



## Weekly News

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Knowing, loving and following Jesus*

## Parish Church of St Richard

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### Worship at St Richard's

Sunday's Mass will be live-streamed onto the St Richard's Facebook page. During the week, the church will also be open most days for private prayer.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Mass 11:00

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> Exposition 18:20

Mass 19:00

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> Mass 11:00

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Mass 10:00**

*(17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time)*

### 'Bring and share' lunch – Sunday 24 July

If you haven't signed up for the Bring and share lunch and would like to come, it's not too late just speak with Fr Chris or Mary.

### Ric's Bench

Ric's Bench sessions this week are on:

Monday 19:00 – 21:00

Friday 14:00 – 16:00

Please do come along for a cup of tea or coffee.

### Pilgrimage to OLW – 29/07 – 31/07

The total cost will be £160 per person so, assuming you have already paid your £10 and £20 deposits, the amount due is £130 per person, this is payable before we leave for Walsingham by either Cheque or BACS (if paying by BACS, please put OLW pilgrimage as reference). I think everyone now knows with whom they will be travelling, and fuel costs should be split and sorted by the travellers in each car. Fr Chris will send out more information by email this week, but if you have any questions, please speak with him.

### Foodbank donations

The church will be open to take donations for the Foodbank on Tuesday at 10:00 – 12:00 and Friday 14:00 – 16:00.

### Haywards Heath in bloom

Thank you to everyone who has helped with the preparation of the church grounds in preparation for the judging for the 'Haywards Heath in bloom' initiative, it all went very well.

### ***Of your charity, please pray for, those in need:***

Mimi Palmer, Una Wade, Christopher Grimwood, Shirley Swyer, Brigid Brand, Alistair Bucke, Ann Eastall, Colin Hill, Sheila Jobson, Jean McCarthy, Tony Dawson, Maria Firth, Gary Firth, Karen Guy, Suzy Rumbold, Fr John Gayford, Jennifer Walter, Kim MacAllen, Peter Atthis, Baby Isaac, Baby Nyle Mahmoud, Kitty and Nick.

***Those who have died recently: Victoria Trew and those whose anniversary falls around this time of year:*** 17<sup>th</sup>) Edith Clarke, Arthur Longworth (pr), James Sandys-Renton, 21<sup>st</sup>) Kenneth Lowery,

Douglas Hollis (pr), Peter Loudon, 22<sup>nd</sup>) Kathleen Dark, 23<sup>rd</sup>) Albert Millett, Eileen Potter, Lily Fabb.

*If you would like anyone added to the prayer list, or would like someone prayed for, but **not** added to the list, please submit your prayer details using the form on the website [www.strichards.co.uk/prayer](http://www.strichards.co.uk/prayer).*

### Dcn Rebecca's Sermon – 17 July 2022

One of the downsides of having an unusual surname is that people frequently struggle to pronounce it correctly. Instead of Swyer, people with say 'Sayer', 'Sawyer' or 'Squire'. If I'm about to go into an appointment, I know they're about to call me because the person will look down at their bit of paper and pause. They'll either then pronounce it incorrectly or avoid the issue completely and just say 'Rebecca'. People also often change the spelling as they somehow assume I've spelt it incorrectly!

For human beings it can get very annoying if our name is written or pronounced incorrectly because it forms a key part of our identity.

Most of us will have people in our lives who abbreviate our names. My family call be Becca, though I've always loathed being called Becky and you do it at your peril. We've probably all experienced those times when a parent is cross with us, and they'll often use our full name.

In legal documents or at legal services or declarations, a person must write or speak their full name.

Parents will commonly spend ages choosing their child's name. They might want to include a name handed down through generations of the family and might also choose a name because of its meaning. There's quite a business in baby names and their meaning.

So, names form part of an individual's identity and names also pass on through generations something of their families' identity and heritage.

In the gospels we often hear Jesus calling people by their name. Some people have their names changed, to add a new level of meaning or to signify a new start in their lives. Simon becomes Peter, meaning 'the rock' as the rather tactless fisherman becomes the chief apostle. Saul the persecutor of Christians becomes Paul, the apostle and evangelist.

At the beginning of Luke's gospel, running parallel to the story of the annunciation and birth of Jesus is the annunciation and birth of John the Baptist. His father Zechariah is struck dumb by God because he doesn't believe the good news the angel Gabriel brings. Zechariah's tongue is loosened again when at his circumcision he was asked whether the baby's name was to be Zechariah after his father and Zechariah writes 'His name is John', derived from the Hebrew and meaning: "graced by God." Again, the name is a key part of identity.

In the Jewish scriptures – the Old Testament – the name of God isn't actually written or spoken as the norm because it is too holy. I can still remember at university when the OT lecturer started talking about *Yahweh* and wrote the Hebrew on the board and some people in the room looked distinctly uncomfortable.

The name of Jesus – the Word made flesh – is made up of the Hebrew words meaning *Yahweh*, meaning the LORD, and *yasha*, meaning saves. So, Jesus's name means "the LORD saves." The name itself reveals and encapsulates his identity.

In today's gospel reading from Luke chapter 10, we've heard the familiar story of Mary and Martha, who with their brother Lazarus, were described as Jesus's friends. At first sight, it sounds as if Jesus is telling Martha off, and some have interpreted his words as encouraging all Christians to a life of contemplation and silence and portraying that as superior to what we might call practical Christianity.

Yet the account is more nuanced than this simplistic interpretation. Elsewhere in the gospels Jesus tells his followers numerous times to serve others and care for them and demonstrate love for them in practical ways. On this occasion Jesus arrived at their house after travelling and so would of course be hungry.

It wasn't wrong that Martha was preparing a meal or tidying up or no-one would eat or live in a clean house. The issue Jesus raises is that Martha: 'was distracted with all the serving.' She's flapping about, getting worked up that Mary isn't helping and worrying about things. So, the issue is that Martha is '*distracted*' by all the serving and worrying. This is why Jesus then says: 'Mary has chosen the better part.' Her complete focus is on his presence with her.

Jesus here then is speaking Martha's name to call her back to herself and away from the flapping and worrying: 'Martha, Martha'. We see another example of Jesus calling someone back to themselves on the day of resurrection when the risen Jesus meets Mary Magdalene in the Garden. In her weeping and distress at finding the tomb empty and worrying that the body of the Lord had been taken, she doesn't recognise Jesus.

That is, until he says her name: 'Mary'. At this she refocuses and recognises him and says: 'master'.

There's something very important for us to reflect on here about God's call to us. We have a very clear sense of Jesus – himself the Word made flesh – calling individuals for who they are. Jesus calls us by our name.

Those called to ordained ministry know that there's a givenness to holy orders as the Church of England has received them, but they must inhabit those orders as themselves. They can't pretend to be someone else and put on a churchy façade. I'm Rebecca Swyer, a deacon in the Church of God.

In the Old Testament we see God calling Samuel by his name at his initial calling, but that isn't the only moment of him discerning God's call. It's a pattern we see numerous other times and relevant to us also. God calls us back to ourselves as he does here to Martha.

We all at times get wrapped up with worrying about things or with the business of our own plans.

My tendency to organise and plan ahead in a driven and precise way can mean I end up relying on myself and focus on my worries and not trust in and focus on God.

At those times, it is especially important to go apart in prayer and silence and like Mary just sit at the Lord's feet. In my life there are periodically times when I have heard God's voice just saying my name: 'Rebecca'. I've learnt to then listen, stop, and keep listening.

This is pertinent for us as individuals, but also as a parish as we prepare to enter the interregnum. Planning is necessary and some worrying about the future inevitable, but as Paul reminds us: *'We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose'* (Romans 8.28). Ultimately, what is the right thing for Fr Chris and Carolyn will be the right thing for us. *'God is compassion and love; he always provides for his faithful.'*