

# CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 188

## New Year's Day 2023

**'Virtually Church but with some way to go...'**

### Welcome

Happy New Year!

This Sunday we recall the naming of Jesus eight days after His birth. Ron reflects on this below.

### Scripture Passages

*Philippians 2: 9-11*

Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

*Luke 2: 15-21*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The

shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

<sup>21</sup> After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

## Reflection

Pam had a theory that what parents call their children will affect their futures. She called it Nominative Determinism. If you name your daughter Sharon, she said, she will become a hairdresser. No boy called Ollie will become governor of the Bank of England. Or be knighted. My boys are called Martyn and David, because they can't have the Mickey taken, and their initials don't spell anything risible. My mum was Joyce Anna Mary. Guess what she was called at school? The world record stupid name lives in Surrey - he was at school in Puttenham. He'll be in his teens now. I won't tell you his surname, but he was named Denim, middle name - Jacket.

Mary and Joseph didn't choose the name of their firstborn. Mary had been told by the angel when he was conceived that he would be called Jesus. And this was reinforced by Joseph being told that the child would be called Jesus *because he will save his people from their sins*. Actually, that's what we say, but back then he would have been Yeshua, and that was the same as Joshua, and not an uncommon name at all. But it's come to us as Jesus, and we're not about to go changing it now. The name means, in Hebrew, *he saves*. or maybe *God saves*.

The name wasn't uncommon. Joshua is one of the heroes of the Old Testament, and lots of boys would have been named after him. The Apocrypha contains a book called Ecclesiasticus - the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach. Barabbas was called Jesus, too, which is why Pilate had to ask which one the crowd wanted spared - Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is

called the Messiah.

Now it's unusual here to call a boy Jesus, but in Spain and South America it's fairly common. In the old TV western *Rawhide*, there was a Mexican cowboy called Heysoos, but in the credits they spelt it H-e-y-s-o-o-s so as not to give offence.

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, said St Paul. That bit of his letter to the Philippians is written as if it's a poem, so it's quite likely Paul was quoting from a hymn he knew when he wrote that, so it could well be the oldest Christian hymn we know about.

I was brought up in a church where people at a service would at least bow their heads with respect if the name of Jesus was mentioned, which was quite often, if you think about it. And despite what Johnny Foreigner might do, we ought to try to keep the name of Jesus special. Definitely not using it as a swear word. If we accept that Jesus is Lord and God, then that's covered in the commandments, up there at number three. It pains me that "Oh my God" isn't even considered swearing anymore. Even shortened to OMG, I still find it offensive. The name of Jesus should be hallowed, as in the Lord's Prayer. Treated as holy. That's what it means.

The Tuesday before Christmas, the Radio 4 play in the afternoon was the story of the birth of Jesus told from the point of view of an old shepherd called Isaac, and Joseph. It was excellent, I thought. Joseph in the play was well up on the scripture anyway, but the angel's message to him made him dig about more. Jesus. He will be called Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. But how will he save? wondered Joseph, and started poking about in the scriptures. And in Isaiah, he found references to the expected Messiah's suffering, torture and death. And so, holding Mary's son for the first time, he was overcome with the foreboding that this child was in for a terrible end, and not likely to live to ripe old age.

But in our Communion service, in the Prayer Book, we quote Paul to Timothy - *This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Jesus Christ **came into the world** to save sinners.* That's what Jesus was for.

When I worked in London I had a friend called Trevor who was a model maker. Not like me, just dabbling, but a professional. Trevor made the model planes for the film *Empire of the Sun*. Eight beautiful quarter-scale flying models of P51 Mustang fighters, and they were all blown up. I asked him how he felt seeing all those months of work destroyed. And he said, *that's what they were for.* The finished product wasn't the model planes, it was the on-screen explosions. (And in any case, while he was at it, he made a ninth, for himself, to keep.) But my point is, we get a bit sentimental about Jesus the baby, away in a manger and all that, but he isn't the finished product. The finished product is Jesus risen, ascended, glorified - job done.

So today we celebrate the Naming of Jesus, along with his circumcision, which was something all Jewish boys go through, makes your eyes water to think about it. But Jesus was having his status as a Jew affirmed - his parents did everything the law demanded. And this was the time when a child's name would be announced and confirmed. And Mary and Joseph announcing that he was to be called Jesus would have caused no eyebrow raising - there would have been nothing to say this was a special baby. But we live with hindsight. Joseph may well have had forebodings and misgivings about the future of his adopted child, and Mary was told her heart would be broken. But we know that the horror of crucifixion was followed by the wonder and joy of resurrection, and that the baby in the stable, worshipped by shepherds, is alive today - more alive than ever, our Lord and King, our Saviour and our Friend.

Ron

## Points for Prayers

- Honouring the name of Jesus
- All that lies ahead of us in the New Year, our hopes and fears
- All those facing hardship this winter, needing to choose between food and heating
- Those seeking to help those facing hardship through projects such as the Lord's Larder and other foodbanks, community fridges and the provision of warm spaces
- Resolution to various industrial disputes
- Conflict between Russia and the Ukraine and those who are refugees from this conflict
- Those whom we know who are facing illnesses of all kinds and have recently been bereaved
- For Elliscombe House in Higher Holton and its residents
- For teachers, children and parents of North Cadbury church school in the Christmas holiday period

## Hymn

One hymn which celebrates the name of Jesus is 'At the name of Jesus'.

## Services for this week and next

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	9.00 am Communion, Yarlington
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	9.30 am Camelot Matins, North Cheriton
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	11.00 am Group Communion, North Cadbury
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	9.30 am Communion, Galhampton
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	9.30 am Communion, North Cheriton

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January

9.30 am Matins, Blackford

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January

11.00 am Sunday Worship, Holton

## **Excalibur**

Excalibur is back in paper form. It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes. The December and January editions of Excalibur have now been published online at [camelotparishes.co.uk](http://camelotparishes.co.uk).

## **The Parish Office**

If Rob is not in the Office during normal office hours please contact him via email ([office@camelotparishes.org.uk](mailto:office@camelotparishes.org.uk)) or on 01749 850934.

*Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family*

*We pray that 'we might live in love,  
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5: 2)