

# Saint Mary's Newsletter: April

**Vicar:** David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

**Peoples Warden:** Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

**Vicars Warden:** John Heaton 07 8243996



## SERVICES FOR APRIL

### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>:

10am Family communion Service.  
& youth making palm crosses

Refreshments - Adrienne Calderwood

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>:

10:15am Palm Sunday Family Communion

Refreshments - Trish Smithson

### Friday 19<sup>th</sup>:

10am Good Friday: Stations of the Cross

### Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>:

10am Easter Sunday Communion

Refreshments - Easter eggs ☺

### Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>:

10am ANZAC Service at Gordonton Hall and  
Cenotaph - please bring a plate

### Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>:

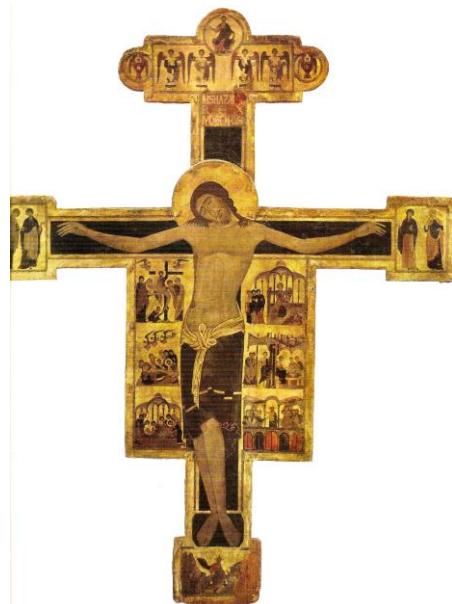
10am Family Communion

Refreshments - Majella Heaton



**Palm Sunday Service:** Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>  
please bring along palm fronds - or  
failing that, some ponga branches

**Good Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Apr:** 10:00AM. We  
mark this special Holy Day with a  
Stations of the Cross service. This  
is an emotional service where we  
journey with Jesus on the road to  
the cross



**ANZAC Service:** 10AM at Gordonton  
Hall 25 April Please bring a plate.  
We also require at least 4  
volunteers to read out names from  
the roll of honour - please see the  
vicar

### The Power of Words

Words are not simply sounds caused by air passing through our larynx. Words have real power. God spoke the world into being by the power of His words (Hebrews 11:3), and we are in His image in part because of the power we have with words. Words do more than convey information. The power of our words can actually destroy one's spirit, even stir up hatred and violence. They not only exacerbate wounds but inflict them directly. Of all the creatures on this planet, only man has the ability to communicate through the spoken word. The power to use words is a unique and powerful gift from God.

Our words have the power to destroy and the power to build up (Proverbs 12:6). The writer of Proverbs tells us, "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit" (Proverbs 18:21). Are we using words to build up people or destroy them? Are they filled with hate or love, bitterness or blessing, complaining or compliments, lust or love, victory or defeat? Like tools they can be used to help us reach our goals or to send us spiralling into a deep depression.

Furthermore, our words not only have the power to bring us death or life in this world, but in the next as well. Jesus said, "But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:36–37). Words are so important, that we are going to give an account of what we say when we stand before the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul wrote, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" (Ephesians 4:29). In this passage, Paul is emphasizing the positive over the negative. The Greek word translated "unwholesome" means "rotten" or "foul." It originally referred to rotten fruit and vegetables. Being like Christ means we don't use foul, dirty language. For some reason, many people today think it is macho or liberating to use vulgar humour, dirty jokes, and foul language, but this kind of talk has no place in the life of a Christian. Paul continues: "... but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." This is reminiscent of his words to the Colossians: "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone" (Colossians 4:6; see also Colossians 3:16).

There is a remarkable parallel between Ephesians 4:25, lying; Ephesians 4:28, stealing; and Ephesians 4:29, unwholesome talk. In each case Paul is urging us to be a blessing to those with whom we have daily contact. Paul is emphasizing that merely refraining from telling lies, stealing, or unwholesome speech is not enough. The truth is that Christianity is not a mere "don't" religion. As followers of Christ we should emulate the example of Jesus whose words were so filled with grace that the multitudes were amazed (Luke 4:22).

Jesus reminds us that the words we speak are actually the overflow of our hearts (Matthew 12:34–35). When one becomes a Christian, there is an expectancy that a change of speech follows because living for Christ makes a difference in one's choice of words. The sinner's mouth is "full of cursing and bitterness" (Romans 3:14); but when we turn our lives over to Christ, we gladly confess that "Jesus is Lord" (Romans 10:9–10). As condemned sinners, our mouths are silenced before the throne of God (Romans 3:19), but, as believers, our mouths are opened to praise and glorify God (Romans 15:6).

Christians are those whose hearts have been changed by the power of God, a change reflected in our words. Remember, before we were saved, we lived in spiritual death (Ephesians 2:1–3). Paul describes those who are dead in sin: "Their throats are open graves" (Romans 3:13). Our words are full of blessing when the heart is full of blessing. So if we fill our hearts with the love of Christ, only truth and purity can come out of our mouths.

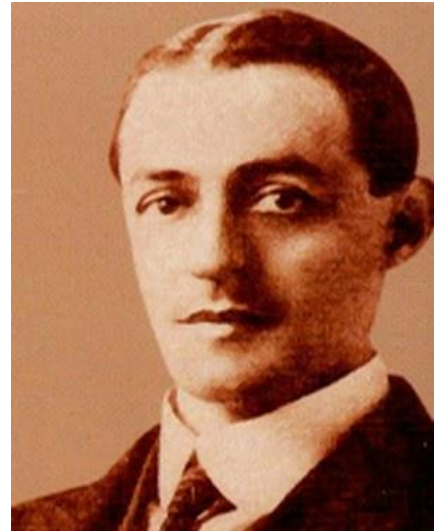
Peter tells us, "In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15). Let the power of our words be used of God to manifest the power of our faith. Be prepared to give the reason for why we love the Lord—at any time, to anyone. Our words should demonstrate the power of God's grace and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives. May God enable us to use our words as an instrument of His love and saving grace.

### This Month in Christian History:

14 April 1940: English Bible expositor

Arthur W Pink declares in a letter:

*"Nothing is too great and nothing is too small to commit into the hands of the Lord."*



### Parish Giving

Please consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. Did you know that St Mary's has to pay for our Vicar and all other costs of running a Parish, as well as giving a proportion to the Diocese? Please help us to be sustainable by giving via Automatic Payment. It is an easy way to give and is useful for the parish in running its budget. The Parish Bank Account is:

02 0410 0103053 00

Be joyful always,  
Pray continually,  
Give thanks in all  
circumstances for  
this is God's will for  
you in Christ Jesus.

*1 Thessalonians 5:16–18*