

Parish Records – November 2010

Old Brampton

- **Holy Baptism**
7th Nov.: Molly Grace Buggins
21st Nov.: Amelia Rose Myhill
- **Funerals**
17th Nov.: William Edward Hoffman (aged 3)

Barlow

- **Holy Baptism**
21st Nov.: Chloe Harriet Shaw
28th Nov.: Maisie Elizabeth Smedley
- **Funerals**
25th Nov.: David Chambers

Loundsley Green

- **Funerals**
2nd Nov.: Joyce Street, 3rd Nov.: Derek Tucker, 4th Nov.: Samuel Varley,
9th Nov.: Kathleen Thorpe, 10th Nov.: James Brady All these crematorium only
22nd Nov.: Joan Adams 26th Nov.: Mavis Berisford (crematorium only)

Services in December

Old Brampton Sunday services

- 08.00 Eucharist (2nd Sunday at Barlow; 5th Sunday at Cutthorpe)
- 09.30 Family Service first Sunday
Eucharist 2nd and 4th Sundays
Morning Worship 3rd and 5th Sundays
- 18.00 Evensong (first Sunday only)

Barlow Sunday services

- 08.00 Mass (2nd Sunday only)
- 11.00 Sung Mass

Loundsley Green Sunday services

- 09.45 Eucharist 1st and 3rd Sundays
Morning Worship 2nd and 4th Sundays
- 18.00 Eucharist (2nd Sunday only)

Weekday Masses

- Tuesday, 9.30, Loundsley Green
- Wednesday, 10.00, Barlow (1st Wednesday only)
- Thursday, 9.45, Old Brampton

Bible Reading: 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month, 7.30 - 9 pm at the Rectory.

Services of Thanksgiving and Commemoration of the Dead

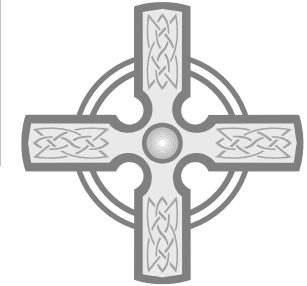
- Old Brampton** 6 November 6 pm
- Barlow** 13 November 6 pm

Contributions to Rambling Rector

Would you like to open a topic for discussion in Rambling Rector ? If so, please contact Fr Stanley:- Tel. : 01246 558122
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St Peter & St Paul, Old Brampton St Lawrence, Great Barlow Loundsley Green Church



Rambling Rector

Issue 28, December and January 2010

Emotion

I write in mid-November, a month that many clergy find difficult. It has lots of emotion. It begins with memorial services when people commemorate those they have lost. These services are gentle, warm and hopeful, but it's inevitable that memories of loss lead to emotional tenderness, where the wrong word or the wrong tone can ruin things. Then comes Remembrance Sunday. I find it difficult to write—or speak—in a measured way about Remembrance Sunday. I start off full of admiration at the professionalism and self-sacrifice of the armed forces, and soon find myself spilling over into anger at the arrogance of those who send armies to war often (so it seems) largely to win a place in the history books. More emotion. November usually brings an increase in the number of funerals, each with its own emotional cost. It's always a privilege to serve a family at a funeral: it sometimes feels as if it's the only time people actually want and need the services of the church. One of my roles is to invite you to pass the burden of your grief to me. Learning how to handle this is not something that they bother to teach in vicar-training, so life experience helps. The options include kicking the cat, shouting at the wife, or imagining myself as a lightning conductor through which the grief of others passes into the earth.

Rest

Dealing with the ups and downs of life is tiring. Emotional tiredness is, if anything, more debilitating than physical tiredness. It's really important that we look after ourselves by resting, and finding something or someone that lifts the spirits and makes us smile: maybe spend time alone, find a friend who radiates energy. Some of you might have heard me say that some people are *radiators*, who fill one with life and in whose presence it's always a pleasure to be, and *drains*, who suck the life force from you, like vampires. Find a radiator. Avoid drains. Lionel Blue is always a radiator, and his advice for starting the day is to recall some proud moment of the recent past. Be glad! Rest. Take time to be on your own.

We need to learn to be alone

We spend a lot of time cultivating friends and hobbies in order, it seems to me, to avoid being on our own and having to confront our own inner selves. The truth is, we can't avoid this: we start alone and we end alone. As we get older, and deafer, and blinder, and as our friends start to shuffle off this mortal coil, we are increasingly alone. It has been



said that a blissful childhood does not prepare one for life: an unhappy childhood enables a child to develop some of the psychological tools that enable him to enjoy the solitude of advancing years. (There's nothing worse, it is said, for a teenage boy than to have a father who understands him.) Our response to solitude can be a self-indulgent 'woe is me', or it can be an effort (and yes, it is an effort) to confront ourselves. As past years flit through our consciousness, we may find ourselves shocked at the realization of our own folly, but when we have come through that, we can begin to accept the past, rather than rail about perceived injustices and slights, and be glad of the inner resources it has given us. It's a matter of learning to accept that we are humans, and imperfect, and that we have made, and continue to make, mistakes. It's a big shock for us to realise that we are not as perfect as we thought we were.

Christmas

The acknowledgment of our imperfect human state is part of the Christmas story. I'm sorry to be so coarse as to introduce religion into this, but it has to be done. What is Christmas really about? Take away Santa and the winter solstice festivities—important though they are, and fun though they be. Take away the Christmas-card icky-yucky 'baby cheeses' (geddit?). The theological meaning of Christmas is not as an event, but as part of a *process* in which the Divine enters humanity in order to lift up our humanity to the Divine. The Advent and Christmas stories bring the Divine to humanity. The crucifixion/resurrection story is about the renunciation of self in order to rise to new heights, and the Ascension, that bit of the Jesus-story that can appear ridiculous, is the absolutely vital end of the process in which humanity is lifted to the Divine. In our human lives, being mindful of our thoughts and motivations is like the growth of the divine within (Advent and Christmas). Accepting our human frailty (sinfulness in theological language), and coming to terms with it, is the crucifixion part, the renunciation of ego-self. Moving on, having ditched the load of ego, is the resurrection-life: with lighter burdens, we are better able to fly. It is the great liberation.

Christmas is really about being human. Divinity meets humanity. Heaven meets earth. As I wrote last year, if the mess of being human is good enough for the Holy Family, it's good enough for holy you and holy me. We have no need to feel ashamed of our human urges, human emotions, human despair or human joy. Our job is to channel our human urges and emotions, our despair and joy, into ways that increase the sum total of delight in the world for ourselves and for others. *God became what we are, in order that we may become what he himself is. ... The glory of God is a living person and human lived to the full is the vision of God.* The Christmas Gospel tells us that we *all have the power to become sons and daughters of the Divine.*

Please take some time in the next few weeks to relax into being yourself. Don't let the heater burn out. Spend time alone. Then you will be better able to radiate delight to the world.

Happy Christmas and 2011.

Oremus invicem – let us pray for each other.

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Weddings, Baptisms, appointments

I'm available without appointment most Tuesday evenings 5 pm – 7 pm at the Rectory 01246 558112, 25 Oldridge Close, Holme Hall, S40 4UF; other times by appointment.

Sanitising the Bible for Children

Paul Butler, the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, has lots of experience in dealing with young people. He writes that we are too ready to sanitise the Bible for children. He recommends that we let the Bible tell its own stories, and that we (adults) do not try and tell other people (children) how a particular story should be interpreted when all we are trying to do is to get the children to behave as we want them to. Certainly I have been troubled to find myself in services elsewhere (thank God) that imply that Jesus wants children to do things that have no foundation in Scripture, but simply bear a striking resemblance to what the speaker wanted. There is nothing in Holy Scripture that tells us that Jesus was mild and obedient—rather the opposite sometimes—and certainly nothing that says that children should be. That is why I will never sing verse 3 of *Once in Royal David's City*. There is nothing that tells us we must be sentimental about anything, and certainly not about pets. That is why pet services make me uncomfortable. Here is Bishop Butler's last paragraph.

How we behave with the Bible ourselves will communicate most of all. A love of the Bible will happen in children because they engage with it themselves and discover for themselves the living God who speaks through it. Our own love for the scriptures will be infectious if it is real. This rediscovery of a love for the Bible is the responsibility of both home and the wider worshipping community; both must work together. Children will only discover a love for the Bible when they engage with it directly. Please do not sell our children short – let them loose with the Bible itself. Let the Bible loose in their lives.

What do you think?

Other Christmas and New Year Services

Old Brampton

Sun 5 Dec	9.30 am Christingle
Fri 17 Dec	2 pm Wigley School Carols
Sat 18 Dec	11 am Carols at Holme Hall shops
Sun 19 Dec	6 pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve	4 pm Crib Service 11.30 pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	8.00 am Holy Communion at Cutthorpe 10.00 am Holy Communion
Sun 26 Dec	8.00 am Holy Communion (NO 9.30 service, go to Barlow at 11)
Thur 30 Dec	9.45 am Holy Communion
Sat 1 Jan	9.45 am Holy Communion

Barlow

Thur 16 Dec	7.30 pm Concert
Mon 20 Dec	5.30 pm School Christingle
Christmas Eve	3 pm Crib Service 11.30 pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	9 am Sung Mass
Sunday 26 Dec	11 am Sung Mass

Loundsley Green

Tues 7 Dec	6 pm Christingle 1
Wed 8 Dec	6 pm Christingle 2
Mon 13 Dec	2 pm Ashgate Croft School Carols
Sun 19 Dec	4 pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve	10.30 pm 'Midnight' Mass
Christmas Day	10 am Christmas Worship
Sunday 26 Dec	NO service (10 am at Central Methodist Church)