

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

Holly Ryan, Wendy Webb, Ann-Marie and Andy, David Games, Daniel Argov, Abigail, Melanie, Dan, Angela, Anna and Phoenix, Philip, Chris, Lewis, Timothy, Iona Zimon, Steven Wiltshire, Jenny Hey, Julie, Michael, Sara Ali, John Cuff, Sue Goodall, Alex Underwood, Janet Semper, Peter Parsons, Richard Gurney, Brian, Ray Hey, Freddie Harrison, Lily

**ORDINANDS** At Petertide

Please pray for all to be ordained deacon or priest at Petertide, among them Peter Day, Martin Henig, Ben Williams, Suzanne Hosking, Charlotte Ballinger, Kathryn Percival, Adrian Furse

**PETER DAY** will be ordained deacon by the bishop of Oxford at Christ Church Cathedral on Saturday 3rd July at 2pm. Please pray for him, for Holly, and for the parish of Wokingham where Peter is to serve.

**MARTIN HENIG** will be ordained deacon by the bishop of Oxford at Christ Church Cathedral earlier on the same day, at 10am. Please pray for Martin, and for the parishes of Ss Peter and Paul Botley, St Frideswide and St Margarets Binsey, where Martin will serve.

**BEN WILLIAMS** who was our student assistant some years ago, will be ordained at the same service as Martin, to serve in the parish of Cowley St John. His parish will be celebrating the day with a Festal Evensong service at St Albans, Charles Street, East Oxford, at 5pm on the same day, Saturday 3rd July. All are welcome to join Ben for this service.

**BERNARD ROE RIP** Bernard, a very longstanding and faithful member of our church, died peacefully in June having received the rites of the Church. His requiem mass will be celebrated in church at 2pm on Wednesday 7th July, and it is hoped that as many as possible from St Mary Magdalen's will be present. Bernard's family has kindly laid on a reception at Hertford College after the service. Those intending to come are asked to reply to Bernard's daughter, Mrs Claudia Slater, on 01992 813899 or 21 Woodland Way, Theydon Bois, Epping, Essex, CM16 7DY (to enable the caterers to provide appropriately). May Bernard rest in peace and may light perpetual shine upon him.

**TREASURES OF LAMBETH PALACE LIBRARY** The library at Lambeth Palace is hosting a fascinating exhibition of some of their most valued items, including the 9th century MacDurnan Gospels, the 13th century Lambeth Apocalypse, as landmark texts in the history of the Church of England. This exhibition has been curated by Clare Brown, a former stalwart of St Mary Magdalen's whose support and friendship we continue to enjoy. So a parish trip is in order. We propose to travel down to London by coach on Wednesday 21st July, at 12noon (eat beforehand or bring a packed lunch), to visit the exhibition around 2:30pm. The cost of the exhibition is £8, (£7 concessions). We will end the afternoon by attending evensong at Westminster Abbey. Please tell Jenny Farthing or Fr Peter if you would like to come.

**PATRONAL FESTIVAL**

On Sunday 25th July, we celebrate our Patronal Festival. The preacher at the High Mass will be the Right Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Woolwich, and newly appointed Bishop for Urban Life and Faith. Fr Christopher was an ordinand from St Mary Magdalen's during the ministry of Fr Charles Smith, and has maintained close links with the parish ever since.

Lunch will follow in the University Club in Mansfield Road. Tickets will be on sale after the High Mass for the three preceding Sundays. We shall be catering our own lunch, and will be able to offer tickets at a very reasonable price. In order to make the event the success it ought to be, we will also need people to donate time and energy both before and afterwards. Volunteers are needed to help with setting up on the Sunday morning before mass, to assist with serving food, and with clearing up. Please speak to Rachel Elliott if you can help. There are three disabled parking spaces available for us on the day—if you would like one, speak to Fr Peter.

**MORNING OF PRAYER** On the day preceding our celebration of the Patronal Festival, there will be a morning of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament from 9:30am in church. All are encouraged to come and spend time in the presence of the Lord, to pray for the parish and for its needs. Our fundraising campaign will be in many people's prayers at this time.

**ST GILES FAIR** Looking ahead to St Giles Fair, it would be helpful if people could bring in any slightly more valuable items for the fair within the next few weeks. This is because Mallam's auction items for St. Mary Mags free of commission, and a couple of sales are coming up in July: things like small items of jewellery, old books etc., also the price of gold is very high at the moment. Please pass on any such items to Ruth Wynne-Davies who will make sure they are viewed and valued experts.

**FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN** Contributions have begun to trickle in. Many thanks to those who have already given. It would be good to have made substantial progress towards our target by the time of the Patronal Festival. Ideas for activities which might be sponsored are also needed.

**SUNDAY CELEBRANTS** July's celebrants are as follows:

Sunday 4th July

8am Fr Peter Groves; 10:30am Fr Peter Groves; 5:30pm Fr Jay Wilson

Sunday 11th July

8am Fr Richard Smail; 10:30am Sr Margaret Anne; 5:30pm Fr Jay Wilson

Sunday 18th July

8am, 10:30am, Fr Peter Groves; 5:30pm Fr Jay Wilson

Sunday 25th July

8am Fr Richard Smail, 10:30am Fr Peter Groves, 5:30pm Fr Jay Wilson

**JESUS IN THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE**

by Fr Peter

One of my favourite fictional dinner parties takes place in Monty Python's movie "The Meaning of Life". After three eerie knocks on the door, the host goes to open up and is greeted by the sight of a shadowy hooded figure carrying a scythe, who introduces himself with the words "I am the grim reaper". Knowing her manners, the lady of the house comes along and invites him in, presenting him to her guests as "one of the little men from the village", and telling them that his name is Mr Death and he is, apparently, a reaper. When he protests that he is "the grim reaper", the only response from the table is to observe that that's hardly surprising given the state of the weather.

Few social occasions are as fraught as the dinner party. The less well we know our guests, the greater the fuss we are likely to make in preparing for them. This is particularly true if we are lucky enough to have attracted a particularly impressive guest. Many of the colleges of Oxford University still have annual dinners to which one is expected to bring someone of significance, whatever that means. The competition among dons for whose is the most impressive guest, is always hilarious to watch—there are few breeds more starry eyed than academics. But social snobbery is something to which all others fall prey at one time or another.

Imagine the scene. You have invited a new friend, one whose friendship you can't quite believe you have obtained, and this new friend is coming with some others to eat at your house and to meet your other friends. The occasion is painstakingly prepared. You did shopping a week ago, you began the cooking two days ago, you opened the wine four hours ago, but table has long been set and at last you are ready to put on your smart clothes. However, things do not turn out as you wish. There are uninvited guests, people you know slightly but would rather were absent. People who do not know how to behave at such an occasion. People who talk about unmentionable subjects which embarrass you, subjects such as poverty, disease, prostitution, deprivation. You are sure your new friend doesn't want to hear such sorts of things and yet rather than being interested by your own underprepared conversational gambits about the London literary scene, this friend seems fully engaged by your undesirable acquaintance.

Poor old Simon the Pharisee had gone to such trouble. It was harder in the ancient world to give a private dinner party, particularly if one was a religious figure. People were bound to come and go. Teachers and preachers were public figures. But it was Simon who had invited Jesus, and doubtless Simon who was looking forward

to having Jesus as his own for the evening. I am the host, he is the guest he will have thought. I am in charge of the situation, everything will be exactly as I wish. But no. In comes the anonymous woman. She is not Mary Magdalen, incidentally. She is anonymous, unnamed but not unnoticed. She knows nothing of decorum. She throws herself weeping at Jesus, dripping her salty tears on to his dusty calloused feet, and wiping those feet dry with the mess of her hair before compounding that mess with the ointment on which she had spent her last penny. She doesn't belong in Simon's house, he thinks. She threatens his control of the situation, she threatens his reputation, the kudos he is gaining by having this famous young man in his house. But most of all, and most simply of all, she is spoiling all his carefully laid plans. This is his party, Jesus is his guest, he belongs to him and him alone.

How easy it is to relive this story over and again in our Christian lives. Jesus is what we want him to be, the person who comes to dinner party, to make us feel better. Jesus is the trophy friend which marks us out from others whilst gaining their admiration. Encountering Jesus is an experience so powerful and so disconcerting that we are only able to undergo it on our own terms. So we find Jesus in J.S. Bach and George Herbert, in Rowan Williams and in Desmond Tutu; but not in the under washed and shabbily dressed person who wants to talk to us after mass; not in the child whose mother is made to feel so embarrassed by his noise that she keeps him away from worship; not in the heroin addict who wanders into church in the hope of finding a few coins to go towards his next fix. Jesus belongs to us, and therefore he is under our control.

Such an approach is not only selfish it is highly dangerous. Look at the example of Simon the Pharisee. He thought he knew what he was doing. The rules of social decorum he has known since his youth. Now his assumptions are challenged. He has made such a fuss of this Jesus person because he is convinced that he is a prophet. But this conviction cannot be right, because were Jesus a prophet he would know that this woman is a sinner. Since he doesn't recognize her for what she is, perhaps he's not a social celebrity after all. Perhaps. But perhaps it's not that Jesus isn't a prophet, but that Simon hasn't listened to him, for a prophet is one who speaks the word of the Lord. Of course the woman is a sinner. Everybody is a sinner, and everybody is the object of God's unconditional and forgiving love. How do we respond? Which of two people will love more? Do we act like somebody who has just been bought a pint of beer, or like somebody who has just had a lifetime of debts cancelled? Jesus tells Simon this story to bring him up short.

But there is more. Not only is Simon deluded about the love of God, he is also deluded about how to behave. He, the social master, the founder of the feast who has gone to so much trouble to get everything right, has actually got everything wrong. It is the woman who has washed Jesus feet, who has greeted him with a kiss, who has anointed him before his meal. All these are the right things to do, and all of them have been done by this embarrassing streetwalker, who has shamed the social snobs for whom shame is the worst fate of all.

Simon thinks that if Jesus were a prophet, he would know if someone were a sinner. In reality, if someone knew herself to be a sinner she would know, in Jesus, that she was forgiven. She would respond with the ludicrous and embarrassing expressions of love which so offend the smart men of the town. She would know that she who is forgiven much will love much. If only Simon the Pharisee knew not that she is a sinner, but that he himself is. For if he knew himself to be a sinner, he would know what it means to be forgiven much; and if he knew what it means to be forgiven, he would know what it means to love much. But most of all, perhaps, if Simon knew himself to be a sinner, he would know how to respond to the love of God when it was sitting at his table and staring him in the face. So then, which are we? Pharisee or prostitute? The gospel choice is clear.

### Sunday Readings

JULY 4TH:	Isaiah 66.10-14	Galatians 6.14-18	Luke 10.1-12, 17-20
JULY 11TH:	Deuteronomy 30.10-14	Colossians 1.15-20	Luke 10.25-37
JULY 18TH:	Genesis 18.1-10	Colossians 1.24-28	Luke 10.38-42
JULY 25TH:	Song of Songs 3.1-4	2 Corinthians 5.14-17	John 20.1-2, 11-18



# ST MARY MAGDALEN

**Services**  
**Sundays :** Eucharist at 8 am and 5.30 pm  
 Mattins 10 am  
 High Mass at 10.30 am  
**Weekdays :** Eucharist at 12.15 pm and 6.00 pm  
 Morning Prayer 8.15 am, Evening Prayer 5.40 pm

### Confessions

Daily after the 12.15 pm Mass, Wednesdays & Saturdays at 6.30 pm

### Parish Clergy

The Reverend Dr Peter Groves  
 Telephone: Oxford 247836  
[peter.groves@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:peter.groves@theology.ox.ac.uk)  
 Sr Margaret Anne, ASSP  
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[margaretanne@socal1ss.co.uk](mailto:margaretanne@socal1ss.co.uk)

### Website

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

## Calendar for July 2010

1	Thur	Feria	<i>John, our Bishop</i>
2	Fri	Feria	<i>Rowan, our Archbishop</i>
3	Sat	Thomas, Ap	<i>The church in India</i>
4	Sun	14TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR	<i>Parish community</i>
5	Mon	Feria	<i>Those recently ordained</i>
6	Tue	Feria	<i>Children's church</i>
7	Wed	Feria	<i>Theologians</i>
8	Thur	Feria	<i>Oxfam</i>
9	Fri	Feria	<i>Churches Together</i>
10	Sat	Feria	<i>Sacristans and servers</i>
11	Sun	15TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR	<i>Parish Community</i>
12	Mon	Feria	<i>Oxford City Council</i>
13	Tue	Feria	<i>Visiting students</i>
14	Wed	Feria (John Keble)	<i>Keble College</i>
15	Thur	Bonaventure	<i>Franciscans</i>
16	Fri	Feria	<i>Those who travel</i>
17	Sat	Feria	<i>Home communicants</i>
18	Sun	16TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR	<i>Parish community</i>
19	Mon	Ss Gregory and Macrina	<i>Our Orthodox brethren</i>
20	Tue	Feria	<i>St Margaret's, Oxford</i>
21	Wed	Feria	<i>The Gatehouse</i>
22	Thur	Mary Magdalen	<i>The PCC</i>
23	Fri	Brigid, R	<i>Religious communities</i>
24	Sat	Feria	<i>Fundraising campaign</i>
25	Sun	PATRONAL FESTIVAL	<i>Our church and parish</i>
26	Mon	Ss Joachim and Anne	<i>Parents</i>
27	Tue	Feria	<i>Christ Church Cathedral</i>
28	Wed	Feria: Anointing at 6pm	<i>Healing ministry</i>
29	Thur	Martha: Anointing at 12.15pm	<i>Oxford's hospitals</i>
30	Fri	Feria	<i>Monthly requiem</i>
31	Sat	Ignatius Loyola, R Dr	<i>Campion Hall</i>