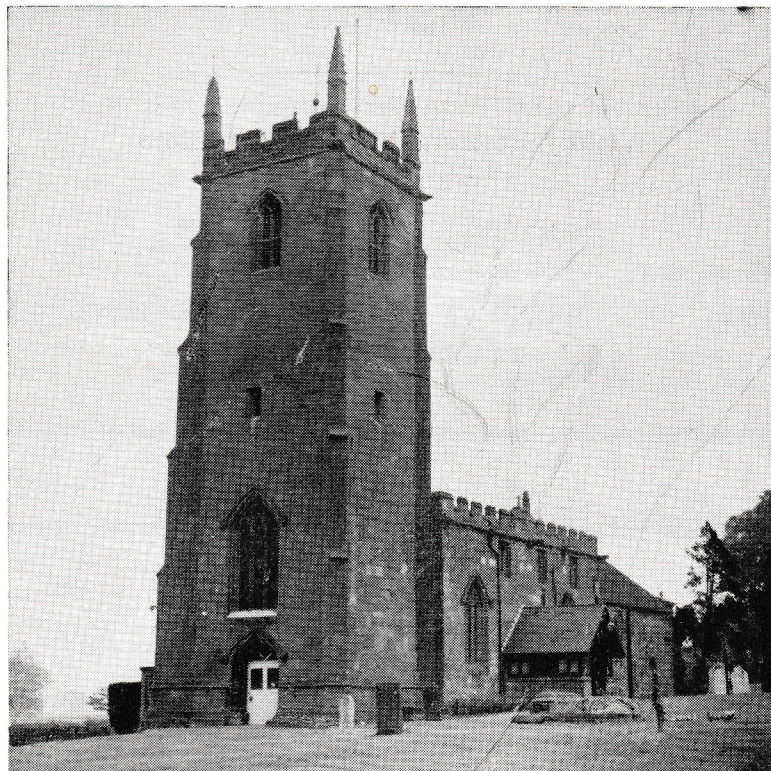


# ANSLEY CHURCH MAGAZINE

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The Vicar would like to hear of cases of sickness. Please send messages to the Vicarage.

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April 1987

Our Dear Friends,

Approximately 14 months ago seven astronauts lost their lives in the tragic explosion of the space shuttle "Challenger." Amongst them was the school teacher Christa McAuliffe. She had been selected from many applicants to be the first teacher in space. She had an enthusiasm, vision, and commitment to both education and the space programme which captured the imagination of all who knew her. For that reason her death was taken very personally by many. They identified themselves with her. One teacher said, "When Christa stepped onto that shuttle, we stepped on with her. When she died, a part of us died too."

That teacher's comment about Christa expresses what the Christian Church throughout the world will be stating on Easter Day, the 19th of this month, in a much deeper and far more profound sense the fact that every believer in Jesus Christ is identified with Him. "You have died with Christ, and you have been raised to life with Him too," and "If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death, lives in you, then He who raised Christ from death will also give life to your mortal bodies." That identification is powerful because it is visibly convincing. The Christian must show that he or she is very different from the person who is not identified with Christ. There must be something about the Christian that conveys the Master's skill. The following story illustrates this truth.

The famous artist Paul Dore once lost his passport when travelling in Europe. He presented himself at the border and explained his predicament to the frontier police. "I need to enter your country today," he said. "All I can say is that I am the artist Dore." They were not impressed. They said: "Many people try to deceive us and claim to be someone distinguished. We will soon see whether you are Dore or not. Take this pencil and sketch those peasants over there." Dore quickly produced a masterly sketch and the officer was convinced. When men profess to be Christians, the world has every right to say—"Let's see if you are; what do you do more than others?"

God Bless You, Happy Easter,

James, Catherine, Mark and Rebekah.

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR APRIL

##### Wednesday, April 1st

6.00 p.m. Six o'clock club at St. John's, Ansley Common.

7.30 p.m. Lent Meeting "Take your Partners" at Fillongley.

##### Sunday, April 5th — Passion Sunday

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

11.00 a.m. Family Communion.

"The Man who caused the Cross."

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

**Wednesday, April 8th**

6.00 p.m. Six o'clock club at St. John's, Ansley Common.

7.30 p.m. Lent Meeting **"Take your Partners"** at Ansley Common.

**Sunday, April 12th — Palm Sunday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion. **"The Man who carried the Cross."**

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer. **"The Man who escaped the Cross."**

**Wednesday, April 15th**

6.00 p.m. Six o'clock club at St. John's, Ansley Common.

**Maundy Thursday, April 16th**

8.00 p.m. Fellowship of the Lord's Supper. Ansley Village Hall.

**Good Friday, April 17th**

10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. **Children's Event** held in the Hall. Games, Competitions, Story, Quiz, Painting, Model Making. Bring your own packed lunch and 50p.

7.00 p.m. Special Service **"The Crucifixion,"** in Church. Church Bus will run. 6.30 p.m. from Village; 6.45 p.m. Ansley Common.

**EASTER DAY — April 19th**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

11.00 a.m. Family Communion — The Resurrection.

6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer — Jesus is Alive.

**Low Sunday — April 26th**

11.00 a.m. Morning Prayer.

6.30 p.m. Holy Communion.

**Saturday, May 9th** — Here is an advance notice. But the day will soon be with us. The Vicar of Corby in Northants is bringing 12 members of his congregation to meet the congregation of Ansley. They arrive at 4.30 p.m., to be taken for a meal in various homes in our parish. At 6.45 p.m., we shall all gather at the Village Hall to listen to what they have to say. I know you will book the date and make them very welcome.

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**Over 50 different people** have attended the house meetings held in the parish during Lent so far. Lent is not over yet and there are a number of meetings still to take place. Do enquire if you want an invitation.

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**Lent Boxes or envelopes** are still available from Diana Keeley our T.E.A.R. fund representative. The money given will go to most needy areas. It is worth remembering that in the next 15 seconds seven people will die of hunger. Within the next hour 1,680 people will starve to death, and by this time tomorrow 40,320 will have died of lack of food.

Of the world's 7,000 languages, over 5,000 have no Bible. 94% of all ordained preachers in the world minister to the 9% of the population who speak English.

Robin Aim is a New Zealander working in Zaire. He recently conducted a teaching conference for ministers on the shore of Lake Tanganyika. Many of those African ministers attending had walked for three days through the dense rain forest, in sweltering temperatures. There were at least 2000 in attendance. Some people in England would not even cross the road to hear the Gospel.

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**On a certain day** last year a man sat in Nairobi airport reading a copy of the New Testament. As he did so tears were seen rolling down his cheeks. The pages were opened at John's Gospel Chapter 4 where is recorded the event of Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman. In conversation with a person sitting next to him he said, "I have been reading about Jesus Christ and, although I do not know who He is, I just can't stop crying because of His kindness."

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#### **The Bible instead of a gun**

The staff recognised the man who came into the Bible Society shop. He had been a guerrilla leader—a fierce fighter in the war for independence. A man with a gun.

But he didn't carry his gun any more.

Instead, he had come to buy a Bible in his own Shona language.

"Why do you want a Bible?" they asked him.

"This is our salvation now," he said, holding his new Bible in his hand. "Everything else has failed. I want the Bible to be my compass to lead me wherever I go."

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#### **"MY TESTIMONY"**

**by Peter Oxley**

"We were a very poor family," says 40-year-old Peter Oxley, of Sheffield, in Yorkshire.

My father and mother were out of work due to ill health. My mother often took me along to the pawn shop.

"I hit out at this in the only way that I knew how — crime.

"By the time that I was 38-years-old, I had spent 19 years in prison. On two occasions I was nearly charged with murder.

"Sex, violence and theft ruled my life and I thought nothing of shooting someone who got in my way.

"I was bitter against society and the system."

During his many years in prison Peter lost his wife and his mother didn't want to know him.

His bitterness turned to hatred.

Each time that he came out of prison Peter had the best of intentions. But with no money he found it easy to turn back to crime.

In 1983, Peter received his last prison sentence. It was while he was in prison that he experienced God in a very real way. Peter hadn't been looking for God. He attended the service in the prison chapel just to escape from his cell.

"I was in no way interested in God, but the more I tried not to listen to what the chaplain was saying, the more I couldn't help it.

"He told us that Jesus had died for each one of us—for our personal sins," says Peter.

"Over the years I had heard several prison chaplains talk about this man, Jesus, but it never meant a thing to me until I heard the chaplain at Strangeways Prison. I could see that this man had something that I wanted."

After reading through some literature and talking privately to the chaplain, Peter said to God: "If you are real, come in and change my life."

He says: "I found a tremendous peace in God. I cried for what must have been three quarters of an hour as I felt all of the bitterness and frustration go.

"I must have used two and a half boxes of tissues! I'm glad that I went to prison in 1983 as I needed to be sorted out."

Peter is very doubtful of the value of prison sentences as a deterrent to crime.

"But Jesus has stopped me from committing other crimes. By His grace only is it possible for me to overcome the temptation of sin.

"In prison, people put up a false front because to feel 'love' is to be 'weak'. I had to let God come into my heart, knowing He knew how weak, bitter and hurt I was," says Peter.

Since his release from prison in 1984, Peter has tried to help ex-offenders not to make the same mistakes that he made.

"If I can stop one person from leading a life of crime, then I will feel that my life has not been a total waste."

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