

## *From the Editorial Team*

January: named after the Roman god Janus who looked both backwards and forwards. Another year. Where do they all go?

Inevitably at this time we think of beginnings but have you noticed how often what used to be regarded as the start of something has now become the end? As you read this, Christmas Day will have past (or will do very shortly) and for most people it is the great culmination of a month or more of frantic present buying and preparation for the Big Day.

For the Church however Christmas Day is the start of a season of twelve days of celebration and joy leading to the Epiphany when we rejoice in the appearance of Christ to the Magi and thus to all people, not just the Jews. The twelve days of Christmas have been transferred from the twelve succeeding days to a rushed countdown of days before Christmas. In the past decorations stayed in place until Twelfth Night; how often now do you see them surviving beyond New Year's Day?

The sacrament of Baptism is another celebration which is frequently seen as something separate; a one-off service followed by a party. But Baptism is the start of an exciting journey of faith which in fact has no end.

So this January let's revel in the 'new' and start thinking about how we can transform our lives and those of others with new purpose and determination and by that I don't mean an unrealistic list of resolutions destined for the bin after a few days or weeks! Paul wrote to the Corinthians with the words

*"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who through Christ changed us from enemies into His friends and gave us the task of making others His friends too."* [Paraphrased from the NRSV and Good News Bibles].

Beginnings are so much more thrilling than ends. I am sure that there is something new we can all tackle this year. There are plenty of opportunities to help out with the running and life of St Mary's or maybe your calling is to the wider community. Starting a new project has also been shown to be good for our health too, especially for those of us of more mature years!

So may we look, like Janus, backwards with thanks for all the blessings of 2017 and forwards to the challenges and excitements of 2018.

The Editorial Team wishes you all a happy NEW year.