



The Parish of St. Peter, Bushey Heath November 2025



From the vicar

Towards the end of September I travelled to Croydon to St. Michael's Church for the Regional Synod of the Society of the Holy Cross (SSC). I had not been to the church before nor had I set foot in the town with the exception of a change of trains at East Croydon in 1981 en route from Whyteleafe to Lichfield City. St. Michael's was quite wonderful and the liturgy glorious. Whilst there I visited a local café for coffee and mentioned that this was my first visit to Croydon to the young lady at the counter who was curious about why I was there and what was going on at the church (a large number of clergy dressed in black clericals does tend to attract attention). Whilst in conversation I mentioned that on my previous visit it had been necessary to signal to the driver of the Brighton to Manchester train if one wished to board, East Croydon being a request stop. Of course that is no longer the case. The conversation inevitably continued with thoughts of automation and the elimination of human contact during the intervening years (although not in that café which reminded me of something from the set of a 1960's soap opera).

Indeed things have changed over the years as they always have and always will. Sadly this often means the elimination of people from particular situations and activities. Those who are familiar with the novels of Thomas Hardy will remember that changes in agriculture and rural life as a result of mechanisation in the 19th Century were amongst his themes. That process continued throughout the following century and many rural communities suffered significant reductions in the numbers of residents as a result. This was certainly true of my previous benefice with the population of some villages being halved between 1900 and 1950. Inevitably this had an effect on the viability of parish churches, village schools and other institutions and activities.

It is people who inevitably bear the brunt of change (and who often benefit as well). I try not to dwell on it too much, but automation and latterly the advent of the computer have changed the life of parochial clergy, if not beyond recognition, then certainly dramatically. When I was ordained nearly 40 years ago parish life was all about people whereas today clergy are increasingly burdened by the managerial culture which spreads to the local church from a centralised bureaucracy whether it is that of the institutional church or of government in one of its forms. Policies abound and virtual communication dominates, but whether it is better than the old days I doubt. It is always people who are left out.

It is too easy to become sentimental and to rue the passing of the ages. Sentiment is a poor inspiration for the gospel. It is necessary to build on firm foundations of prayer and service with people at the heart. With the gospel at the centre of what the church does and with the saints as a support and inspiration then the work can continue, perhaps organised differently at times to take account of changes in the world, but still focussed on doing what Jesus did. We are still bidden to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to expend ourselves sacrificially, not to complete a list of tasks, but to know that the Lord is close to us and to the men, women and children committed to our care. Change is inevitable and frequently beneficial, but Christians still need to 'hold the line' and retain the best – all that is an essential part of the life of faith – and that means people, even if trains now stop automatically!

St. Peter's Church, Bushey Heath

wishes to appoint a

Sacristan

The sacristan assists the parish priest by helping to prepare for services and by caring for the sacred vessels and vestments. No previous experience is required as full training will be given. This is a voluntary post which would suit anyone who wants a greater role in the liturgical life of the church, but is happy to work in the background.

For an informal discussion please speak to Father Andrew.

PRAYER FOCUS

Please continue to pray for an end to conflict in the Near East, Ukraine and all countries beset by violence.

Remember the faithful suffering persecution, especially this month those in Burkino Faso.

From the diary...

Usual Sunday services: 8.00am Holy Communion; 9.30am Parish Mass

Sunday 2nd November **All Saints' Sunday**
Wednesday 5th November, 10.00am Mass

REQUIEM FOR ALL SOULS

Thursday 6th November at 8.00pm

There will be a sheet at the back of church for the names of the departed to be remembered.

Friday 7th November, 7.00pm Mass
Sunday 9th November **Trinity 21 (Remembrance Sunday)**
In addition to services at 8am and 9.30am: Family Service at 11.30am (note later time)
Wednesday 12th November 10.00am Mass

Obsequies for Sister Diana Burton, CA

Thursday 13th November, 3.00pm
Reception into Church and Vespers of the Dead

Friday 14th November, 11.30am
Funeral Service
followed by interment at Allum Lane Cemetery at 1.00pm

Friday 14th November, 7.00pm Mass
Sunday 16th November **Trinity 22**
Wednesday 19th November, 10.00am Mass (*St. Hilda, Religious*)
8.00pm Parochial Church Council in the Parish Hall
Friday 21st November, 7.00pm Mass
Sunday 23rd November **Trinity 25**
Wednesday 26th November, 10.00am Mass
Thursday 27th November, 1.30pm Funeral of the late Doreen Abbott at St. Peter's.
Friday 28th November, 7.00pm Mass
Sunday 30th November **Advent 1**
Wednesday 3rd December, 10.00am Mass
Friday 5th December, 7.00pm Mass (*St. Nicholas, Bishop*)
Saturday 6th December **Christmas Fair**

Harvest Festival – thank you

Sincere thanks to all who supported the Harvest services and events this year especially to our flower arrangers and cooks – to all who made such a delightful day possible.

Christmas Choir

Are you feeling festive? It may be a bit early for that, but Jonathan Quinn would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to sing in the choir on Christmas Eve. If you are interested please speak to him after the service. The first rehearsal will be after the 9.30am service on 16th November.

Bushey Inter-faith Forum

How can our faiths help the poor and vulnerable around the world?

Thursday 27th November, 7.30pm at the London Spiritual Centre, Falconer Road, Bushey
courtesy of the Jain community.

Entrance free

Contact details:

Vicar: Fr. Andrew Burton SSC, a priest of the Society. (020 8950 1424). Usual day off Monday.
Churchwardens: Mr. Simon Farley (020 8950 4073) and Mr. Tony Quinn (07786 332654)

www.stpeterbusheyheath.org.uk / www.achurchnearyou.com