



St Mary  
Magdalen  
OXFORD

# **Parish Notes**

**May 2022**

## **Services:**

### **Sundays**

8am, 5.3pm: Said Mass  
10.30am: High Mass

### **Monday to Saturday**

12.15pm, 6.00pm: Said Mass

### **Monday to Friday**

8.15am: Morning Prayer  
5.40pm: Evening Prayer

### **Confessions**

A priest is available to hear confessions  
after the 12.15 Mass.

Other times by appointment with Fr  
Peter or Fr Stephen

### **Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage**

By appointment with the Parish Priest

## **Parish Clergy:**

The Reverend Canon Dr Peter Groves  
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The Reverend Stephen Hearn  
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The Reverend Esther Brazil  
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### **Parish Administrator**

admin@stmarymagdalenoxford.org.uk

### **Find us online**

[www.stmarymagdalenoxford.org.uk](http://www.stmarymagdalenoxford.org.uk)

Twitter: @marymagsoxford

Facebook: /stmarymagdalen.oxford

## Events

### **Concert: Songs of Mary (Antiphon Chamber Choir)**

**13<sup>th</sup> May**

Hannah Towndrow (Royal Academy of Music) conducts the Antiphon Chamber Choir at 7.45pm on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of May in a concert of sacred music dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Programme:

Victoria, *Regina caeli*  
Howells, *Salve regina*  
Rachmaninov, *Bogoroditsye devo*  
Pärt, "Ode II" from *Triodion*  
Ešenvalds, *Magnificat*  
Phillips, *Gaude Maria virgo*  
Palestrina, *Ave maris stella*  
Heredia, *Magnificat Octavi Toni*  
Bednall, *Ave regina caelorum*

Tickets are available at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/antiphon-chamber-choir>

### **The Parochial Church Council**

**10<sup>th</sup> May**

The PCC meets on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm in church.

### **Scripture on Saturday**

**7<sup>th</sup> May**

Online Bible Study resumes on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May from 10.00am. We shall be beginning our examination of Paul's Letter to the Romans. No experience is necessary; all are welcome. The zoom link will be circulated to the parish mailing list before each session.

### **Ascension Day**

**26<sup>th</sup> May**

Ascension Day falls this year on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May. There will be a said mass at 12.15pm and a Sung Mass at 7.30pm. Also on Ascension Day our neighbours from St Michael's will be beating their parish bounds, and will come to St Mary Magdalen's around 10.50am. Members of our church are most welcome to join them in their progress round the city centre.

## **Notices**

### **Baptism at the High Mass**

We welcome Jonathan Taylor to baptism at the High Mass on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May, and Thea McCosker on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Christian Aid Week**

Christian Aid week runs this year from 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May. This year's campaign focuses on alleviating hunger in Zimbabwe, where the combined effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, conflict, and drought have caused a crisis for many families. As usual, envelopes will be distributed in church to take away, fill and return the following Sunday. Donating in this collective way helps to show our Parish commitment to giving.

Donations can also be made directly by visiting [christianaid.org.uk](http://christianaid.org.uk). Please pray for our local Christian Aid team, based in their office at New Road Baptist Church, and for all volunteers and collectors around the country.

## **Fr Peter's Easter Sermon**

*"They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."  
John 20.2*

We have enjoyed a magnificent observance of Holy Week in these past seven days, and we are hugely grateful to everyone who has made that observance possible, and all who have participated in our solemnities and celebrations. As we all know, this has been our first full set of such services for three years. Last year we ran a reduced Holy Week programme, and many restrictions were still in place. Two years ago, we were in lockdown and forbidden to enter the church building. So these once a year ceremonies have become for us, once in three years. This hiatus has provided certain challenges. There are lots of things which churches such as ours only do in Holy Week, and lots of printed materials and liturgical objects which are kept only for these services. So it's normal for us to be scurrying around trying to remember where we put various bits of stuff last year. This time, we have been worrying about where we put various bits of stuff three years ago. And then, worrying about what it is we're supposed to be doing with the various bits of stuff when we have found them.

"They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him". Few everyday experiences are more frustrating than losing something important to us. The increasing sense of powerlessness and panic as we realize that something is lost, is familiar to us all. Equally familiar is the need to control our frustration and fury when a helpful person, usually a family member or friend, says "well, where did you leave it?" If we knew that, then we wouldn't be looking. Even the more constructive "where did you last see it", is actually pointless, because of course if we can remember where we last saw it, we will already have looked in that place.

It might seem trivial to apply these everyday frustrations to the story of Mary Magdalen that first Easter morning. She knows exactly where she last saw Jesus. She saw him breathing out his life on the agony of the cross. She saw him taken down from that instrument of execution, wrapped in grave clothes, and placed in new tomb. She saw the stone being rolled into place. She knows, in that sense, where she left him, even though it was not she who physically placed him there, her fidelity to his presence even in death makes her as much as anyone else a member of his burial party. So of course she is looking in the right place when she comes, early on the first day of the week, to bring spices for anointing to the tomb.

And yet, she is not looking in the right place. Despite the obvious answers to the obvious questions – where did you last see it, can you remember where you left it? – despite her knowing exactly how to answer these straightforward enquiries, she has no idea where to find that which she is seeking.

The point is that these obvious questions are not, in fact, trivialities. Though as questions they might seem trite, the answers they provoke are very far from it. Mary does know where to look. And she looks in the right place, because only by looking in the right place can she discover that she is looking in the wrong place. What she encounters this Easter morning, what she proclaims as the first witness to the resurrection, is that everything we thought we knew is in fact turned on its head. She is looking for something, and she finds nothing. Knowing exactly what is the correct place in which to look, she finds only darkness, only absence, only a final emptiness.

But this emptiness, this absence, this nothing, turns out not to be nothing, for it points to something. She knows she was looking in the right place, and so finding the tomb empty is the surest sign that she was looking in the wrong place. Not wrong in the ordinary sense of remembering incorrectly where she had left Jesus, but wrong because what use to be right now no longer applies, what used to be true is now false. The greatest certainty of all – that death reigns supreme, that the end of the victim is truly his end, that violence and power and hatred will snuff the life out of the one who refuses their dominance – this greatest of all certainties proves as empty as that tomb, as absent as that body. Everything has changed, and everything you thought you knew you can no longer know, because as even the most stubborn of sceptics will admit, one cannot know something which is not true.

"They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Of course that's what Mary thinks, what on earth would one expect? But they have not taken the Lord out of the tomb, they – whoever they are – have done nothing with him whatsoever. And we do not know where they have laid him, because they have not laid him anywhere. So often it is the case that not knowing, and crucially, understanding that we do not know, is the basis for learning anew. We do not know because, at this stage, all we know is the nothing we have encountered. The tomb is empty, the body is not there. But that nothing will shortly become everything, that absence will witness to the fullest, the greatest, the most complete and all-embracing presence that it is possible to proclaim.

Mary knows where she last saw Jesus, but at this point she has no idea where she will see him next. The one she thinks must be the gardener is the one who will call her by name. He is the one who will speak to her the truth which is the unknowing of all that is past, the recognition that everything has changed, the truth that this emptiness, this absence, this nothing is in fact the source of everything. And so in the end Mary will find what she was looking for. Not what she thought she was looking for – not a shroud and a body and death. She will find something infinitely greater. She will find the truth that is Jesus. She will find the truth itself. She will find that love is now the only truth, that only death is dead.

## **Intercessions**

*Please pray for the long-term sick and those in special need, among them:*

Jo Laity, Sr Mary Bernard, Sophie Brown, Pamela Rogers, Sophie, Adrian, Ann, Alison, Johanna Merz, Maggie, Michael, Diana Arkwright, Gordon Scott, Michael Starford, Helen Bell, Jenny, Gladys Bushell, Beryl Dryden, Susan Barnes, Roy Dicker, John O'Leary, Jennifer Larcombe, Bob Guthrie, Eleanor Jamison.

## **Sunday readings**

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May: Acts 5.27-32, 40-41; Revelation 5.11-14; John 21.1-14

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May: Acts 13.14, 43-52; Revelation 7.9, 14-17; John 10.27-30

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May: Acts 14.21-27; I Revelation 21.1-5; John 13.31-35

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May: Acts 15.1-2, 22-29; Revelation 21.10-14, 22-23; John 4.23-29

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May: Acts 7.55-60; Revelation 22.12-14, 16-17 & 20; John 17.20-26

# May 2022

<b>Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
<b>1 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>2 Athanasius B, Dr</b>	<b>3 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>4 The English Martyrs</b>	<b>5 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>6 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>4 Feria (Easter)</b>
Parish community	Steven, our bishop	Theologians	Christian Unity	Oxford City Council	Helen and Douglas Houses	The Gatehouse
<b>8 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>9 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>10 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>11 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>12 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>13 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>14 Matthias (Apostle)</b>
Parish community	Oxford Synagogue	The homeless	Peace in Ukraine	Sacristans and servers	Choir and musicians	Preachers
<b>15 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>16 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>17 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>18 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>19 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>20 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>21 Feria</b>
Parish community	Famine relief	Vocations	Healing Ministry	Oxford's hospitals	Christian Aid	Teachers
<b>22 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>23 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>24 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>25 Bede Pr, Dr</b>	<b>26 Ascension of the Lord</b>	<b>27 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>28 Feria (Easter)</b>
Parish Community	The free press	World peace	Historians	The hope of heaven	Biblical scholars	Church wardens
<b>29 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>30 Feria (Easter)</b>	<b>31 Visitation of the BVM</b>				
Parish Community	Missionaries	Expectant parents				