

I have lived my life with a clear conscience  
before God. Acts 23:1



**February 2012**

# **The Recorder**

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An edited version of this magazine is available on the Church Website.

(Personal details are NOT included)

Church website: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

**Trinity - A Family Church**

Worshipping together - Caring for one another - Sharing with others

Dear Friends,

One of our community partners recently asked me when Trinity 'began'. He had seen the year 1972 on the website but knew that we were "older than that". What answer would you give to that question, "When did Trinity begin?"

There are several possible answers. 1972 is when the United Reformed Church began from a union of Congregational and Presbyterian Churches in the UK, so in that sense Trinity as we now know it started then. But some of you were part of Trinity way before that, when it was a Congregational Church, so 1972 cannot really be our final answer. Our building was begun in 1850, so is that when Trinity began? Well, not really, because the people who built our current building were previously worshipping elsewhere. They were already a church before 1850. In fact, our congregation has its origins as an independent congregation of Christian people in something that happened 350 years ago, in 1662.

In 1662 over 2,000 clergymen were expelled from the Church of England and banned from holding public office because they refused to comply with the Act of Uniformity, which meant everything in church had to be done according to the Book of Common Prayer. This event became known as the Great Ejectment. These clergymen gathered round them people of like-mind, and they became known as non-conformists. Trinity has its origins, so I am told, in one such group.

I am not a historian and I do not claim to have read any detailed account of this period, but I do recognise that it was a very significant time in our own church history. It is in the news currently because of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Book of Common Prayer is being rightly celebrated for the beauty and insight of many of its prayers. At the same time, though, regret has been and is being expressed on both sides for the rift and suffering caused. It is good that this anniversary is being used as a spur to serious talking about the future between the Church of England and the URC. Our differences are considerable, but not in the fundamentals of the faith.

The latest message to the United Reformed Church from our General Secretary, Rev Roberta Rominger, picks up this theme:

*"2012 begins with a service in Westminster Abbey to express reconciliation between the United Reformed Church and the Church of England. It's the fruit of bilateral conversations that resulted in resolutions at URC Mission Council and the Anglican General Synod in 2011. This service, on 7 February, will mark the 350th anniversary of the 1662 Great Ejectment by looking to a future of shared work and witness.*

*"And, when General Assembly meets in Scarborough this July, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the URC as well as the 350th anniversary of some of our churches. The unofficial theme for this commemoration is 'Courage, conscience and conviction' and these three qualities are indeed what we offer in our determination to live faithfully in these challenging times. Our valiant Church makes contributions out of all proportion to its size. God bless you for all the lives you will touch in the year ahead and the faith that will shine from you."*

Sue Saunders and I are going to the service in Westminster Abbey. We will be 'waving the flag' so to speak, for Trinity and our pioneering, non-conformist ancestors in the faith.

But we will be going together with an Anglican friend, recognising that what we share is greater than what divides us. One Church, One Faith, One Lord.



Minister : Rev Dr Gwen Collins e-mail: gwen@trinity-urc.org.uk
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Church Secretary : Mrs Sue Saunders, e-mail: secretary@trinity-urc.org.uk
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## February Services

### Morning Worship at 10:30am - led by the Minister unless otherwise stated

- Feb 5            Service of Holy Communion, led by Revd Michael Wallace  
Feb 12          Morning worship led by our minister, with Revd John Danso,  
                         Chiltern Area Racial Justice Advocate  
Feb 19          Thinking Day Parade Service and all age worship  
                         4.00 Service of Holy Communion  
Feb 26          Morning worship  
                         4.00 Praise Service

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### Rotas for February

**Not included in this version**

# What's on in February



Monday 13h Feb- - Visit to Papua New Guinea Hostess & Speaker - Gwen Collins

## WOMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday 7th Feb	Quiz - Hymns
Tuesday 14th Feb	David (2) - Fugitive
Tuesday 21st Feb	Shrove Tuesday. The Olney Hymns. Pancakes
Tuesday 28th Feb	Malaysia. Preparation for Womens' World Day of Prayer Bring & Buy



*All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom*

## Diary Dates

Event	Time and date	Venue
Coffee Morning	Saturday 11th	LSR
Pantomime	Saturday 11th 7.30pm	Sanctuary
John Danso Racial Justice Advocate	Sunday Morning Worship. - 12th 10.30am	Sanctuary
Evening Communion	Sunday 19th 4pm	Sanctuary
Ash Wednesday - Lent	Wednesday 22nd	
Coffee Morning	Saturday 25th	LSR
Hirers & Users Meeting	Saturday 25th 11am – 12 midday	Sanctuary
Praise Service	Sunday 26th 4pm	Sanctuary
Fairtrade Fortnight	Monday 27th – Sunday 11th March	
Elders Meeting	Tuesday 28th 8pm	LSR
Churches Together in Wycombe Meeting	Wednesday 29th 3.50pm	LSR

February 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

**Not included in this version**

**Gwen Stibbon** writes from Horsham to send her good wishes to all who remember her. She reports that she passes a copy of the Recorder to her friend, Sheila Rudofsky, who worked in Papua New Guinea and knows our minister. She hopes to find the time to visit Wycombe at some stage - but time is something she seems to have too little of!!

## TRINITY PANTOMIME

At last it's here, ***Oh yes it is !*** Trinity's pantomime, especially written for us by the Rev'd Kate P. It promises to be a fun filled evening with a light supper in the interval, so I hope you already have the date in your diary. The cast have been working hard rehearsing, the costumes lovingly stitched and the scenery made and painted. Tickets are on sale now for £7.50 or £5 for concessions so get yours without delay. Looking forward to seeing you there to join in the fun booing the Ogre or cheering the young lovers.



## Polite Notice

Would all groups and organisations who meet regularly at Trinity please let 'Lettings' (Simon and Sarah) know if they are not meeting for any reason. In the winter especially this will save on our heating bills. Also, if Simon and Sarah have any hire requests the room may be re-let.

Thank you.

Kay E  
Assistant Treasurer

# Commitment for Life

## ZIMBABWE

### Dealing with Zimbabwe's debt

I've recently been in Zimbabwe, a trip that has left me feeling disconcerted, but not for the reasons I expected. Invited by the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZCDD) to discuss strategies for dealing with the country's debt, there was optimism I'd not seen in news stories about the country. The economy has now stabilised. The US dollar effectively became the official currency in 2009, breaking the cycle of hyperinflation and recession caused by the government's printing of money. There is a coalition government that has survived for three years without collapsing into civil war, as many feared. Central Harare feels like most other cities: traffic, banks, shops, adverts, newspapers – and inequality. The Zimbabwean upper classes are benefiting from high prices for exports of minerals such as gold and platinum.

These valuable commodities lie at the heart of the economic challenge facing the poor majority: to see their living standards improve. The all too often travelled path is for these resources to leave the country, followed by the wealth they earn – whether taken out by local elites and foreign companies or lost through debt repayments.

I met with 50 activists from civil society organisations to discuss strategy for dealing with Zimbabwe's debt. The government's \$7bn foreign debt was created mainly in the 1980s and 1990s through lending from private companies, institutions such as the World Bank, and foreign governments. In 2000 the ZCDD was formed by civil society organisations to campaign for the debt to be cancelled, part of the global Jubilee movement. In the same year, with repayments swallowing up between 25% and 50% of the country's export earnings, the government stopped repaying many of its foreign debts.

Within the government there are two main proposals for dealing with the debt. One side says revenues from exports, particularly diamonds, should be used to start repayments. The other says Zimbabwe should apply to join the heavily indebted poor countries initiative run by the IMF and the World Bank.

Both these options are opposed by activists in Zimbabwe. They want resources from minerals to be invested in infrastructure and industry, creating an economy not dependent on mining, with more jobs and greater equality. They oppose the money being squandered on debt repayments. They fear the IMF and the World Bank, remembering how structural adjustment increased poverty and began the country's economic decline in the 1990s, after poverty was reduced in the 1980s. As a Christian pastor told me: "Why would we want to get medicine from the same doctor who made us sick last time we went to see him?"

Applying to join the heavily indebted poor countries process would also mean debt repayments would increase – while it offers to cancel some debts, in return others have to begin to be repaid. The incentive to do so is to be eligible to get loans from the likes of the World Bank and African Development Bank again. Some debt is cancelled so that the country can get back into debt.

Which is why activists are campaigning for an alternative: a debt audit. An audit would analyse the lending that created the current debt to find out how it did and did not benefit ordinary Zimbabweans. This would help to learn the lessons of the past, and prevent mistakes being repeated. Three senior officials from the ministry of finance attend the all-day strategy meeting, listening to these alternatives.

On arriving at Harare airport, as a UK citizen, I had to pay \$55 for my visa. There were notices up saying Chinese citizens have to pay \$60. The east Asian country is undoubtedly a big player. One local said: "We used to be in the British empire, but maybe we are entering the Chinese empire now."

Just as the UK did in the 1980s and 1990s, China is giving loans to Zimbabwe to buy its goods, which are then to be repaid by earnings from exports. There appears to be little difference between a recent Chinese loan for a defence college and past British loans for the police to buy UK-made Land Rovers. The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development is working with allies in parliament and the government to get greater scrutiny and accountability over such loans.

A debt audit is a vital step in this process. It is part of the vision of hope of those fighting for justice in Zimbabwe for the country's wealth to be invested in building the economy and providing jobs.

The simplistic story of Zimbabwe I got from the UK media has been challenged by a much more complex reality. There is optimism and hope that justice can prevail through the difficult times that lie ahead. I wonder whether we in the UK are brave enough to stand in solidarity with the Zimbabwean people in their challenges to come.

Tim Jones: Senior Policy and Campaigns Officer Jubilee Debt Campaign



## Women's World Day of Prayer

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012

This year's services are prepared by the women of Malaysia with the theme "Let Justice Prevail".

As normal there will be two services organised by the High Wycombe committee, they are as follows:

**2.30pm** at All Saints Parish Church - Speaker Debbie Orriss (please note time, there is no morning service this year)

**7pm** at Wycombe Marsh Church - Speaker Diane Roberts

## COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS 2012

with Christian Aid's help

Christian Aid have again produced an attractive and thought provoking Lent diary, inviting us to count a different blessing each day as we think about people who struggle to bring justice and peace to the world. Each day we mark up a small amount of money to represent the blessings we have counted that day – and at the end of Lent send it to Christian Aid.

For example:

16<sup>th</sup> March – Fewer than 1 in 10 seats in the Indian parliament are held by women. Give 50p if you have ever had a female boss.

23<sup>rd</sup> March - One in six babies in Afghanistan do not live to see their first birthday. Give 1p for every birthday you have celebrated.

If you'd like to join in with this, or if you would like a children's version:

Call 08700787788

Email [orders@christian-aid.org](mailto:orders@christian-aid.org)

Or visit [christianaid.org.uk/lent](http://christianaid.org.uk/lent)

You can also follow on [twitter.com/christian\\_aid](https://twitter.com/christian_aid) by searching for #cyblessings or visit [christianaid.org.uk/facebook-count-your-blessings](http://christianaid.org.uk/facebook-count-your-blessings) for daily reflections.

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## The London Marathon: 22nd April 2012

Hello, I am Richard Stein and a URC Student, currently studying at Westminster College. I am running in the London Virgin Marathon on 22 April 2012 for Christian Aid.

I would be extremely grateful if you could sponsor me to help continue the great work that they are doing. I need to raise £2000. You can access the sponsorship page by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.justgiving.com/richard-stein>

or send sponsor money to Katia Wengraf, 35-41 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, SE1 7RL. Please write the cheque out to 'Christian Aid' but note in the remittance 'Richard Stein'.

Commitment for Life encourages you to support Richard in the event.



a partnership  
of churches  
in mission

## Herod's spirit still killing the innocents, say Welsh churches

The CWM-member Union of Welsh Independents, says that the use of Welsh airspace to exercise military drones shows that the spirit of Herod is still at work this Christmas.

The Union, which represents tens of thousands of Christians in about 450 chapels in Wales, says that many innocent children have been killed by such drones in places such as Pakistan and Gaza.

"We are appalled that military drones are allowed to fly in airspace over south Wales between Aberporth and Mynydd Epynt," said Rev Dr Geraint Tudur, general secretary of the Union of Welsh Independents.

"We must challenge the spirit of Herod by objecting to this new weapon, like every other weapon, which is being used to kill people in other countries - including civilians and innocent children.

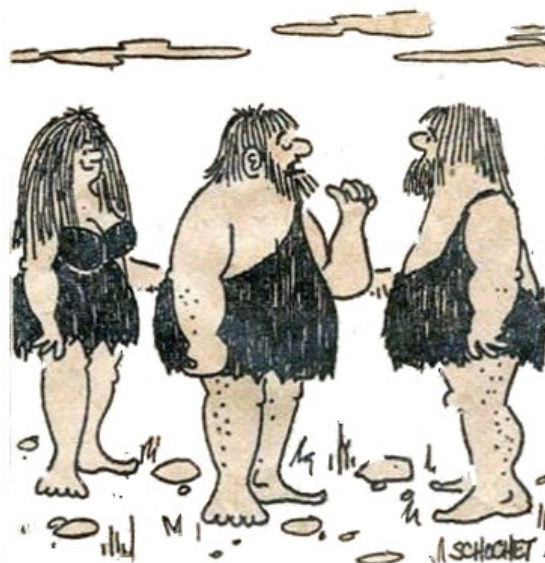
"Two thousand years since the birth of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, it is tragic that humankind continues to turn to war and violence.

"During the Season of Goodwill, we pray that people recognise there is another way - the way of peace and reconciliation - so that everyone can celebrate a happy and peaceful Christmas."



**Celebration 2012.** Commitment for Life is 20 years old this year and exists to help United Reformed Churches and LEPs work for a fairer world and for peace with justice. For resources to celebrate see [www.cforl.org.uk](http://www.cforl.org.uk).

## THE ORIGINAL SIN



I've decided to teach her to talk. What harm can it do?



## Worship at Trinity – themes for 2012

We will be engaging with some important aspects of Christian Life in our worship at Trinity this year. These are our themes:

- Jan 22 – Feb 19: PROMISE OF GOD 5 weeks in which we discover the God who is able to accomplish far more than all we can ask or imagine.
- Feb 26 – April 1: BECOMING THE GOOD NEWS 6 weeks in which we observe Jesus taking up the mission of the Old Testament writers to help us think about how we can enter the stories of Jesus and become good news.
- April 8 – June 3: RESURRECTION LIFE 9 weeks in which, through praying the Scriptures, we begin to discover the skills needed to live in the light of the resurrection.
- June 10 – July 22: FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS 7 weeks in which we explore who Mark's Jesus is and ask what it means to become his apprentice.
- July 29 – Aug 26: DISCOVERING JOHN 6, 5 weeks in which, through reading John's account of the feeding of the 5,000 and his teaching about the bread of life, we discover what it means to be a disciple.
- Sept 2 – Sept 30: DOERS OF THE WORD 5 weeks in which we use the letter of James to celebrate God's gifts and consider our response.
- Oct 7 – Oct 28: WORDS FOR PRAYER 4 weeks in which we draw upon the psalms to help us deepen our prayer.
- Nov 4 – Nov 25: KINGDOM PRIORITIES 4 weeks in which we assess the priorities required to recognise Christ the King.

This is following 'Roots' resources for worship and the set readings agreed ecumenically (lectionary).

WAYS INTO PRAYER: 'Roots' also suggests weekly 'Ways into prayer' related to each Sunday's main reading. Those of you who have been at church in January will have noticed that these are now included in the notices on the order of service. I hope that you will find them useful in giving a fresh impetus and focus to your prayers, week by week.

BIBLE STUDIES: There is also a weekly Bible Study outline offered on the Roots website. You will need Trinity's user name and password in order to be able to access this material. Please ask me for these if you want to use these Bible Studies.

VISITING PREACHERS: We are very grateful to those who make themselves available to lead worship at Trinity. Our visiting preachers this year will be told of themes we are following in worship, but we will also make it clear to them that they are completely free to choose their own topic and theme if they prefer to do so.



*Service of Prayer  
for  
Healing and Wholeness*



Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March, 4.00p.m.

Led by members of Trinity's Prayer Circle for Healing

Please come along and invite your friends

*For more details ask Barbara Macleod or Audrey Richardson*

**New House Group to start in February**

For some time the Elders have felt that it would be a good thing for Trinity to have House Groups to give another opportunity for growing in faith and fellowship. Many Christians witness to the benefit of meeting regularly with others in a small group to share joys and struggles, to support each other in the ups and downs of life, and to learn more about our Lord and what it means to be His disciple in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We are delighted to announce, therefore, that our first House Group will start on Tuesday evening 21<sup>st</sup> February, 8-9.30pm, with the second session being 6<sup>th</sup> March. Initially the focus will probably be on the themes of the previous Sunday's morning service as a discussion pointer.

Marian and Martin Drake have responded to our invitation to host the group in their home, and to lead the first couple of sessions to get it started. They have a lot of experience of House Groups and we are grateful to them for being willing to take a lead on this initially. If you would like to take part please speak to Marian or Martin to find out more, or email them on [mjdhome@btinternet.com](mailto:mjdhome@btinternet.com)

The hope is that other House Groups will develop. If you would like to go to a House Group but can't manage Tuesday evenings please talk to me or Sue Saunders, or your Elder, and we will arrange further groups as needed.

When we talked about this at January's Church Meeting an elder made the comment that going to a House Group is not to be thought of as a duty, something you 'ought to' do and need to be at every time, but as a privilege. Another person said she hoped that those who have never tried it will have a go, as they might find that they really enjoy it. Amen to that ☺

*Gwen*

## COME WITH TRINITY TO CWM Holiday Conference 2012

This year we are doing something new! We are going to have a Trinity group going to CWM Europe Region's Window on the World holiday conference in the summer. It's good for all ages, from 0 to 90's, and will be a good chance to get to know each other better and meet new friends. Bernie and I have been many times with church groups, including our children at various ages.

### **Window on the World 2012 "Go for Gold" 30<sup>th</sup> July 2<sup>nd</sup> August, Belsey Bridge Conference Centre, Ditchingham, Suffolk.**

In celebration of the London Olympics, Window on the World will "Go for Gold" and explore what this means for Christian discipleship. Most of us there will be from the UK, but others will be Christians from other parts of the world.

**Messy Church:** Worship each morning will be in the form of "Messy Church," with lively worship, activities and learning together. "Messy Church" is a shape of church aimed at reaching families, there are currently over 900 registered Messy Churches in the UK. There will also be children's sessions each day.

**Bishop Wesis Porop** from the United Church in Papua New Guinea will lead the quieter early morning worship, together with Bernie and me.

**Revd Dr Susan Durber**, Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge, will lead Bible Studies each day. These will consider Paul's letter to the Philippians. We will be introduced to the letter; its writer, its context and the world of those who might have read it first. We will explore its way of understanding who Jesus was and is. We will explore the metaphor of faith as 'pressing towards the finishing line' in the context of Roman and contemporary games.

**Fun activities:** There will be a "It's a knockout" sports afternoon, with team games, bouncy castles and fun for all the family. There is an outdoor swimming pool, tennis court, play area, football field and table tennis table, as well as lots of interesting places nearby. It's in 'The Broads National Park'. Or you can enjoy relaxing in the sunshine during the 'free' afternoons.

**Excursion:** The conference includes a half-day excursion to Norwich, Wroxham or Great Yarmouth depending on your personal tastes.

**Costs:** Not yet advertised. We hope to find ways so that everyone who wants to can come.

### **What do you need to do if interested?**

Tell me (Gwen) or Sue S, and keep the dates free.



**Fairtrade Fortnight 2012**

**27 February to 11 March**

## **Earth Hour – Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 8.30 pm**

The WWF sponsors the idea of an Earth Hour. The idea is that every person, family, commercial company and organisation throughout the country will turn off their lights for one hour at a specific time on a specific day. This year it's on Saturday 31st March, 8.30 pm.

Of course some individuals, companies and organisations are unable to do this, but you might want to consider it. Sometimes people settle themselves down with snacks, drinks and cards, with the curtains open and candles lit. There is no real hardship but it saves electricity, reduces the demand for energy and perhaps helps the planet a little.

Do consider taking part - it's only one hour in the whole of your year - and it shows that you support initiatives to help save our planet.

For those with internet access, if you want to find out more, visit <http://www.earthhour.org>

## **Diary Dates - March to June**

Space constraints prevented the inclusion in last month's Recorder of the forthcoming events listed below. Relevant details will continue to be published each month, but this lets you plan ahead if you feel the need!

<b>Event</b>	<b>Time and date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b><u>March</u></b>		
Women's World Day of Prayer Service	2.30pm Friday 2nd	All Saints Parish Church
Service for Healing	4pm Sunday 4th	Sanctuary
A.G.M & Church meeting	8 pm, Tuesday 13th	Lower School Room
Elders' meeting	8 pm, Tuesday 27th	Lower School Room
5th Brigade	9.30 – 12midday Sat 31st	
<b><u>April</u></b>		
Palm Sunday	Morning Worship 1st	Sanctuary
Easter Sunday	Morning Worship with Holy communion 8th	Sanctuary
<b><u>May</u></b>		
Church meeting	8 pm, Tuesday 15th	Sanctuary
Pentecost Service	Sunday 27th	High Wycombe Town Centre
Christian Aid Week	15th – 21st	
Elders' meeting	8 pm, Tuesday 29th	Lower School Room
<b><u>June</u></b>		
Elders Meeting	8pm Tuesday 26th	Lower School Room
5th Brigade	9.30 – 12midday Sat 30th	



# Happy Birthday



This month we would like to wish a Happy birthday  
to

Arthalié P (2<sup>th</sup>)

Grant C (5<sup>th</sup>)

Nathan C (9<sup>th</sup>)

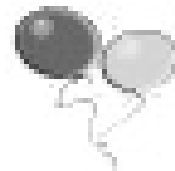
Matthew H (9<sup>th</sup>)

Jonathan L (23<sup>rd</sup>)

Adam T (29<sup>th</sup>)



# Congratulations



to

Gwenda D (24<sup>th</sup>)

on celebrating her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
with love from us all at Trinity

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*The March edition of the Recorder will be published on 26th February.  
Closing date for contributions is Friday 17th February*

Recorder Editor : e-mail : [editor@trinity-urc.org.uk](mailto:editor@trinity-urc.org.uk)

Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

# prayer page

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

*Ephesians 3:14-21 (NIV)*

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2012

Our walk with God  
is never a lonely walk.  
It is a joyful experience  
as along the path others join us attracted by the company  
of God's children  
singing the same songs of praise  
that angels sing,  
following a path  
worn down by tears and joy  
and sacrifice.

Our walk with God  
is never a lonely walk  
for he walks with us  
on a track that leads  
to a glorious  
destination

© John Birch (adapted), *Celtic Prayer and Resources* from [www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com)

Change? Me? Us? Here? Now?

Yes, Lord, bring about your kingdom.

I know that change can only start with me.

If I am not willing to let you change me,  
and if others are not willing to let you change them,  
things will always stay the same.

So start with me, Word of God, for you are sharper than a double-edged sword.

*Anon.*

Jesus, Saviour and Friend – you are our help when we struggle.  
You are our inspiration and our guide.  
As we remember Saint Valentine this month,  
and the sacrifice of his life in witness to you,  
we pray that you would help us to endure all suffering through our love for you.  
Help us to seek you wholeheartedly.  
Help us to love you more than we love others.  
And may others in turn come to know the fullness of the love of God. Amen.

*Anon*

## A challenge

Be wise in the way you act towards those who are not believers,  
making good use of every opportunity you have.

Your speech should always be pleasant and interesting,  
and you should know how to give the right answer to everyone.

*Colossians 4.5-6 Good News Bible*

