

### Diary dates for November and December, 2013

|                           |                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 <sup>th</sup> November  | 10.30 Holy Communion<br>All Souls Service of Remembrance<br>11.00 Bible Study - St Paul 3<br>12.00 Bring and share lunch |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> November | 11.00 Remembrance Sunday                                                                                                 |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> November | 10.30 Council Meeting                                                                                                    |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> December  | 10.30 Holy Communion<br>11.00 Bible Study - St Paul 4<br>12.00 Bring and share lunch                                     |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> December | 17.00 Carol Service                                                                                                      |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> December | 17.00 Crib Service                                                                                                       |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> December | 11.00 Christmas Day                                                                                                      |

### Prayer of the month

My Jesus, how good it is to love you.  
Let me be like your disciples on Mount Tabor,  
seeing nothing else but you.  
Let us be like two bosom friends,  
neither of whom can ever bear to offend the other . . .  
We can be satisfied only by setting our hearts,  
imperfect as they are, on you.  
We are made to love you;  
You created us as your lovers.

*St Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney,  
The Curé d' Ars (1786 – 1859)*

### Prayer focus

Remembering

### Verse of the Month

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks.

*Isaiah 2 v4*

## St Bart's Monthly



## November, 2013

### Services

**Sunday 11.00** Holy Communion (with hymns)

**Thursday 10.00** Holy Communion (said)

A warm welcome to all who worship with us.  
After the service coffee is served.

**Priest-in-charge: The Revd Gareth Randall**

For further information concerning baptisms,  
marriages or funerals:

☎ 02 99 46 77 00

e-mail : [gareth.randall@nordnet.fr](mailto:gareth.randall@nordnet.fr)

Website : [www.stbarts-dinard.org.uk](http://www.stbarts-dinard.org.uk)



November, 2013

Dear Friends,

### *Ghosts ?*

Do you believe in ghosts ? Hallowe'en (the eve of All Saints' Day), All Saints itself and All Souls' Day have all come and gone. Here at St Bartholomew's, rather late this year on November 7<sup>th</sup>, we will be remembering all the dead whose names are listed in our three Books of Remembrance. On November 10<sup>th</sup>, we will remember the dead of the many wars we have fought and on the 11<sup>th</sup>, there will be the usual civic ceremony at the War memorial in Dinard in the square down from Notre Dame.

But as I walk through the crowded Dinard market on a Saturday morning, I remember where Henry and Irène lived before one died and the other moved into a Maison de Retraite in St Servan. In church, the kneeler with the cross of Lorraine, dedicated to the memory of her husband, Marcel, reminds me of Ida. The empty seat opposite me reminds me of Sybil. The Sunday School banner reminds me of Joyce. The bench on the path up to the church reminds me of Michael. Not all our absent friends are dead – some have moved on to other places; some may return; some may not.

But to remember the dead is to continue to cherish someone we love, to hold them in a tender embrace and to value all that they meant to us. Of course, the dead have gone before us as one day, too, all must part. But to remember the departed means their 'ghosts' are never that far from us whom they loved and love. To us as Christians, the communion of the saints can be not simply a stated article of faith in our creed but also an active reality in our daily lives.

*Father Gareth*



### Notices

- **Harvest Ploughman's lunch** raised 250€ for church funds – our thanks to Victor and all those involved in making the meal so enjoyable a success.
- **Our thanks** to Carolyn Hewitt for organising 'This little piggy came to Dinard' an exhibition of the work of her friend Zandra McGillivray which raised 235€ for the church.
- **SPA** – The lunch at Diana's raised a magnificent 760€ - congratulations and thanks to all involved !
- **Toilet twinning** A second loo has been twinned with our new loo in St Bart's. You can find it in Nuwakot, Kathmandu, Nepal - Latitude 27.844, Longitude 85.445806.
- **Deadline** for submission of material for the December edition of the St Bart's Monthly is *midday on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> Nov*
- **Church Finances for September**  
Income: 6,288 € Expenditure: 3,808€

### Readings in church

#### *November 3 All Saints*

Daniel 7 v1 - 3, 15 - 18

Psalms 149

Ephesians 1 v11 - end

Luke 6 v20 - 31

#### *November 10 Remembrance Sunday*

Job 19 v23 - 27a

Psalms 17 v1 - 9

2 Thessalonians 2 v1 -5, 15 - end

Luke 20 v27 - 38

#### *November 17 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Advent*

Malachi 4 v1 - 2a

Psalms 98

2 Thessalonians 3 v6 -13

Luke 21 v5 - 19

#### *November 24 Christ the King*

Jeremiah 23 v1 - 6

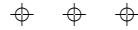
Psalms 46

Colossians 1 v11 - 20

Luke 23 v33 - 43

## Welcome

Christ Church, Brittany, have a new priest-in-charge, The Venerable Fred Trewethey. Some of us were fortunate to be at his installation and met him and his wife Margaret. We wish them and all members of their congregations real joy under his leadership.



## Quotations of the month

‘Gingerism’ :

Illiterate prejudice against those who are clearly well-red !



## Court reports 11/12

*The following are a series of what was actually said in American courts and has been sent to me by Ron Frankel*

ATTORNEY: Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

WITNESS: Are you qualified to ask that question?



## Church Notice boards 8/11

*Nathan, Barry Jordan's son, sent me this:*

Choose the Bread of Life or you are Toast.



## A critical mass

A Higgs Boson particle walks into a church only to be physically confronted by an unscientific priest who says coldly that Higgs Bosons were not welcome there," to which the Higgs Boson simply replied, "But how can you have mass without me ?"

*Valerie Trevino*

22

## A letter from the Revd Dr Alan Chatters

September, 2013

Dear Friends,

Frances and I were overwhelmed and delighted with the wonderful Diana-made cards we received from you all on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood. It was wonderful to recognise and recall so many names and occasions and to remember with humility so many happy events.

Of course, my visits to St Bartholomew's go back a good many years to 1966 when I first brought a choir over to join in the worship of many Roman Catholic churches and cathedrals in Brittany, always ending up in St Bartholomew's. One of our earliest memories is a wonderful gathering one Easter afternoon in Elizabeth Hannay's garden with the congregation, when Odile de Champchesnel and Ann Payan helped with the teas – not so easy when there were some twenty eager choristers to feed as well as the church members !

Another time was when Gloucester Cathedral Choir (we thought it was one of the best in the world) came across to give concerts in the area and to sing mass in St Malo Cathedral (where I preached) as well as in St Bartholomew's. But I could go on about our beloved St Bartholomew's and its faithful, joy and friendly people.

We were sad we were unable to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with you this year but God-willing we will be with you next year.

With our love and fondest remembrances,

*Alan and Frances Chatters*



3

## Remembrance Sunday - Much Marcle, 2011

The friendly folk of Wootton Bassett don't consider themselves special. They would tell you that any decent person would pay a similar tribute to men and women killed in Service, if the coffins of the fallen passed by their front door. They don't feel different from anybody else. It just so happened the repatriations went through their town and that was how they dealt with it.

The town has since become "Royal Wootton Bassett" in recognition of its commitment and acknowledgement to the fallen service men and women when repatriated to Britain to RAF Lyneham, from the conflict in Afghanistan.

The 1914-1918 Great War ended on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918. The fields where it was fought had turned into a sea of mud, and the very next Spring, poppies covered the ground. Some 8 million soldiers had died and some of the bodies were just swallowed up by the mud, with no known grave. So people made artificial poppies to help them remember those who had died, and we wear them today. And we, like Wootton Bassett are here to remember on Remembrance Sunday.

We remember the many who have died for their country and all who suffered in the two great wars, the many conflicts since and in particular Afghanistan. Violent and brutal battles, where they have attempted to keep the peace, and tried to save innocent inhabitants from destruction. Since the end of the Second World War, there has been only one year we are told, 1968 – in which British Servicemen and women have not been killed in action. We can therefore keep this day with pride – pride in the bravery of our forces, in their professional outlook, and in the lack of senseless cruelty, a mark we may well note, in contrast with some others. And praise also in the fact that their cause – our cause, has been and is a true and right one; an attempt to

## *Noises off*

Out there  
somewhere  
in the dark  
something  
is blowing  
in the wind

## How Children perceive their Grand parents 5/9

*Another mini-series of humorously sharp observations  
sent to me from my friend, Lisa Klein*

My grandson was visiting me one day when he asked, "Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?"  
I mentally polished my halo and I said, "No, how are we alike?"  
"You're both old."

## *Puzzled 5/5*

*The following were sent to me by Peter Campbell*

What do you think this means :  
**ecnalg**

**death ..... life**

**Answer -**  
Backward glance

**Answer -**  
Life after death

**Odd Words  
Fewer or less ?  
Weight or numbers ?**

I catch the end of an interview on ‘The World at One’ in which a Labour Party spokesperson – was it Ed Ball ? I’m not sure – warns that the Coalition Governments’ measures will result in large amounts of homelessness. Oh dear - is homelessness a volume to be weighed or rather people to be counted ? Would it not be better to talk of the number of people made homeless rather than make being without a roof over our head an abstract noun that could be measured on a scale – literally weighed ?

It seems there is no longer a difference in English usage between number and volume. Often you can hear someone referring to less people rather than fewer people. The distinction used to be if you could count them then it was fewer; but if you had to weigh them then it was less. Less sugar in tea but fewer people believing in God !

But now we seem to have lost the ability to choose the right word to describe how many or how much is involved in an issue. We all would all like more but are we less precise in how we describe quantities ?

*Gareth Randall*



**New Archdeacon for France  
The Venerable Ian Naylor**

The measure to employ four full-time Archdeacons in Europe cannot be implemented through lack of sufficient finance from central church authorities so Ian Taylor who has been our acting archdeacon will be Archdeacon until his retirement. Congratulations, Ian !

make peace, an effort to defend the right and the innocent, a stand for truth and fairness, and for freedom.

We believe we keep Remembrance Sunday for peace. In praying for peace, as we all do, we should remember that not all peace is good peace. “You make a desert, and call it peace,” was the bitter comment, on the brutality that formed the Roman Empire; too many opponents of other peoples, other religions, other convictions, try to make peace, by brutality, by slaughter, by oppression, by fear. And we should always pray for ‘peace,’ for a **just** peace, a **fair** peace, a **right** peace, and the bringing of freedom. The Good Friday Agreement in Ireland, was and is a wonderful example to other nations and places. A peace, based on surrender to evil, by contrast, is hateful to God and humanity alike, and will never bring a lasting result.

And remembering the horror of war we determine the continual work for peace. Jesus said “Blessed are the peacemakers – they are called the children of God.”

When we offer one another the sign of peace in our services, we are offering the peace of Jesus Christ. He spoke of ‘peace’ to his followers, meaning inward peace, the peace that is not disturbed by outward events, that can carry the holder through fire and torture, evil happenings, through sorrow and distress.

That inward peace comes from centring our thoughts and lives on Jesus, and from really trying to follow his teachings and example day by day. If we can place our confidence in God, we will gain that inward peace. If all people, if all nations, could only do the same, there would be no problem left about us possessing outward peace also.

And what of our returning veterans? Too many have little in the way of family and no home to go to. It’s a sad fact that many are homeless

on the streets of the capital and our major big cities. Until recent years, it amounted to a staggering twenty percent of the homeless population. A Service background tends to mean that you can survive on the streets for longer. A survey conducted by the Royal British Legion has shattered some myths. It found that a few offend and only a small number are violent and are in trouble with the law. Veterans tend to be older, homeless for longer, and have drink-related problems. There are some with post-traumatic stress disorders, and a number with mental health problems, few have problems with drugs.

The Legion are currently seeking new ways in which to help the situation, and intend to offer a more holistic approach, working with others in the charity sector to make best use of its resources. They intend to be more proactive in the future, they say ‘peoples needs don’t just disappear when they have been helped – they change and continue. And the people in need don’t tend to ask for help, they tend to wait to receive, especially those with disabilities or who are isolated.’

So today in remembering we pray for all victims of war and brutality, the prisoners, the captives, the suffering, the wounded, the homeless the children and the old. May God have mercy upon the souls of all who have died as victims of war and cruelty, terror and despair, and may he bring us to true peace and rest at last.

*Hilary Underwood*



**Fosse septique**

Greater love has no parent than a desire to upgrade their property in France with the latest in waste disposal in the countryside for the future ease of their family.

*Val and Geoff*

**10 Commandments for Positive Leadership 1/2**

*Olive Browne sent in the following piece of wisdom that was pinned to her office wall as a nurse*

- 1 People are illogical, unreasonable and self- centred.  
Love them anyway.
- 2 If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.  
Do good anyway.
- 3 If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies.  
Succeed anyway.
- 4 The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.  
Do good anyway.
- 5 Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.  
Be honest and frank anyway.



**Banque Alimentaire - Dinard**

On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, we delivered six substantial boxes of groceries. The organizers send their most grateful thanks to all at St Bartholomew's for our generous support.

*Helen Morgan  
Sacristan*

## Questions

**'Good for nothing'**

or

**'Paid to be good' ?**

Before I came to St Bartholomew's as Priest-in-charge in January 2007, I was an NSM (a Non-Stipendiary Minister – a *'good for nothing'*), first at King Charles the Martyr, then at St Mary the Virgin and All Saints, both churches in Potters Bar where I lived and taught. For 14 years since my ordination in 1993, I had worked part-time at no charge to the Church of England because I was in receipt of a good salary from Dame Alice Owen' School as an Assistant Head.

Coming here was a real joy, not only because I have been in love with Dinard for many years and, having first come to St Bart's as a holiday chaplain in 1995, it seemed the realisation of a cherished ambition to serve God and his people in this place.

Coming here also changed my status in the church – I was now paid for what I did (a stipendiary clergyman – a *'paid to be good'*); at first, half of and currently three quarters of a full stipend. It felt good to receive money for doing what I felt called to do, my vocation, my profession of faith in God the Father as revealed through God the Son mediated through the presence of God the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Now the question which I want to ask is, 'Are we, the people of God, and me, your priest and pastor, called to serve God with or without a reward?' What difference does it make for me to receive money from you for serving you and working for the wider community? Is our Christian ministry devalued or valued if there's financial gain involved?

*Father Gareth*

## Help the Heroes – the Big Battlefield Bike Ride 2013 Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May – Amiens to Le Touquet (Etaples) When it rains it just pours

I still couldn't take breakfast but managed to force down a croissant. Today was going to be quite eventful. I still had my runny nose but it was not so bad. Despite being under the weather, I was managing to cycle reasonably well.

About 20 miles into the Ride, I was climbing a long steady hill and began to feel this was more work than it should be. I thought I should take a water break near the top in case I was dehydrating. Then I noticed the back tyre was going soft, and obviously knew I had a puncture. Just as I was taking out the spare tube and tools, my two 'Guardian Angels' turned up in the form of Danny and Davey, two Coldstream Guards. As they were about to pass me, they shouted "Are you OK Ronnie, do you want a hand?" "If you could," was my reply and before I turned the bike on the saddle, the wheel was out, and the tyre and tube were off, ready for replacement. As it looked as though a piece of flint had penetrated the tyre, I decided to change both the tyre and tube. It was just like a Formula 1 pit stop and I was on the road again in a jiffy.

After our first stop, disaster struck. I had been struggling to keep my eyes forward far enough to see the red arrow direction signs because of my stiff neck, which by now giving me real 'gip'. At a cross road, where I should have turned right, I carried on to encounter a 1500 metre steep climb.

I remember seeing the sheep in the adjoining fields looking at me with some curiosity, as they don't often see cyclists pounding up the hill towards, as it turned out, nowhere. I began to wonder why nobody seemed to be overtaking me as I wasn't going up that quickly. At the

top I came to a T junction with no direction markings. Apart from a bus shelter on the corner of the bend, there were just two houses, all shuttered up, and one road sign. Spookily there was no traffic at all, which over the next hour turned out to be continuously true.

Clearly, I was taking the scenic route to the next stop two thirds into the ride. Studying the map I recognised that the road sign did correspond to a village we were supposed to pass through, and decided to follow the road to the right, way back down the hill again the other side, only to meet another T junction and no road signs whatsoever. Rather than compound the problem by not having any clue where I was, I retraced my steps, went back up the hill and picked up the previous sign with the village direction, the number of the road and as it transpired, I could name the two house village where I was, as there was a village road sign on the way back.

The only thing left was to call for technical assistance. I managed to call the number on my French mobile and left, so I thought, a message of my location and call for assistance. 30 minutes went by without a call back and when I tried to ring again I found my mobile was out of coverage and probably the first message never got through.

It seemed the only thing left to do was retrace my steps and get back onto a busier road and possibly get mobile coverage from there. Unfortunately I then noticed my front tyre was as flat as a pancake and I had used all my spares that morning!

Well, I was really stuck now! Fortunately, in the next ten minutes whilst I considered my options, a lady strolled down the road from literally nowhere and in my best French I explained my predicament. She hadn't a mobile 'phone with her but said if I could just wait for the school bus for her daughter she would try and help. 10 minutes later the school bus duly arrived and luckily, after an animated conversation

*Film Review of the month*  
*'Tea with Mussolini' Franco Zeffirelli 1999*

It's July and Father Richard is staying with me. He flicks through my collection of DVDs and selects an old favourite off the shelf – 'Tea with Mussolini' and we settle down with a glass of Prosecco to enjoy.

If you have never seen it, 'Tea with Mussolini' is a truly a delightful film with many of my favourite English actresses. Maggie Smith is delightful as ever as Lady Hester Random, widow of the late British ambassador to Italy. Judi Dench is Arabella, a fragile if passionate 'failing' artist. Joan Plowright plays Mary Wallace, a delightful no-nonsense spinster, the 'adopted' mother of a bastard son of her Italian employer, Massimo Ghini, a gigolo tailor. The son, Luca, is played as a boy by Charlie Lucas and as a young man by Baird Wallace, honest, charming and vulnerable. American interest is sustained by Cher who plays Elsa Morgenthal, an artful, art-loving serial wife of absentee millionaires and Lily Tomlin who plays Georgie Rockwell, a butch archaeologist.

Set in Florence in the years leading up to and including the Second World War, it is a delightful social comedy with prejudice of every sort being humorously aired. It is based on a real story and although it is authentic in many respects like the frescos that are 'lovingly preserved by our ladies' in the church in San Gimignano the film is as pristine and clean-cut as Luca's British soldier's uniform.

At heart, it is the story of the British love of Italy, of an eccentric English ex pat community. As such, it could be a winner with ex pats here in Brittany. If you have never seen it, then you must; if you have already, then why not see it again – I'd be surprised if you don't smile a lot and feel a whole lot better for having done so!

*Gareth Randall*



## Are we a Social Club ?

*In the first reply to our new series of articles posing a Question for YOU to reflect on, Paddy Vidal Hall has sent us the following:*

I've always thought, when working with a group of people, that our aim, whatever the official title, was to learn more about loving God, our neighbours and ourselves. Jesus talked to the people who answered, whatever their reason for being there, and they obviously talked together, and learned things about themselves from the experience. From these encounters and many others over time developed the bubbling yeast that enabled the Church to grow.

We help each other to see ourselves and each other in a new light that God bathes us in, as we pray together and relate to each other. God does not leave us if we get off beam in some way. Our friends stick by us if we do strange things sometimes. If we listen and share honestly, as we attempt to get closer to God, our lives are changed. Our relationships improve; there is a buzz; we come back, surely not just for coffee ! More of the meaning God has for us is revealed and people learn more about what it is to love. If we get something wrong, we will be nudged towards changing. Perhaps some people expect that we should act in a prescribed way – invariably 'high-minded'. If we upset others, my experience is that we are open to and listen to serious suggestions because we know God talks to us and guides us. Perhaps our 'social club' works because God is definitely a member who expects us to share his message and invites newcomers and 'old hands' to enjoy his life and light.

*Paddy Vidal Hall*

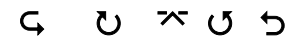
PS Of course, silence is an essential meeting place too!

with the whole of the bus, it transpired that the driver had a mobile and she called in my technical support. Another 30 minutes later the van arrived to pick me and the bike up and I was transported to the lunch spot, where I had something to eat, and my bike forwarded to the mechanics for repair. What a day, but at least I was quite proud of myself. I did not panic and my French was much better than I had thought. With some splendid help, I could now continue. Surely I must now be through the worst.

## Agincourt

The lunch time stop was at Agincourt and whilst most riders had already departed, I managed to grab a piece of fruit cake and warm myself by the open fire, decked in a room decorated as a medieval hall with armoury and longbows.

*Ron Kirk*



## Cogito ergo sum

The seventeenth century rationalist French philosopher, René Descartes, was asked by a waiter whether he would like a glass of red wine but conscious of the need to remain sober, Descartes replied, "I think not" then promptly disappeared !

*Valerie Trevino*



## Personal Column

Congratulations to Pat Marvell who celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday last month and to Dee Cronshaw who celebrates her 80<sup>th</sup> this month.

## The Bartholomew Gospel

### 6 Prayer

*'Teach us to pray, Master . . .'* Luke 11 v1

Prayer. It's what I used to do all the time at synagogue. We met there for prayer, our souls connected to God. We swayed as we prayed, like candle flames, the rhythm of the words reflected, emphasised, by the rhythm of our movement.

What do you think of prayer? Are we simply talking to ourselves? Is it simply wishful-thinking, just a lot of empty-sounding, nice but pious nonsense?



Well, Jesus was serious about prayer. In the beginning, we had a fright: early one morning, he wasn't in the house where we were staying. The night before, he'd cured Simon Peter's mother-in-law, but before we were awake, he'd taken himself off to be alone to talk to God. And that was his pattern - regularly taking time to talk and listen to God.

There was a confidence about his prayer that was infectious. He said, 'Ask and it will be given to you! Search and you will find! Knock and the door will be opened for you! Everyone who asks receives; everyone who searches finds; everyone who knocks has the door opened.' Pure common sense which he reinforced with the simple notion that when asked, no one would give their son a stone for bread or a snake for fish. Then how much more so our Father in heaven? Four days after Lazarus had died, outside his tomb Jesus prayed. He thanked God for having answered his prayer before he prayed it! And the answer was Lazarus shuffling out into the light and we were impressed!

"God zegene en beware u", which means "God bless you and may he save you". Koen also explained that Christian families there do still say this short prayer, especially to little children as they are going off to sleep.

This spelling was easily found on the net. Bérénice's compact Ghentois version of the phrase doesn't sound much like "God zegene en beware u" but the meaning was no big surprise. Bérénice had been raised in a very strict Catholic bourgeois family, after all. It made sense that they would have followed local tradition.

Bérénice hasn't been to church in a very long time. And she didn't raise her children to be church-goers. But this little family prayer has survived and is being passed on to her great great grandchildren now. When next I see any of her family, I will tell them what I have learned.

### Sekewoardu

**"God zegene en beware u"**

*Valerie Trevino*



### American humour ?

Of former President George Bush –

'All hat and no cattle'



## A curious family tradition

Bérénice is a Ghentoise who married a Frenchman right after WWII. I have known her for a long time - she is now in her late 80s. On occasion over the years, I spent time with her family in France and I noticed that, in addition to the usual four kisses of farewell, her French-raised children and grandchildren also made a cross on each other's forehead with their thumbs and said something that sounded like "sedwukt" as they said goodbye to each other. I had never seen this in any French family. This was a tradition that Bérénice had passed on from her own childhood in Ghent.

Although, as non-family, my own forehead never got crossed as I said my goodbyes, I was always curious about the custom and its origins. Recently, I tried to find out what exactly was being said but Bérénice and her children and grandchildren were unable to answer my questions. It was just a family tradition, the younger ones said. Not even Bérénice knew how to spell the words being used or exactly what they meant. It was more a habit than anything else.

I know that Bérénice speaks a dialect proper to Ghent. My efforts to research the phrase on the net were fruitless so I started emailing some Belgians with my questions. What is the exact phrase? What does it mean? Is it still in use today?

From Heidi at the tourism office in Ghent, I learned that "Sekewoardu", as she spelled it in her email, means "Jesus protects you" and is a custom in Catholic families when saying goodbye at the door or amongst family members before going to sleep at night. Still, I could find nothing on the net for "Sekewoardu".

Finally, the Catholic Church in Ghent emailed me with further information. Koen wrote that what Bérénice was actually saying was

But for Jesus, prayer was not about showing off in public, a matter of standing on the corner of the street and drawing attention to yourself because you were being seen to pray. Prayer could be in public, in synagogue or in the Temple for example, but it was a question of approaching God, not to boast about how good we are but in humility, to recognise how good God is to whom we speak. Check out the parable of 'The Pharisee and the Tax Collector' which Luke retells – you'll love it.



So we asked him, 'Teach us to pray, Master.' And, of course, he did.

Our father in heaven,  
may your name be honoured;  
may your kingdom come;  
may your will be done  
as in heaven, so on earth.  
Give us today the bread we need now;  
and forgive us the things we owe,  
as we too forgive what was owed to us.  
Don't bring us into the great trial  
but rescue us from evil.



Great. So what's that all about? Well really, it's an example of prayer for us all to follow. It's a template for us all to copy.

So what are the underlying principles? There are four: praise, saying sorry, saying thanks and asking for things.

Praise is adoration. It recognises God for who he is – our Father – and what he is – our God in heaven, our King on earth. We are identifying with him, asking that his will be our will so that we may be his instruments in helping to make his kingdom a present reality.

Saying sorry is confession, repentance. It's a recognition of where we are and what we need to do to be better. Here, it's encapsulated in the notion that we owe and are owed. We are in debt to God and to the people around us; some of them are in debt to us. So we ask for forgiveness, resolving, too, to be forgiving.

Saying thanks is gratitude. It's a recognition of what we have to be grateful for. It's us seeing that we are in debt for all we have been given, not least our life itself. Though it might be hard, we should be grateful for the bad things too because they could ultimately work for the good. To be honest, thanks is only implicit throughout this prayer, thanks that God is our Father, thanks that we do receive our daily bread, thanks that our wrong-doing is forgiven.

Asking is the hard one. We can ask for ourselves; we can ask for others. There is, as I've already indicated, the confidence that God will answer our requests but His answer may be yes, may be no, or may be not yet. The onus is on us to ask only for what is right, to realise that if we want to pass an exam, then God won't do the work for us but might give us the peace of mind so that the work we've already done will not be wasted by nerves.



That's the Lord's Prayer. You can use it as it is or use it to inform how you pray.

So what is prayer?

It's being connected to God:  
talking to him;  
listening to him;  
being with him;  
a life-time's dialogue.



### **The Bridge**

*The following, a new version of an old favourite,  
was sent to us by Ken Ivin from Spain.*

Walking near the harbour in Gibraltar, a man was deep in prayer. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Because you have tried to be faithful to God in so many ways, He is minded to grant you one wish."

"Build a bridge between Gibraltar and Spain so we can drive back and forth between without border controls or stops for customs checks."

"Your request is very worldly. Of course it could be done but is it good to do ?

After some thought the man said, "I wish I could really understand my wife, know how she feels inside and how I can make a woman truly happy."

"You want two lanes or four lanes on that bridge ?"