

# All Saints Alive

## VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

### Truly serving God



Dear Friends,

I remember "Jim'll fix it" on TV – he used his influence to gain all sorts of special treats for children. If I ever felt a tinge of jealousy when other youngsters got their heart's desire, I do so no longer. I also remember when cycling was an innocent pastime and there was a sense of fair play in sport.

Recently we have seen how Sir Jimmy Savile and Mr Lance Armstrong have both used their position to further their own ends. Each used charitable work to disguise the way in which they were either causing damage to vulnerable young people or gaining an unfair edge over opponents to win prizes and boost his status.

These are truly disgraceful situations, and it is important that they are exposed and lessons learnt. Perhaps then healing can begin for Savile's victims who have lived with this for decades, and in a lesser way greater vigilance can be exercised over sport and drugs. In Savile's case, it is very disappointing that this could not have come out while he was still alive.

Meanwhile, the trial continues in The Hague of Radovan Karadzic who committed yet worse crimes of genocide but his defence has been that he should be rewarded for "reducing suffering" and had sought peace in Bosnia! The ability of humans to disguise the truth, possibly even to themselves, is remarkable.

Does charitable work for disabled and disadvantaged people or for a cancer foundation or violence perpetrated in the cause of "peace" justify other actions? Surely not. For ultimately the goal of these people has been their own self-

aggrandisement. Christians understand this to be about human sin, something which may be extremely pronounced in some people, especially faced with particular opportunities or crises, but we are all in danger of justifying ourselves and disregarding our failures.

Tragically we must acknowledge, of course, that there have been shocking failures even among people of faith. We all have mixed motives for what we do, and we should not pretend otherwise. Christianity calls us regularly to bring our lives back to God, to let his light shine into us so that we can bring light to others. This is about humility, recognising that God can and will work through us, and when we allow him to work there will be good outcomes. If we are driven by a proud and arrogant self-seeking, we wander far from God.

No wonder many of our hymns have strong imagery of fighting and overcoming, but this is about the power of the spiritual battle within. There are powerful feelings and influences at work in our lives, and the fact that we cannot always control them is why many people seek counselling or psychotherapy (there may be other reasons, of course). In the Gospels we often see Jesus praying and working against the forces of evil which afflict and oppress people. Today we still need the strength of God to hold and guide us, to enable us to turn from sin and live in the light of God's love.

To acknowledge our need of God is far from being a weakness, but a means to find a truer humility, so that rather than seeking our own ends and meeting our own needs we will be serving God. As the great prayer of Ignatius of Loyola says: "Teach us, good

*Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do your will."*

Love  
Jo

## **The Kempe Window**

Thank you for your very generous donations towards the costs of repair for the East Window. It looks magnificent now with the light shining through and the repairs completed.

I was overwhelmed by your generosity and it is marvellous to be able to keep All Saints looking glorious for our worship and for the broader community.

## **All Saints' Travelling Cribs**

There is an old Mexican custom which uses the idea of people dressed as Mary and Joseph travelling round the village, knocking at doors to see who will give them hospitality. We have adapted this custom with our very own travelling cribs. The crib boxes contain nativity figures, an Advent calendar, a story book and pictures to colour.

Our cribs will be blessed at the Family Service on Sunday 2 December and then they will move from home to home so that by Christmas Mary and Joseph will have travelled round Hertford to arrive at the Crib Service at All Saints on Christmas Eve. We invite young families to take part.

If you would like a family to bring a travelling crib to your home, please speak to Jean Gilby (01992 583125) or any other Mothers' Union member.

## **News from the Millers**

"We hope that you are well. We are beginning to find our feet a little now. Our belongings arrived safely and we are

renting a pretty little house with the sea at the bottom of the road; the girls love to explore the beach. We have found an Anglican Church, St Matthias, which has been welcoming. No Messy Church though, much to Sophie's dismay! Thinking of you and missing All Saints, it's been a great loss for us. Much love, Annabelle, Graham, Sophie & Alice xxx"

If anyone would like to write to Graham & Annabelle, or send a card, Jo has their address.

## **Greetings from Denver Colorado !**

I visited the All Saints Church and attended service for the first time on August 26, my last weekend in Hertford. I had been working in Hertford since March.

I truly felt welcomed and at home at All Saints, the service was lovely, the sermon made me think and it helped me get some perspective on my own life.

After the service was over I did have a cup of coffee and talked with some of the parishioners. I was invited to lunch at a ladies house with her husband who is a doctor. I so enjoyed my lunch and afternoon with them. Please pass on my thanks to them and everyone else who was so welcoming

I have not found a suitable church to attend since I have been back in the states but I will keep looking.

I cherish my time in Hertford and the people I have met and the experiences i have had.

So, Rev. Jo thank you for making me feel welcome and giving an inspirational sermon and hopefully you can remember that American that walked into church that Sunday back on August 26th.

Well, that is all for now, again, Thank You for everything and God Bless.

David Travis