

- - TEAM NOTES - -

T-Pot is now weekly, every Wednesday from 10am to 12.30pm in the Rectory Classroom. Everyone welcome!

Mothers' Union Wave of Prayer - Monday 6th February, 10.30am in St Mary's. The "Wave of Prayer" is a continuous expression of commitment in prayer to each other. It runs throughout the year so that the work and members of each and every area in which Mothers' Union is active is prayed for at some point.

All Things Bright & Beautiful returns to St Mary's this Tuesday, 7th February at 2.30pm. Please pick up a flyer from the back of church and 'spread the word'.

Any Questions? - Speaker: Rev. Professor James Woodward, Principal of Sarum College. Topic: "Aging: Blessing or Burden? - what has the church to say about old age?" Date and Time: Tuesday 7th February 2023. 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start. Venue: Swanage Methodist Church, High Street.

Quiz Night – Thursday 9th February, 7pm for 7.30pm start at Herston Village Hall, 12 Jubilee Rd. Entry is free with a collection in aid of St Mark's School. Teams of up to 6 people – come along as a team or join a team when you arrive. Please bring your own refreshments.

Jumble Sale at Herston Village Hall - Saturday 18th February, 10-12. Donations of clean good condition clothes and shoes, bric-a-brac, small household items, jewellery/accessories, bags, fabrics, toys, paperback books very welcome. No electrical items please. Drop off dates: Thurs 16th 5-7pm and Fri 17th 3-6pm at the Village Hall, Jubilee Road, Herston. Tea and cake available. Free Entry.

Stamps for Leprosy Mission: We've been collecting stamps Leprosy Mission for some years. Many thanks to those who have donated stamps, medals, and coins which have contributed to raising many thousands of pounds towards the treatment and support of those affected by leprosy. In the last couple of years, the value of the stamps has reduced to the point where there is not really any money to be made by selling them, so the Mission has decided to stop collecting used stamps and collectibles. The last parcel of stamps and collectibles from St Mary's will be sent off in January. You may find that another charity will accept them, such as Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance and the RNLI. Information on The Leprosy Mission is on www.leprosymission.org.uk.

SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY

St. Mary's – St. Mark's – All Saints' – St. Nicholas'
5th February 2023 ~ 3rd Sunday before Lent

Isaiah 58:1-9a 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 Matthew 5:13-20

Our Gospel reading this Sunday is very well-known – Jesus' expectation that we should be salt and light to the world. The familiarity of these verses should not blind us to the challenges contained within them.

Salt was a valuable commodity in the ancient world. It was used as a seasoning, (despite the fact that chips had not yet been invented), and, more importantly as a preservative – keeping stored food fit to eat. A small amount of salt went a long way; its presence was not always visible, but its effect was powerful!

Light is something we take for granted in our society, but it was, again, much more of a valuable commodity in the ancient world, produced by oil in lamps, or by rush lights (primitive candles). Light was something you needed to show the way through unlit paths, and to act as a beacon or warning.

These 2 pictures give us very different insights into the role of God's people in the world. As **salt**, we are called to flavour and preserve our world – literally to prevent it from becoming rotten. We work quietly but powerfully, sometimes almost invisible, but always there – a bit like the Church of England.... As **light** we are much more visible, showing the world the way, (hopefully even the Way), and warning when darkness threatens to engulf God's Light.

Sometimes being salt and light will be wonderful and welcomed, sometimes it will be very uncomfortable. God's people are often criticised for refusing to conform to the ways of the world. These verses remind us that our purpose is to speak God's word, and do God's work, in the world, not simply go along with its current wisdom. Christians will sometimes disagree with public opinion and the view of the majority; that is part of our role in being a light to the world. St Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 2:5 that: "your faith might not rest on human wisdom but on the power of God".

Rev. David Richards

Do access the Swanage and Studland Team website regularly:
www.swanageteam.com