

## MARY'S MONTH

**M**ay is Mary's month remarks the Jesuit priest and poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, in his poem, the *May Magnificat*. But, he wonders, why?

After all, there's usually a reason for liturgical feasts falling when they do, and the Church's recalling of events in the life of

Mary is no exception: the Presentation of her Firstborn in the Temple comes forty days after his birth, as required by the Law of Moses: we celebrate Christmas exactly 9 months to the day from the Annunciation, when the Lord takes flesh in the Virgin's womb. But:

*The Lady month, May/Why fasten that upon her/With a feasting in her honour?* Fr Hopkins suggests two answers to his rhetorical question. They're closely related, and both worth reflecting on.

In the first place, he says, spring is the time of "growth in everything": in *flesh and fleece, fur and feather/grass and greenworld all together*. We can see in the fecundity and freshness of nature in spring an image of Mary, pregnant with the new life that will bring salvation to a wintry world grown old. Maytime growth in everything, then, reminds us of the growth of the Saviour enfolded in Mary's flesh, and should impel us to give thanks, as Mary herself gives thanks in her own Magnificat when she sings praise to the Lord present within her.

But what is particularly important for Hopkins is not just that things grow, but that, in the process, they grow into themselves, become ever more clearly the things they are made to be, *magnifying each their kind*, as he puts it. Mary, conceived without sin is, of course, already what human beings are made to be. We look to her, then, as an example of what we hope to become. But also – because this is what human beings are meant to be – we can look to her as the channel through which the love of God flows to us unimpeded to enable us to become what we are meant to be. And in this, something tremendously hopeful is revealed.

Hopkins depicts Mary's maternal love as extending beyond humanity to all of creation, because in all of creation we can see, as she did, a reflection of the beauty of the One whom Mary bore in her flesh and gave to the world. And it's no grimly dutiful affair. She does not love us because she has to. Her love for us, and for the world, partakes in what Hopkins here calls *spring's universal bliss*, a seeing the world, and us within it, as lovely, as lovely as birdsong in an orchard heavy with fruit blossom. If the one whose vision is unclouded by original sin sees us thus, perhaps reflecting on that might begin to correct our faulty vision of ourselves, and of each other.

And, of course, if we do come, gradually by God's grace to see with that unclouded vision, it will be for us, as it was for Mary, a source of a joy that no one can take from us.

*Sr Ann*



## FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 6 May - 6th Sunday of Easter

### CALENDAR - TERM WEEK II

Sunday 6	SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 9.00am Sung Latin Mass 11.00am Sung English Mass Celebrant: Mgr Keith Newton
Monday 7	12.00pm FISHER MASS in Great St Mary's
Tuesday 8	1.05pm Mass
Wednesday 9	12.30pm Exposition of Blessed Sacrament 1.05 pm Mass
Thursday 10	ASCENSION OF THE LORD Masses at 8.00am, 1.05pm, 6.00pm
Friday 11	1.05pm Mass 6.30pm Vespers and Reflection
Saturday 12	1.05pm Mass 4.30—5.30 Confessions 6.00pm Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday 13	SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 9.00am Sung Latin Mass 11.00 am Sung English Mass Celebrant: Bishop John Arnold.

FR MARK LANGHAM - SR ANN SWAILES OP - FR PHILIP MOLLER SJ

### **BENSON CLUB**

The Benson Club meets to discuss G.K.Chesterton's nightmarish novel, *'The Man who was Thursday.'* Wednesday 9 May, 7.30pm, Great Chamber.

### **TAIZE PRAYER**

On Monday 7 May, 9.00pm in the Fisher Room.

### **DISARMING BEAUTY**

Fr. Julián Carron, president of Communion and Liberation, will present his book *Disarming Beauty* on May 18th, 5.00pm, in the Cripps Auditorium at Magdalene College. The book is a thought-provoking collection of essays about the most pressing questions of contemporary society.

### **EXHIBITION**

Pop-Up exhibition, *Take Me There*, at the Heong Gallery, Downing College, 12th May 6.30-8.30pm on the theme of identity. Featuring artists from Anglia Ruskin University including Sr Marie Pavlina Kasparovna, OP.

### **MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE**

A one-day course will be held at Fisher House on Saturday 19 May. Please see Fr Mark if you are interested.

### **APOLOGIA**

On Tuesday, Fr John McGowan OCD will speak on Carmelite life and spirituality. 8.00pm Fisher Room. Dinner at 7.00pm

### **QUAERO : THEOLOGY FOR NON-THEOLOGIANS**

Our theology group continues on Sunday at 3.30pm in the Library. For more details, and a reading package, contact Robert Billups on [querocam@gmail.com](mailto:querocam@gmail.com)

### **FOOTBALL**

Julia Wdowin is our captain as we assemble a team to play the Oxford Chaplaincy for the Fisher-More cup (which we sadly but temporarily lost to them last year). Please sign up on the notice-board, or contact Julia on [jw735](tel:01223735).

### **FISHER HOUSE BAKE OFF**

On Friday, 11 May, at 8.15pm, your chance to prove your baking skills, and impress judges Fr Philip Mollerwood, and Sr Maryberry Swailes. Please sign up on the list outside the chapel.

### **EUROVISION PARTY**

Our annual tacky-fest will be held in Fr Mark's sitting room (!) on Saturday 12 May, starting at 7.30pm. If you want to experience the best that Europe has to offer - you'd best go somewhere else. Food, drinks and mirth guaranteed!

### **FISHER MASS**

The highlight of our religious year - the feast of St John Fisher and the Cambridge martyrs. Mass at 12.00 noon in Great St Mary's. Academic dress to be worn, and Doctors wear Scarlet. Following Mass there will be a buffet lunch at Fisher House.

### **THE KEYS AND THE KINGDOM**

Catherine Pepinster will speak after evening Mass on Ascension Day, 10 May, about relations between the papacy and Britain in recent decades. 6.45pm in Fisher Room.

### **KOLB FUND**

The fund provides grants for Catholic women students born in the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland, towards the cost of books or equipment, travel or medical expenses. For an application form see the Fisher House website at <http://fisherhouse.org.uk/the-elizabeth-kolb-memorial-trust/>

### **GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE**

If you would like a copy of Pope Francis' recent exhortation on Holiness (*cf* last week's newsletter), please sign up outside the chapel. Cost £4.95

### **WELCOME TO FISHER HOUSE**

This weekend we welcome Mgr Keith Newton, Ordinary of the Ordinariate, who will celebrate and preach at 11.00am Mass. He will also celebrate the Vigil Mass in Ordinariate Usage.

Next Sunday, we will be joined by Bishop John Arnold, from Salford, who is Bishop responsible for the Oxford and Cambridge chaplaincies. He will celebrate and preach at 11.00am Mass.

### **ASCENSION**

The feast, newly restored to Thursday, is a Holyday of Obligation. Masses are at 8.00am, 1.05pm, 6.00pm.

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

On Fridays over lunch, we continue our scripture reading, with an opportunity to read and discuss some passages. 1.30pm in the Fisher Room.

### **CPR CLASS**

There will be an opportunity to learn Cardiopulmonary resuscitation: on Friday 25 May. Places limited. Please sign up.

### **COLLECTION LAST WEEK**

£403.80

*Thank you!*