

Dear Friends,

Bubbles and Breakfast

So when we celebrated Easter on the 21st April I changed my purple stole, the long coloured scarf that I wear for Communion services in Lent and replaced it with a white one, the colour for all major events including weddings and baptisms. The flowers came back and the Easter candle was brought into the church to the acclamation "Alleluia , Alleluia he is risen."

The month of May this year includes among others, festivals celebrating Philip and James, Julian of Norwich, Augustine, as well as Alcuin and Dunstan but overarching all these is that the whole month is in Eastertide. This is the period in the church's calendar when we remember the time that Jesus spent with the disciples before ascending to heaven. Easter did not stop on Easter Sunday afternoon with cake and chocolate eggs but the joy of Easter continues.

Almost at the very end of John's Gospel there is the story of the disciples meeting Jesus while they were out together in their boat, night fishing. They had caught nothing and just after daybreak they returned with empty nets to the shore. Unrecognized by them, Jesus called to them from the beach knowing that they had no fish. "Cast your nets," he said and they did, pulling up so many that they could hardly haul in their catch. When they came ashore they saw that it was Jesus and that alongside him was a charcoal fire grilling fish and bread. Jesus said to them: "Come and have breakfast." What better invitation after a hard cold night's fishing than a warming breakfast with your best friend who you hardly expected to see. This visual reminder of the power of God, the exceptional catch of fish and his ever present welcome informs our church life together.

Ascension Thursday this year is the 30th May so in the half-term holidays and I shall be celebrating it in St. Mary's Westgate with a short service of morning prayer - at 8.30 in the morning. So **breakfast time** - it will be followed by the releasing of bubbles into the air to symbolise ascending - then please come for breakfast at the rectory. There will be no fish but coffee, tea, toast marmalade and bacon rolls.

Looking forward to all the joy of this coming month, and of course the joy of the season.

May God be with you this Eastertide,

Steve