

Jessie observed: 'The parents at the brick kilns seem content just to have a job, but they have little access to healthcare and are unable to provide for their children's welfare - both their physical and mental well-being.

'CSI wants to help these families where they are and create a better future for the children. It is hoped that education and health awareness will prove empowering for the next generation.'

CSI's outreach programme will be run from a satellite-clinic of the Dr Anne Booth Mission Hospital. The programme will include schooling, healthcare, the provision of fresh vegetables and instruction in nutrition, and AIDS awareness training.

Brick making is an expanding industry. There are more than 2,000 brick kilns in Tamil Nadu due to the quality of the clay and the intense heat, which is necessary for baking bricks in the open air. Labourers work for nine months of the year - avoiding the monsoon season - working up to 16 hours a day. They prepare wet clay bricks during the night and early morning, when it is cool, and then leave the bricks to bake in the sun.

Brick labourers are poorly paid, so many are forced to borrow money from their employers. Finding themselves deeply in debt, they become 'bonded' to their employers - bringing accusations that brick labouring is a modern day form of slavery.

Most of the migrant workers in Veerachi Mangalam are Hindus, from a number of Dalit sub-castes, but their needs are so severe they are happy to put aside caste and religious differences and receive help from the Christian community.

'This is not an exercise in proselytising,' explained Jessie. 'The hospital and church leaders who visited the brick kiln were moved by Christ's compassion for the poor. Our aim is to work sensitively alongside the labourers and give hope to the marginalised.'

To support the brick kiln labourers (USPG Project 498), visit www.uspg.org.uk/projects or contact the USPG Link Officer for Asia, Subash Chellaiah on 020 7378 5693.



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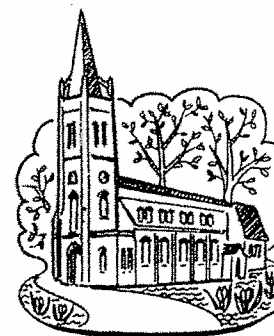
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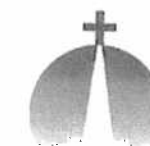


Saints of the Month: April.

- 16th St Bernadette of Lourdes 1844-79. As a girl of 14 she saw a series of visions of the Virgin Mary, as a result of which Lourdes became an international centre of pilgrimage and healing.
- 21st St Anselm. Archbishop of Canterbury 1093-1109, and Doctor of the Church.
- 23rd St George. Patron of England, Greece and Catalonia, also of soldiers and boy scouts.
- 25th St Mark. Evangelist and helper of St Paul. Died around the year 75. His remains were taken to Venice in the ninth century, since when he has been patron of that city.
- 29th St Catherine of Siena. Patron of nurses; Mystic and Dominican sister, 1347-80



THE NEWSLETTER



ALL SAINTS CHURCH Upper Norwood

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The Vicar's Monthly Letter

Dear Friends

Lent - the period of preparation for Holy Week and Easter is a time when we can take stock. It is a time when we can dig deeply into the fundamentals of our faith. The mystery of our faith finds its centre in the events of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The Church is called to live out that gospel, the good news of meaning of Jesus' life that is given for the sake of the world. That is the important thing. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is that God has so loved the world that he has given us his son to bring about a new world, the new world of God's kingdom of love, peace and justice. All that we do and are as the Church needs to be seen in that light and Lent is a time when they mystery that is God's love can be rediscovered.

This is also for us at All Saints a time of transition. The building works are now well underway and soon the future shape of the church will become clearer. For me and I hope for you it is an exciting time as our church is equipped for the future of its mission to those around us.

The Lent course we have been offering on Thursday's in the parish rooms has been going well. Do think of joining us for the talk and discussion. Please ask if you wish to know more details. If we are to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us, to quote St. Paul, we need to become better educated about what the faith in its essentials is about. This is another opportunity to do just that.

May God bless you and Jesus our Redeemer enfold in his love.

Fr. Leonard Marsh



CLERGY

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