

We think of the saints who have served and shared the faith of God over generations. So we remember Pope Francis, who died just a few days ago. We give thanks to you, our God, for his gentleness and humility. We give thanks to you for his calm and wisdom in leading millions of worshippers across the world. We give thanks to you for the ways he worked with other churches to bring Christian unity, and we give thanks to you for his voice speaking out for peace, kindness and love in our world.

Following his example, and knowing the joy of the risen Christ in our hearts, we pray that you will show us how we can follow the example of Pope Francis and other Christian leaders in our daily lives.

We think of our country and our community, for those in desperation and those in need. So we remember those who are facing homelessness, poverty and despair. We pray to you, our God, for those who seem on the margins, those who have been forgotten, and those who have not had the chances in life that we enjoy. We pray for those who have given way to addiction, or those who have developed lives of crime. We pray for those who are worried about cuts in benefits or losing their jobs. We pray to you that even those at the end of all hope will find hope in you.

Following the example of Jesus, we pray that you will show each one of us what we can do to help those who seem beyond help, and how we as a church community carrying the name of the risen Christ can make a difference.

We think of the world and all the countries in it, and we pray for financial calm and for peace.

We remember the difficulties the world is facing as it looks to the future, with money in the hands of the few, financial crises, and worries about savings and investments. We pray to you, our God, for wisdom to be given to those who make the big decisions in our world, that they would fully understand the global consequences of their actions. We pray to you for those continuing conflicts in Sudan, the Middle East and Ukraine, and the attempts to bring calm. We pray to you for all those innocent people caught up in horror and violence, that they would be comforted by the knowledge that Jesus suffered, and you heal.

Following the life of peace that Jesus led, we pray that we would be people of wisdom and peace in our homes, schools, colleges, churches and workplaces, thinking through our decisions and working for the good of all people.

We think of those known to us who are in need right now, and we bring our own needs to God.

So we remember those in our families and our church family who are sick, lost, or lonely at this time. We pray to you, our God, for your love and comfort to surround them as a good parent protects their children. We pray that they would know the power of your Spirit in bringing healing, and the warmth of your love in bringing comfort. We pray to you that you would help with the decisions that people have to make, the hardships they face, and the mourning they endure.

We remember ourselves, as we reflect on the Easter story and look back a week to the joyous resurrection of Jesus. Now, as we read of how the disciples and others met Jesus afresh and believed in him, we pray to you that we would meet Jesus in a new way. May we all be filled with the Holy Spirit to live and serve others.

## Weekly Notices

*Rector: Rev. Jonathan Gordon 01442 871547*  
*Associate Priest: Rev. Michael Eggleton 01442 823273*  
*Readers: Peggy Sear and David White*  
**[www.stbartholomewschurch.org](http://www.stbartholomewschurch.org)**

Services for April 27th  
**Easter 2**  
**8am** Holy Communion BCP

**10 00am** Parish Eucharist  
Hymns 99, 490, 553, 228

**Readings:**  
Acts 5: 27-32  
Revelation 1; 4-8  
John 20: 19-end

**6pm** Evening Prayer  
Psalm 16  
Isaiah 52: 13-53.12  
Luke 14: 13-35

Services for May 4th  
**Easter 3**  
**8am** Holy Communion BCP

**10.00 am** Parish Eucharist  
Hymns; 362, 442, 128, 422

**Readings**  
Acts 9: 1-6  
Revelation 5: 11-end  
John 21: 1-19

**6pm** Evening Prayer  
At St. Mary's

### Prayer for today

Almighty Father, you have given your only Son to die for our sins and to rise again for our justification: grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness that we may always serve you in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever

### Prayer for Peace

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

In the 1980s thanks to Godfrey Smith, a columnist for The Sunday Times, there was a series of letters about particular pieces of music that have the TQ – the Tingle Quotient. As we listen, the music sends a shiver of excitement up and down the spine and opens out for us a new world of beauty and wonder.

The letters started with a novelist writing about his travels across the Sahara. In moments of desolation and loneliness he would think of music that meant the most to him and which he thought he might never hear again. Then a schoolmaster in Rochester wrote of a production of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ where the funeral scene virtually brought the house down. Juliet entered a darkened school hall, lit only by glimmering candles with music sung that brought the audience to tears.

For both novelist and schoolmaster, the work that had that TQ factor was Allegri’s Miserere. It provided consolation in the cold desert nights, and it created the impact in that production of Shakespeare’s play. Other readers supplied their list of TQ music, and always the Miserere was in the top five. I suspect that this music strikes the TQ for many of you as well.

Why is it, I wonder? We can provide an answer by talking of the contrast between the plainsong sung by the men’s voices and the responses from the choir that lead to that small group of solo voices where the treble or soprano reaches a high C and comes down the scale to the cadence. We can point to the intriguing history of this work for the setting by Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652) was the exclusive possession of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. To copy the music was a crime punishable by excommunication.

In spite of this, a 14-year-old Mozart heard the piece in 1770 and wrote it down from memory, paying another visit to verify some of the notes he had copied down. The Emperor, Leopold 1, the king of Portugal, persuaded the Pope to grant him a copy. When it was performed in his own imperial chapel, he was disappointed. He even thought the Pope had palmed him off with an inferior work. Then he realised that the beauty and magic of the music lay in its being sung in the Sistine Chapel where the plainsong and the high C cadences could ring out among the pillars and arches of that great building.

**Church website.** Check out the website regularly for updates and news of services etc.

The Miserere, or Psalm 51 is the heart-felt cry of the Church for mercy. As one of the penitential psalms, it is a very personal expression of sorrow for sin and a moving appeal to God for mercy and restoration.

In Allegri’s setting that high C is reached as the individual acknowledges his sin, and again as he cries for mercy and finally as he proclaims that his tongue will sing of God’s grace and righteousness. A single voice in the music scales the heights of heaven to represent all of us as we turn to God with that same awareness of sin, that same plea for mercy, and that same affirmation that we will then turn to God with thanksgiving and the offering of a humble and contrite heart.

And so with the psalmist and with Allegri, we can pray ‘Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness.’

### **April 27th. Holy day for a girl called Zita**

If you have ever been in trouble for simply doing good, then Zita is the saint for you. Born in 1218 to poor but devout parents in Monsagrati, Zita was sent at the age of 12 to work as a servant for the rich Fatinelli family in nearby Lucca.

Zita was pious, generous and hard-working. Oddly enough, all three traits got her into trouble. For one thing, the other servants hated her for her devotion to prayer and to doing her work perfectly. When Zita said that ‘a servant is not holy if she is not busy,’ they were furious, and bullied her.

The Fatinellis were also annoyed with Zita. They had discovered that she felt such compassion for the poor of the town, that she would often give them gifts of their food. So, they took to beating her.

Then came the day that Zita was supposed to be baking – but she left it halfway through in order to go and help someone in dire need. The other servants told the Fatinellis, and everyone rushed down to the kitchen, expecting to find disaster. Instead, the story goes that they found an angel, finishing the baking.

Well, how can you be angry with someone whom the angels help? It was a wake-up call for both servants and family, who began to feel ashamed of themselves. Soon Zita’s patient endurance and consistent goodness won her their deep respect and increasing affection. She was placed in charge of the household.

As the years passed, Zita became locally famous for helping the sick, the poor and the imprisoned. Soon after her death a popular cult sprang up. Chapels were named in her honour as far afield as Palermo and Ely. In England she is known as Sitha, and she has traditionally been invoked by housewives and domestic servants, especially (for some reason) when they lose their house-keys.