

28th December 2025



For meditation: *But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31*

NEWS AND VIEWS

Today we join with our Anglican friends at St Thomas a Becket church to celebrate their patronal festival. Thomas Becket was born in 1119 (or perhaps 1120) and served as Lord Chancellor under King Henry II from 1155 to 1162. He served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 until his death in 1170. He conflicted with the King over the rights and privileges of the Church and was murdered by followers of the King in Canterbury cathedral. Soon after his death he was canonised by Pope Alexander III – and his feast day is remembered by the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

The week also brings New Year's Day - a time to reflect on the year that has past, give thanks for our many blessings- and to put in God's hands the year ahead.

To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream, not only plan, but also believe.

Anatole France

FOR PRAYER

We pray today for groups of people who need special care and compassion: • children without homes • people living in fear • people carrying heavy burdens • the overlooked and unheard • those forced to flee their countries because of tyranny or persecution • those known to us who need God's help and strength... God of the vulnerable and the suffering, we pray that the liberating power of your Spirit may bring release to the oppressed and hope to the despairing.

We remember the congregation at Chew Stoke in prayer this week.

LECTIONARY READINGS – 4 January

Jeremiah 31: 7 -14 Psalm 84

Ephesians 1: 3-6, 15 -19

Matthew 2: 13 -15, 19 -23

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made, In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

John 1: 1 -5

DIARY

Thursday 1st January (New Year's Day)

NO Café today – normal service resumes next week.

Sunday 4th January

There is NO service at our church.

We are welcome to attend a lay led service at St Thomas' at 10.30am or a Family service also at 10.30am at St Christopher's. There is also an 11.00am Service at Bathampton church led by Steve Beck.

Spirit of Affirmation - Cecily Taylor

I am the way that stretches out before –
 I am the journey you are on,
 I am the present moment that you tread –
 I am the next place that you stand upon.

I am the air you breathe –
 I am of every part and of the whole,
 I am the love you cannot fall beyond –
 I am the inner silence of our soul.

I am the question that you ask –
 I am the answer that you crave,
 I am the reality of truth,
 I am the ever-living thread that leaps the grave.

I am all time in now,
 I am this minute to begin,
 I am the one that you have always known,
 I am the peace that you may dwell within.

In the first days of the Christian Church the word 'saint' ... stood for anyone who was surrendered to Christ and who by that surrender was 'set apart' and thus different from the world. It denoted anyone who was truly trying to give themselves in love and loyalty to Jesus. The term denoted not so much attainment – still less perfection - but rather, wholehearted desire and intent. In this sense, you and I, if we have given ourselves to Christ, are saints. All true Christians are saints.

David N. Francis