronswood in Merstham some 30 years later.

I started school on our return to England at Staines Prep. School, wearing a yellow blazer and then for a short time I was sent to Strodes School in Egham. My father had put my name down for Tonbridge School but when they had heard that I had done no Latin in New Zealand they would not accept me there. But one day a teenager was swimming in the river and asked if he could climb up our riverside steps onto our bank. My father welcomed him and was so impressed by the boy's manner he asked him where he was at school, which turned out to be St Paul's School in London. There was an entrance exam there shortly after this so I was taken to the massive Victorian buildings of that school in West Kensington to sit their exam. I remember climbing what to me were steep steps to be met at the top by a corpulent but affable porter called "Huff", (one of whose duties was to swing the large school hand bell that used to call us all to classes). Anyway, he was reassuring to me, an obviously nervous small

boy, and he showed me down the corridor to the large assembly hall which had a huge organ at one end, where I was to sit the exam. There was a Latin paper but I just wrote on it that I had not yet studied Latin. Happily for me I was accepted, probably because, having been evacuated during the War the school was expanding again. It just so happened I enjoyed my 1st year of Latin, coming top in my class in the subject.

I spent 4 years at St Paul's and although I enjoyed my time there I never excelled in sports. I tried most things, including rowing, but only represented my school once against Wellington College in boxing when I was knocked out in the first round. Academically I wasn't brilliant but did quite well when the masters were good. Of course I remember those who were eccentric. In my first year I was taught English by Dary Young a moustachioed man who read Dickens with us so that ever afterwards I have loved Dickens. He was a very funny but lovable man and many years later I went to his funeral. Frank Cummins was my form master in our school certificate year and I got to know him so well that Jenny and I visited him and his wife on our honeymoon when he was head of Wells Cathedral School – he later became Surmaster at St Paul's.

However I left St Paul's at 16 as I did not like what would now be called A level studies and an Old Pauline came to the school recruiting for his Chartered Accountants firm, Edward Boyles and Co. I liked him, Stuart Morton, and in my immature way signed articles for 5 years without realising what it was all about, merely that it involved figures and my father was an accountant and seemed to enjoy his working life. I was lucky in that the career of accountancy suited me and in the year 2005 I received a card from the Institute of Chartered Accountants congratulating me for being a member for 50 years.

Neighbours up the river in Staines included the radio comedian, Claude Dampier, who lived there with his Australian wife, Billie Carlisle. Long before we all realised the dangers of smoking I was asked to hand round cigarettes to my father's guests. Claude was talking as I offered him a cigarette and he took it, looked at it, and said, "No! I don't use these," and he threw it on the floor. Years later at my father's 80th birthday, just as William, his grandson was making a superb speech in his honour, Billie Carlisle, Claude's widow, collapsed and was cared for by Jenny and Jane and taken on to hospital.

Other neighbours who remained family friends, were Stan and Em Berry. Stan was a small man but one who had made his way up from being a docker and was by then running his own asphaltting business. He played the piano superbly well by ear.

Around this time a friend from school told me how babies were born. This made sense to me but I still, for some extraordinary reason, thought it didn't apply to my conception – that must have been different.

As my father could not buy that house we were in, he decided to find another one and he was determined to find one by the river. The one we bought was Loddon Court, situated by the River Loddon, a tributary of the Thames, in Wargrave-on-Thames. It was owned by a hereditary baronet by the name of Lord Lawrence who was in his 80s,

but still swam in the river, puffing like a walrus with bushy mustachios. The property was large but in a poor state of repair, the grass on the tennis court there was about 6 feet high, tall nettles elsewhere and the river frontage collapsing in the river. Apart from the large house there was the making of a granny-flat above the stables and garage, a pavilion in the centre of the garden and a large boathouse to accommodate PIM. We were taken round by Lady Lawrence (his 3rd wife – I think the other 2 had died but ultimately she survived him) and as we viewed a small room above the garage which was as remote from the rest of the house as was possible we noticed the single bed was made up. "Who sleeps here?" we asked. "Oh, Lord Lawrence" she replied. "He snores." Years later that "Granny-flat" was the first home for Jenny and me as newly-weds when we named it "Happy Heights".

Anyway, my father said he would buy the property if it had a walnut tree, and it had. I feel sure he already knew the answer to that question. I believe he paid about £4,400 for it in 1946. The family then had the considerable challenge to bring the property up to date. At first we had the help in the house and garden of a little couple by the name of Mr and Mrs Miles but the much more substantial help was of a gardener called Eric Turner, whose wife helped in the house, and Eric was a character assisted sometimes by an Arthur Martin. We also had some help from a German prisoner of war for a short time.

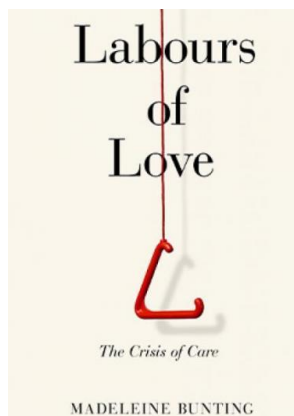
Eric Turner had a splendid sense of humour and I remember when he saw my father scratching his bottom he said "Got a tooth coming through?" Arthur Martin was less remarkable but I seem to recall after one party we had he became so drunk we had to wheel him out in a wheelbarrow.

We had a wonderful teenage life centring on the river. Daddy bought a lovely wooden Canadian canoe and when he was trying to bargain with the former owner I remember Paul saying how lovely it was. "Shut up, you fool" said Daddy. That canoe was called "Ustoo" and in later years Paul and I not only paddled it but punted in it, even trying this with two of us standing up until we inevitably splashed into the river. Once my mother and father ventured up the Loddon sitting in the canoe when a swan approached them in a menacing manner. My father splashed with his paddle to try to frighten it away only resulting in the boat capsizing, tipping them both in shallow water frightening them to such an extent I think they did not venture in that boat again. Each year we competed in the Wargrave and Shiplake Regatta and Paul and my sister Mary won the trophy for double paddling in canoes 3 years in succession. Jenny and I even reached the final of this event in that 3rd year only to be beaten by Paul and Mary. I remember competing in Dongola Races, 6 or 8 people paddling in punts, coming down the river like war canoes. And then the regatta ended with walking the greasy pole. So much of our life was in and out of the water and we swam frequently in the river from our own property. The river then was much more polluted than now and yet now Health and Safety rules discourage any such swimming.

The other boat which was later acquired was a motor punt in which we could camp.

Book Review

This month: *Labours of Love – This Crisis of Care*



We're facing a crisis in care likely to affect every one of us over the course of our lives. Care-work is underpaid; its values disregarded. Britain's society lauds economic growth, productivity and profit over compassion, kindness and empathy. For centuries the caring labours of women have been taken for granted, but care is under pressure as never before.

Over five years, Madeleine Bunting travelled the country, speaking to charity workers, doctors, social workers, in-home carers, nurses, palliative care teams and parents, to explore the value of care, the hidden glue that binds us together. She finds remarkable stories, in GP surgeries, in work undertaken by parents for their disabled children and in end-of-life teams, that conjure a different way of imagining our society and the connections between us. Blending these revelatory testimonies with a history and language of care, and with Bunting's own experiences of caring for the young and old in her family, *Labours of Love* is a hugely important portrait of our nation today – and of how it might be – which raises a call for change.

A former Guardian Journalist, the testimonies she gathers constantly confirm what is meant by "good" care. Listening, her interviewees say, is nine-tenths of the job. Care is about attentiveness. It needs time and focus, and trust. It is not always about action; it is often wordless. It cannot easily be measured. Care, in other words, is often beyond price. Yet in a modern, industrialised society like ours, with an increasing population, it must often be paid for and given to us by those we do not know.

Bunting believes, as do her interviewees, that the urge to care is innate in human beings. It works reciprocally and is a therapeutic use of the self. Vulnerability, she writes, is a form of connection. One of the prompts for the book was her own experience of loss of control and autonomy as a young mother, caring for a newborn while her father gradually died. Her fantasy of complete independence collapsed. Her feminism needed to be rethought.

Labours of Love is a fine achievement. It is full of humanity. Utterly absorbing and humbling. The care workers she speaks to remain endlessly curious about their patients or clients, wanting to hear life stories. They often belittle their efforts – "it's nothing", they say. "It's a privilege." But they are doing the work that really matters.

Adapted from: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/oct/09/labours-of-love-by-madeleine-bunting-review-a-humbling-book-about-care>

Reader recipes

Sausage and Lentil Casserole

Ingredients:-

- 1 tbsp of olive oil
- 2 sausages per person (vegan or meat)
- 1 onion peeled and finely chopped
- 1 carrot per person, peeled and finely chopped
- 85g per person of green tinned lentils
- Vegetable stockpot
- 1 tsp of mixed Italian herbs
- 1 carton of passata
- Water to thin the sauce
- Parsley finely chopped
- Parmesan, finely grated.



Method:-

1. Cook the sausages in a frying pan, on a medium heat, for 7-8 minutes until brown all over, remove from the heat and set aside.
2. Add the oil, onion and carrot to the pan, fry for 5 minutes until soft.
3. Add the stockpot, mixed herbs and a little water, followed by the lentils and simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Cut up the sausages and add them to the pan, along with the passata.
5. Stir together and add a little bit of water to get the right consistency.
6. Serve with pasta and vegetables. Add parmesan and parsley once on the plate.

We would really like to hear from you with your favourite recipes. It really can be anything. Please email them to magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk.

Puzzles

January Sudoku Puzzle

	7		3	6	2			4
6	3	1	5	8				9
						6		
1			2		6			5
	5			7			2	
2			1		9			8
		5						
3				9	1	4	5	2
7			8	4	5		3	

December Solution

5	9	7	8	1	2	3	4	6
1	3	2	4	9	6	5	7	8
8	4	6	5	7	3	2	1	9
2	7	5	1	8	9	6	3	4
4	8	3	2	6	7	1	9	5
9	6	1	3	4	5	7	8	2
7	2	8	9	5	1	4	6	3
6	5	4	7	3	8	9	2	1
3	1	9	6	2	4	8	5	7

Brain Teasers

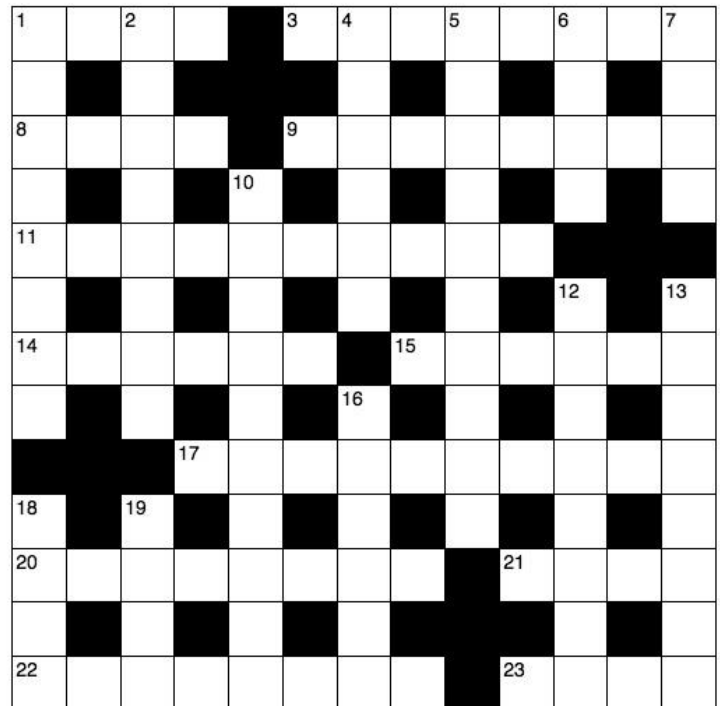
- 1.) I can be crushed to pieces but only if I am given away first, I can be clogged and attacked but that's usually my own doing. No matter how many problems I have, you wouldn't dare let me go. What am I?
- 2.) People say I put doctors out of business, sometimes I am sour, and sometimes I am sweet. I can be eaten and drunk. What am I?
- 3.) I can be hot, I can be cold, I can run, I can be still. I can be hard and I can be soft. What am I?
- 4.) I have branches, sometimes a few and sometimes hundreds. I have no trunk, no leaves or fruit. What am I?

January Crossword

Biblical references are from the New International Version

Across

- 1 'Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a — began to crow' (John 18:27) (4)
 3 Fetters (Job 33:11) (8)
 8 Perform on a musical instrument (1 Samuel 16:23) (4)
 9 Paul describes it as 'the third heaven' (2 Corinthians 12:2–4) (8)
 11 Loyally (Deuteronomy 11:13) (10)
 14 Hens? Me? (anag.) (6)
 15 Not visible (Matthew 6:6) (6)
 17 Predicted site of the final great battle (Revelation 16:16) (10)
 20 Jacob's youngest son (Genesis 35:18) (8)
 21 One of Zophar's eleven sons (1 Chronicles 7:36) (4)
 22 For example, London, Paris, Rome (8)
 23 United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1,1,1,1)



Down

- 1 Favourite church activity: Fellowship round a — — — (3,2,3)
 2 Divinely bestowed powers or talents (8)
 4 Pile together (1 Thessalonians 2:16) (4,2)
 5 Commanded to justify (John 8:13) (10)
 6 Timothy's grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5) (4)
 7 Killed (Psalm 78:34) (4)
 10 One of Graham Kendrick's best-known songs, — — King (3,7)
 12 Indecency (Mark 7:22) (8)
 13 Unceasing (Jeremiah 15:18) (8)
 16 He prophesied 'the abomination that causes desolation' (Matthew 24:15) (6)
 18 British Board of Film Classification (1,1,1,1)
 19 Pans (anag.) (4)

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 1 Depend 4 Canopy 7 Beak 8 Irritate 9 Zedekiah 13 Ate 16 Job's comforter 17 NAE 19 Lang Syne 24 Blockade 25 Five 26 Enigma 27 Drench

DOWN: 1 Debt 2 Peaceable 3 Drink 4 Curia 5 Nuts 6 Put it 10 Excel 11 Is man 12 Hoofs 13 Attention 14 Ezra 15 Ijon 18 Aslan 20 Abana 21 Greed 22 GCMG 23 Leah

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