



# The Lion

A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's Church, Basford

[www.stmarksbasford.co.uk](http://www.stmarksbasford.co.uk)

October 2019



## Terry visits Assisi

On 4<sup>th</sup> October, the Church celebrates the life and ministry of St Francis of Assisi. Having just returned from this Umbrian, hillside town, I'm much more in the picture concerning the impact that Francis has made.

Born Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone, but informally known as Francesco (his mother was been French and thought to have come from Provence), this famous and influential saintly man was the son of a wealthy textile merchant.

Indulged by his parents, Francis lived the high-spirited life typical of a wealthy young man of his time. As a youth, he became a devotee of troubadours (singers of lyrical poetry typical of the south of France). Despite his bright clothing, rich friends, and love of pleasure, his disillusionment toward the world that surrounded him came fairly early in his life. From his youth he seemed concerned about the plight of the poor. Whilst selling cloth in the marketplace a beggar came to him and asked for alms. As soon as he could, Francis left his wares, pursued the beggar and gave the man everything he had in his pockets. His friends were apt to chide and mock him for this act of charity.

Perugia (a local city) presented a threat to the people of Assisi and there was much animosity between the inhabitants of these places. In 1202, Francis joined a military expedition against Perugia and was held a prisoner for a year. This incarceration and a subsequent illness caused him to re-evaluate his life and his spiritual conversion seems rooted in this experience. In 1205, whilst serving with the military again, a strange vision made him return to Assisi.

Whilst praying in the forsaken church of San Damiano, he believed that a wall-hung crucifix spoke to him...  
*"Francis, Francis, go and repair my house which, as you*



*can see, is falling into ruins."* He took this rather literally and sold some cloth from his father's store to assist the priest there for the purpose of restoring the decaying building.

In order to avoid his father's wrath, Francis hid in a cave near San Damiano for about a month. When he returned to town, hungry and dirty, he was dragged home by his father, beaten, bound, and locked in a small storeroom (which can be seen today). Freed by his mother, Francis returned to San Damiano where he was sheltered by the priest. Francis' father, annoyed by his son's continual squandering of money which was technically not his to give, tried to force Francis to forego his inheritance by way of restitution. Amidst some very public legal proceedings before the Bishop, Francis renounced his father and his patrimony. Accounts report that he stripped himself naked in token of this renunciation, and the Bishop covered him with his own cloak.

Francis' works of charity increased by degrees; he took to nursing lepers, in the lazar houses near Assisi and his notoriety spread amongst those whose culture had made his actions generally unacceptable. Notwithstanding this general response, Francis' joy and sincerity in his mission attracted many and before long he had a loyal band of followers living simply and serving God wholeheartedly.

Recognizing that his new 'Order' needed recognition by the Catholic Church, Francis', having written a simple rule for his brethren, presented it to Pope Innocent III who gave his verbal affirmation. The Order grew and a long-time admirer, Clare, was helped to form a second Order for women who based them at San Damiano.

Francis eventually initiated overseas missions which, at least initially, met with disastrous consequences with brothers being martyred. In the shadow of the Crusades, Francis together with a small group decided to go to Egypt and to the Holy Land for the purpose of converting Muslims by peaceful means. This trip wasn't successful in terms of this objective; however, his faith, commitment and

**Clergy:** Prebendary Terry Bloor ☎ 01782 623668; Reverend Pat Dunn ☎ 01782 846417; Reverend Patrick Griffin ☎ 07792 467190

**Churchwardens:** Diane Downard ☎ 01782 621424; Nick Atkins ☎ 01782 632213.

**Readers:** Janet Pazio ☎ 01782 698359; Julie Atkins ☎ 01782 632213; Ed Smith ☎ 01782 614259

**Safeguarding Coordinator:** Jill Ayres ☎ 01782 625327 **Parish Administrator:** Julie Atkins ☎ 01782 632213

determination won Francis access to the Sultan, Malek-el-Kamel with whom he debated matters of faith at length. This episode caused the Sultan to grant Francis and his mission freedom and protection. As I was recently reminded (by Fr Patrick) to this day, it's the Franciscans, amongst other competing denominations, that have jurisdiction over Christian holy sites in Jerusalem and its environs.

Upon his death on the plain beneath Assisi, Francis' body was taken under guard (still because of the Perugian threat) and with some considerable ceremony to the town where to this day it remains as a relic in the basilica dedicated to him. St. Clare too, who out-lived Francis, has a church in her honour and where her tomb can be found.

I managed to read a very goof hagiography of Francis whilst spending my four nights in Assisi; it really brought the place alive for me as so much of the story is contained within the town's present buildings. Despite the 30 degrees of heat, the incredible humidity and sheer hard work of negotiating the hilly streets, this was one of the most wonderful places I have visited. I commend it to you should you ever get the chance to go there. Most of the other churches in the town are dedicated to Francis' close friends and fellow workers. A church near to the main public square, Piazza Comune, is dedicated to St. Ruffino and has the most wonderful Sacrament chapel.

The most captivating aspect of Francis' life to me is his simplicity of faith, his desire (and success) in finding God in the silence of meditation and within the whole of God's created order including Brother Sun and Sister Moon. The common association of animals with Francis stems from this attribute. It's not that Francis was an animal-lover in the way we'd use that term nowadays, it's that he saw in all animals (even ferocious wolves it would seem) their ability to display the beauty of God's creative power; he rejoiced in their presence and cohabitation of the world in which we are set.

You can go on-line to read Francis'.... CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES, or visit the Lady Chapel where, during the month of October, the words of this canticle can be found together with a San Damiano crucifix. As you gaze at it and perhaps pray before it, ask Christ to speak to you as he did St. Francis. The call to "repair the house of God" in whatever way you wish to interpret it remains a universal call to all Christians. That is our primary aim and calling, to avoid all disputable matters and simply serve Christ without complaint and with joy.

Pax et bonum!

Terry

## Worship Services during October

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
6 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup> > Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
9 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
13 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup> > Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Family Worship with Baptism
16 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
20 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> > Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
27 <sup>th</sup>	Last > Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
30 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)

## Diary Dates for October

1 <sup>st</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	Reading Circle
8 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
12 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	18.30pm	Harvest Supper
16 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	House group
17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	19.30pm	Contemplative prayer
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tuesday	19.00pm	Deanery Synod
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	Baptism Prep
26 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	10.00am	Table top
30 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.00pm	C1 Training for PCC

## Early November Dates

6 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	Reading Circle
9 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	13.00pm	Soup and Bingo
12 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
14 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	19.00pm	PCC Meeting



## Harvest Festival Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> October

Don't forget that we also intend to double-up on our support for the local Food Bank this harvest!

### Harvest Supper

Don't miss the food, fun and games at our Harvest Supper to be held in the church hall from 6.30pm on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October**. Tickets will be on sale from Diane or Julie on the run-up to this event.

### Table-Top Sale

There will be a table-top sale in the hall on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October** 10.00am till 13.00pm. For a table please get in touch with Diane.

### Deanery Synod

Our open meeting for Deanery Synod will take place at St Mark's on the **22<sup>nd</sup> October at 7.00 for a 7.30pm start**; where our guest speaker Dr Lindsey Hall will be speaking to us on Lay Ministry Training.