

Saint Mary's Newsletter: March

Vicar: David Smithson 021 985530 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: John Heaton 07 8243996



SERVICES FOR MARCH

Sunday 6th:

10am Lent 1 Holy communion Service

Refreshments: Majella Heaton

Readings/prayers: Majella Heaton

Sunday 13th:

10am Lent 2 Holy communion Service

Refreshments: Charles & Helen Clark

Readings/prayers: Charles & Helen Clark

Sunday 20th:

10am Lent 3 Holy communion Service

Refreshments: Karen Boyer

Readings/prayers: Karen Boyer

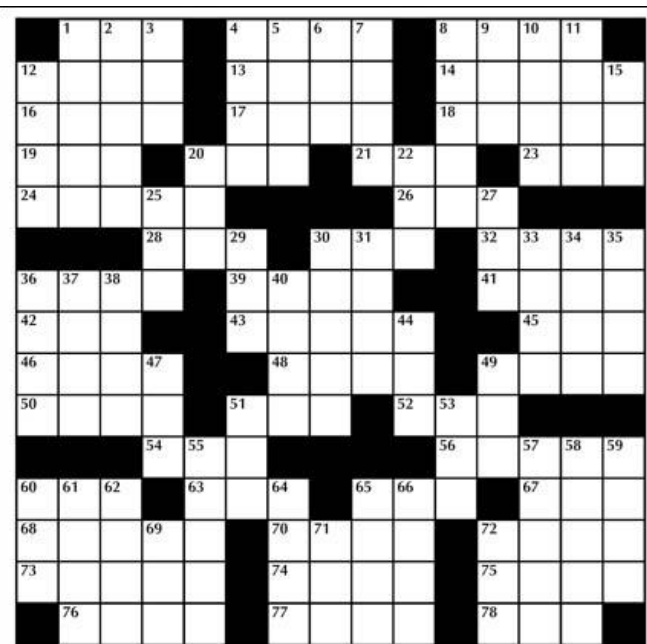
Sunday 27th:

10am Lent 4 Holy communion Service followed by the AGM then a Parish Café Lunch

Readings/Prayers: Trish Smithson



AGM: 27th March Immediately after the service. It is always brief, and when finished we will have a Parish Café Lunch together.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 "as he ___ upon the mount" (Matt. 24)
- 4 "the poison of ___ is under their lips" (Rom. 3)
- 8 "righteousnesses are as filthy ___" (Isa. 64)
- 12 "the price of his ___ shall be...the number of years" (Lev. 25)
- 13 "ye are so ___ removed" (Gal. 1)
- 14 "For that which I do I ___ not" (Rom. 7)
- 16 "rule them with a rod of ___" (Rev. 19)
- 17 "breathed ___ his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. 2)
- 18 "be holy and without ___ before him in love" (Eph. 1)
- 19 "saw Jesus afar off, he ___ and worshipped him" (Mark 5)
- 20 "shall be astonished, and ___ his head" (Jer. 18)
- 21 "weavest the seven locks of my head with the ___" (Judg. 16)
- 23 "secretly as a lion in his ___" (Ps. 10)
- 24 "the queen of ___ heard of the fame of Solomon" (1 Kings 10)
- 26 "the ___, which the LORD God had taken from man" (Gen. 2)
- 28 "when ye pray, ___ not vain repetitions" (Matt. 6)
- 30 "if any man will ___ thee at the law" (Matt. 5)
- 32 "As the partridge sitteth on ___" (Jer. 17)
- 36 "hair is fallen off his head, he is ___" (Lev. 13)
- 39 "were as swift as the ___" (1 Chron. 12)
- 41 "nations are as a ___ of a bucket" (Isa. 40)
- 42 "repented long ___ in sackcloth" (Matt. 11)
- 43 "the days when the judges ___" (Ruth 1)
- 45 "Blessed ___ the poor in spirit" (Matt. 5)
- 46 "let him ___ himself" (Matt. 16)
- 48 "children of Edom...said, Rase it, ___ it" (Ps. 137)
- 49 "Saul ___ David from that day" (1 Sam. 18)
- 50 "fall by the ___ of the sword" (Luke 21)
- 51 "he planteth an ___" (Isa. 44)
- 52 "harder to be ___ than a strong city" (Prov. 18)
- 54 "find an ___ tied, and a colt" (Matt. 21)

The Allegory of Plato's Cave

People are trapped in a cave from birth. They are chained by the feet and neck so that they can only face the back of the cave. Behind them is a fire. Between the people and the fire, objects pass by casting only shadows for the people to see in front of them. From these shadows the people come up with all types of stories, theories, and philosophies. They form their realities based on the shadows they see on the wall not realizing they are only illusions of real objects. In fact they took great pride in their abilities to interpret the pictures on the wall.

One day, one of the people is freed from his lifelong prison. He finds his way outside the cave into the glorious sunlight. However, since he'd been in the dark all of his life, the sunlight hurts his eyes. After a while, his eyes become adjusted to the bright light and he begins to see plants, animals, trees, himself. He sees the shadows that he saw in the cave only to come to the reality that shadows are mere representatives of actual objects and people. He sees that these objects have colours. He then realizes that it is the sun by which he sees everything and after a while he can even gaze upon the very source of light itself.

He then returns to the cave. He tries to explain to his fellow man that they are being kept in darkness and tries to make them understand the experience he just had. But they are so set in their perception of reality. They've believed it all their lives. The illusions of the darkness believed by everyone cannot compare to the truths of a "mad-man"; even though this mad-man is the only one who knows the truth. His new found freedom and attempt to free the others is met with so much disdain and mistrust that they plot to kill him.

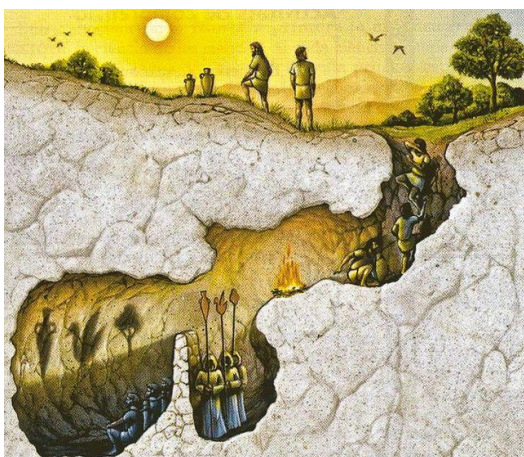
This allegory is very much like when your eyes are opened to how the "World" really operates, and how people around you cannot see what is right in front of them. More than that, it also brings to mind the life of Jesus. He was the "illuminated One" who sought to free people from their bondage to darkness only to be killed as a result. However, He was never in bondage like the rest of us. He only came in the form of the rest of us. Like the people inside the cave, we are all born in spiritual darkness (Ephesians 5:8). Since the fall of Adam and Eve, each of us has been born with Adam's sinfulness imputed into us (Romans 5:12).

Our perception of reality is flawed because of this sinful nature and the proprietor of the cave has kept us chained in ignorance (2 Corinthians 4:4). One day, by the grace of God, someone is freed from the chains. He is led to the opening of the cave. This new experience can be scary for some as they begin to see things differently. Although it is scary, there is something liberating about it all. He begins to see things like he has never even thought about seeing them. Then he sees the Sun (Son) and has now been born again.

But he can't wait to tell the rest of the cave-dwellers what he has experienced. As he re-enters the "cave", the new believer understands that this way of darkness is no longer fitting to him (1 Peter 1:14, Romans 6:2). As he tries to tell the others, he is seen as a foolish man (1 Corinthians 1:18). In many cases, these attempts to free the others from their deeply held ignorance, leads to being ostracized or even death.

God is not willing that any of us should perish by remaining in the "cave" (Hosea 6:4, 2 Peter 3:19). Jesus, in John 3, tells Nicodemus "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." And "For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life." In John chapter 8, He says "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

You too can come out of the cave, and experience a new life. The abundant life (John 10:10).



Parish Giving

Please consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. 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:

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This Month in Christian History:

6th March 1475: The birth of Michelangelo Buonarroti, Italian artist extraordinaire.

Michelangelo's most famous works include the sculptures Pieta (1498) and David (1504), the architectural plans for St Peter's cathedral in Rome, and the paintings on the 5,808-sa-foot ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (1508-12)



IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS,
HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST AND
WILL FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND
PURIFY US FROM
ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

John 1:9