

**Brize Norton and Carterton APCM 2008
Rector's Report and review.**

Firstly I want to say "thanks" to; ministers both lay and ordained, wardens, church officers, office, AV people, musicians, flower arrangers, cleaners, welcomers / sides-people, school governors plus any I might have forgotten. Also to all who give so generously of time and money to keep the churches working.

Now a look at what the 2 churches and Necklace are doing:

The vacancy was for you, as in most parishes, a challenging time but that is now in the past. I have now been here 6 months and am discovering both the joys and challenges of being here. I have been made unfailingly welcome everywhere and have found a welcome freedom to be myself. Reading and listening to the reports shows that there is a lot of good work going on here. As for me, I have still got places to visit and things to discover as well as work to do in the house and garden. But it cannot all be done at once and I am prepared to be patient.

In these days of parishes being put together it is easy for rivalries to develop. Such things do not help our Christian witness and we need to work through this.

Over the years I have observed that these things can stem from what I see as the wrong expectation that because churches share a minister they should have the same ways of worship, policies etc. I have never found that this works as churches are communities of people and therefore every church has its unique blend of joys, needs and gifts. I am happy to see the churches develop in their own way and am not seeking to impose a single agenda. The Team here was set up 5 years ago now and provision was made for a review at this time so part of my job is to look at the structures under which we work and my guiding principle will be "helping all our churches and projects flourish".

Whatever comes out of that, what I ask is that things are done well, in accord with the ways of the historic church of which we are part and with the overall vision in the NT which is to see

people finding faith in Christ and devoting themselves to following Him.

Clergy work. The job of the clergy is varied. The three full time ministers meet regularly for prayer and business. We conduct baptisms, weddings and funerals and engage in pastoral work, some of this is unseen to others and properly so. As you know our churches and projects have been very busy. Teaching, worship and organising are part of what we do. A feature in this parish is the number of Schools and all welcome us for visits and assemblies.

For me the main encouragements in our church life have been; the Lent course, St John's cleaning morning, new people in all three groups, St Britius special services with the impressive collages and puppetry and relaxing with families at the Necklace family hour. The appointment of Penny Price the new head at St John's School was important and we wish her well and pay tribute to Tessa Farley's work in developing the school. I will try to be around and contribute as much as possible but have learnt that I cannot do everything or be everywhere – only Jesus can do that!

Looking ahead, the challenges vary, new building work at St Britius and St Johns', keeping the roof on at St Britius, new congregations, finance – the quota is going up again, holiday club and family festival, growing new work (what do we stop?)

Finally a reminder that our vision is to be churches that are looking to follow where God wants us to go. Mission and growth are on the agenda. To do this we need to be:

- focused on God and seeking to do what He wants in His way
- outward looking
- spiritually and humanly healthy and realistic
- not trying to do too much

Rev W Blakey, Team Rector 27 April 2008.