

February 2006  
50p

# St Martin's Magazine



A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another;  
even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

*John chapter 13 verse 34*

**St Martin's Church  
Hale Gardens, Acton**

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## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Parish Communion & (Sunday School

6.30 pm Evensong 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays

Taize Evening Service 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday

## Any Reaction?

January, 2006.

New Year is the time for resolutions. Unfortunately most of these fall into the category of pious hopes or dreams that at other times of the year are prefaced by the words “if only”, “I wish”. So there is a realisation that such resolutions will not survive more than a few days at most, and probably only a few hours.

This is not to dismiss the idea of a new beginning at the start of the year, only how it is approached. For resolutions to be realistic they need to come out of where we are. So they begin as we review what has gone before, assessing what has gone right in our lives and what has gone wrong.

This must be neither nostalgic musings nor a wallowing in self recriminations, for these are not productive but only a self indulgence. A real and true (as far as is possible) review will help us see what steps need to be taken to improve what has gone well and to begin to do better in areas that have gone wrong. In respect of the latter, there should never be fear to change or abandon, while in respect of the former the temptation to “rest on laurels” has to be resisted as without development what has gone right in one year will become what has gone wrong in the next.

This process of assessment before resolutions can be painful (if honestly undertaken) but it will mean that what is resolved is both useful and able to be achieved. And what is true (and useful) for individuals is no less true for institutions. So perhaps this could provide an agenda for an annual PCC “away day” in the future. Now there’s an idea and maybe the germ of a resolution!

What of my own resolutions this year? I am tempted to say “give up writing these letters”, but that is difficult as I cannot make an assessment because they produce so little reaction (and the same might be said of sermons), but that could be an assessment in itself!

With all good wishes and every blessing for 2006.

**Alec Griffiths**



## **Christmas Greetings from Japan**

Iris and Derek Fenton received a Christmas Card from Sarah Holland who was a regular member with her three girls.

In her card Sarah said, "Christmas just isn't the same in Japan. Maria was saying that she is now old enough to join the Youth Group. We miss everyone at St Martin's. Please give them our Love and Best Wishes for the 100 years' Celebration. Not sure about the next visit - soon I hope!"

Sarah, Nobu, Hana, Naomi and Maria.

Sarah's address in Japan:  
Sarah Holland-Sugiura,  
6-3-5 Kashiwa,  
Kashiwa City,  
Chiba Pref,

Japan 277-0005  
**Out of Africa**

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2006

Dear Friends

On the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2006, for 12 days, I shall be paying a visit to The Diocese of Lake Malawi in Central Africa. I will be going there to meet old friends, gain the acquaintance of some new ones and to assess the situation that currently prevails amongst the clergy and people. This is an important visit and I hope that you will hold me in your prayers. As you know last June I was elected as bishop of Lake Malawi by an overwhelming majority of the electoral body. Subsequently, as a result of what can only be described as a contrived and by no means unanimous verdict, the Court of Confirmation that was eventually held in November, refused to confirm the election.

That should have been the end of the matter but due to the nature of the decision of the Court, the clergy and people of the Diocese of Lake Malawi have felt very reluctant to accept the outcome. In addition the case has become something of a cause célèbre in the Anglican Communion, the outcome of which is important for the future of the wider Church. The details are long, convoluted and ongoing but if you have access to a computer and want more details two trusted websites carry some useful information. They are: [www.anglican-enquiry.org](http://www.anglican-enquiry.org) and [www.modchurchunion.org](http://www.modchurchunion.org)

There has of necessity been a long period during which I have been unable to communicate very much to you and I apologise if this has left you feeling uncertain. I now wish to put the position as clearly as I can in the circumstances currently prevailing.

Theologically the position of bishop is not one that is aspired to or coveted. Rather it is a vocation, a calling from the people and representative authorities of a particular diocese, inspired, one hopes and prays, by the will of God and the influence of the Holy

Spirit. The call has to be taken very seriously by any priest who receives it, even if it is burdensome.

Next month in Malawi, I have to decide whether the apparently vigorous and continuing support of my cause is genuine and realistic. If it is more wistful than anything else, I shall tell the clergy and that will be an end of it. If there is substance to the people's wishes I will be obliged to stay with them in spirit and willingness to become their bishop in circumstances that may or may not unravel positively. This, I believe, is my Christian duty however uncomfortable it is for me.

In the meantime my primary concern and focus gladly remains with you the people here in the parishes that have been my delight and concern for so many years. Whatever happens, it is almost inconceivable that I would go to Malawi as bishop (if ever at all) before summer 2007. I will, in any case, let you know of any developments as they take place.

In some ways this is as difficult and messy a situation as could possibly prevail. I have personally found the last few months to be profoundly trying and I have only found solace in your continued support and encouragement. We are facing unprecedented circumstances and our faith must remain strong; the Holy Spirit can be a demanding taskmaster. It is then my wish to make clear to you that whatever eventually transpires in far off Africa my priorities remain, for the foreseeable future, with my work with you in the parishes.

I have been open and frank with you in this letter and would value your continuing support and prayers. Please do feel able to talk with me about anything you are not sure of and remain confident of my desire to be your parish priest, Vicar and friend.

I am yours in Christ  
**Nicholas**

## Centenary Kick-Off

Grace England helped to get the Centenary Year celebrations by releasing balloons in the church.



There's a good chance they will still be up there at the end of the year too.

## The Churches Players

*Ray Russell writes*

I am delighted that this years Pantomime 'Sleeping Beauty' has been enjoyed by so many of you. The Preview Evening on Thursday was well attended and went without a hitch and after that performances went from strength to strength. The Friday night 'cabaret style' show with a meal included proved a great success and was sold out and Saturday and Sunday matinees were both packed. Many, many thanks to everyone who took part and of course to all those of you who came with your friends and family to support us and make the event such a success.









## Denys Vernall

*A valedictory address given by the Vicar at Denys Vernall's Requiem Eucharist, in All Saints Church, Candlemas, Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006*

Eph. 5:19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make **music** in your heart to the Lord.

Denys Vernall has been doing just that in All Saints, with occasional forays into St Martin's since April 1984. He arrived here in my predecessor's time and has been the only person who has been really capable (apologies to Ken Bartram) of handling the beast that is the organ of All Saints.

Condemned in 1937 as being in need of major overhaul, the organ, that is, not Denys, it has been Denys' task and delight to play it and thereby make music to God in this place.

In many ways he was an unlikely musical genius. True he was a son of the Church, but his musical abilities were matched by his, sometimes legendary, status amongst the real ale community, the philosopher in him was only barely concealed and the loyal, tenacious guardianship of the music in this place was a joy.

I can't speak with authority about the various types of beer and ale that led him to be a founder member of CAMERA, the campaign for real ale.

To the end he defied ill health by taking Guinness mainline and amazed me and generations like me by the extraordinary ability to sit presiding, as it were, over his court in the Lamb and Flag.

I recall with profound and genuine sentimentality the memory of Evensong on a summer's evening here at All Saints, followed by a pint at the pub, with various friends. Denys was wonderful on those occasions. Those of us who have had occasion to work with him know of his desire for perfection sometimes reinforced with what was no more or less old fashioned irascibility, yet I don't think I've ever had an argument with him and it always turned out that he was right even when I was convinced at the time that he wasn't.

He was a hard taskmaster because he valued that which was good, he would never accept less. That incidentally applied also to clergy and their sermons. I think that it is true that he accidentally on purpose stepped on the bass pedals or changed the stops if he thought the sermon was too long or straying too far from theological orthodoxy and he on a number occasions took me up on my theological or more often literary inexactitudes.

I think, on reflection, that he taught me a lot from which I have benefited enormously.

There was always the authority that came from his earlier background in the Church and clearly he had an immense amount of accrued experience.

I shall never forget the occasion that we went to the Royal School of Music day tutorial at the old Addington Palace when Denys took on the Director over a particular musical abstruse point, stood his ground and won the argument. I shall never forget the parish walks that we all took on, Bank holiday Mondays with Denys striding ahead independently and arriving at the pub before us. I shall never forget the depth of spirituality that was his beneath that, sometimes gruff, exterior.

That was particularly evident in the last months when cruel illness and fate robbed him of his ability to speak. He faced the imminent prospect of death like a Christian before the lions and his dry sense of humour was visible even in the written scribbled notes that he communicated with.

Denys wouldn't be happy if I didn't include at least one literary allusion or quotation in my address and I've already quoted St Paul who in some ways one can imagine was the prototypical Denys Vernall from Tarsus. 'Hast thou any philosophy in thee shepherd' he might have to me said from Shakespeare's 'As you like it' and I reply from the same play 'O good old man! How well in thee appears the constant service of the antique world.' - and in my own tongue I go on, perhaps, I think reflecting what all of us might echo.

Denys, good old friend, we shall not see your like again in our time you've served your God and this church well over the years. You've taught me a thing or two, you've even increased my faith with your courageous last stand.

I know we shall meet again in God's good heaven but in the meantime as we shall later lay your ashes in the churchyard you're never be far away. Say a prayer for us then as we shall for you, your music and your memory linger on and like the savour of that aromatic tobacco you used to smoke in the good old days, it's good to have known you.

May you rest in peace and rise in glory.



## **STEPHAN WELCH APPOINTED AS NEW ARCHDEACON OF MIDDLESEX**

The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, has appointed the Revd Stephan Welch, Priest in Charge of St Peter, Hammersmith, as the next Archdeacon of Middlesex. He will take up the post in May 2006.

Stephan Welch (55) has been Parish Priest of St Peter's for five years and Area Dean for Hammersmith and Fulham since 2001. Previously he has served in the dioceses of Oxford, Canterbury and St Albans. He has been fulfilling some of the responsibilities of the post since the previous Archdeacon, the Ven. Malcolm Colmer, left to become Archdeacon of Hereford earlier this year.

Stephan is married to Jenny and they have three adult sons. He is of mixed German-Jewish and English parentage and was brought up largely in Bedfordshire, which accounts for his following of Luton Town FC. Stephan enjoys anything to do with the sea and sails a small yacht called 'Wistful Spirit'.

The role of all the Archdeacons in the Diocese of London has recently been revised to give each one a particular portfolio, extending beyond the Episcopal Area in which they are based, Diocese-wide. At the same time, following the Time for Decision Consultation, the possibility of reducing the total number of Archdeacons is still on the agenda.

Archdeacon Welch will carry the crucial brief for the 148 Church of England schools in London which educate some 46,500 children daily. Stephan has particularly enjoyed a close association with Church schools during his years as a priest, in contexts ranging from the agricultural to the urban. He has chaired Boards of Governors in both primary and junior sectors and has served on several Standing Advisory Councils on

Religious Education (SACRE's). One of his three sons teaches in a West London school.

The pastoral dimension of his work will focus on the Kensington Area which covers the London boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hounslow, Richmond (north of the Thames) and Spelthorne.

Commenting on his appointment, Stephan said, "It has been a great joy to work in the Diocese of London and the Kensington Episcopal Area for the last five years and I'm glad to be able to serve both in a new way. I shall relish working on the schools portfolio and being able to help and encourage develop this vital aspect of our ministry to London."

Following his appointment, Stephan will work closely with the Rt Revd Michael Colclough, Bishop of Kensington. He says, "I am thrilled that Stephan has been appointed as our next Archdeacon. His enthusiasm for the mission of the Church and his pastoral wisdom are already valued beyond the sphere of his present parish and deanery."

## **RACHEL MONTGOMERY APPOINTED AS NEW ARCHDEACON OF NORTHOLT**

The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, has appointed the Revd Rachel Montgomery, Vicar of St James the Less, Bethnal Green, as the next Archdeacon of Northolt. She will be the first woman archdeacon in the London Diocese. Rachel will take up the post in May 2006. By then she will be known as the Ven Rachel Treweek, following her marriage in March to Guy Treweek, who is himself training for the priesthood.

Rachel Montgomery (42) has been Vicar of St James the Less for almost seven years. Before that she served at St George's, Tufnell Park. As Archdeacon of Northolt, she succeeds the Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, now Bishop of Woolwich.

Rachel hails from Broxbourne in Hertfordshire and originally trained as a Speech and Language therapist, becoming manager of a team across three London health authorities. A lifelong churchgoer, she became aware of a calling to the priesthood while at All Souls Clubhouse in London. She has a certificate in Couples and Family Therapy and remains fascinated by the way people connect with one another and to God.

Rachel has strong links with South Africa, having served a placement there just before the first elections. She has also been involved in the work of ALMA, the link between the Diocese of London and dioceses in Portuguese-speaking Africa. In this connection she has visited Mozambique.

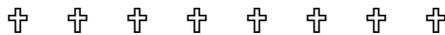
The role of all the Archdeacons in the Diocese of London has been revised to give each one a particular responsibility extending across the whole Diocese. Archdeacon Treweek will carry the brief for overseas links and relations with other faith communities in London.

The pastoral dimension of her work will focus on the Willesden Area which covers the boroughs of Brent, Harrow, Ealing and Hillingdon.

Commenting on her appointment, Rachel said, "I am looking forward to working in partnership with the parishes of Willesden to live out our commitment to being Christ's good news for the people of North West London."

One of the core priorities for the ministry of the Church in this area of London is the development of lay ministry and Rachel, who has great experience of this work in Bethnal Green, will play a crucial role in achieving this vision.

Following her appointment, Rachel will work closely with the Rt Revd Peter Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden. He says, "The Archdeacon's role includes responsibility for interfaith relationships and for London as a place where people from all cultures and backgrounds have made their home. I'm really looking forward to working with Rachel and I know she will make a huge contribution to the London team."



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