

Palm Sunday

The children are excited on this Palm Sunday morning because they are expecting to take part in the annual Palm Sunday procession in church.

Jesus rode on a donkey as he entered Jerusalem for the last time before he was crucified. People welcomed Him by throwing palms down in His path.

The children normally love to wave palm leaves as they re-enact this event by processing with them but this year there is a **VERY** big health and safety problem which makes this impossible.....find out all about it below.....

Adele has arrived early Palm Sunday morning as she is helping the vicar and Esther set up the new display unit with St. Hilary's Easter cards. Doesn't the new display unit look brilliant?!



Adele has now filled it with Easter cards and other things too. Can you see what else is for sale here? St. Hilary's has also produced some monthly and wall calendars for 2009. The Easter cards and calendars have been made especially in order to raise money for the church funds.



The money is now urgently needed.....find out why.....

Oh dear! **WHAT** has happened here? Poor Homer has had to put his hat on **IN** church. He normally **NEVER** wears his hat in church and prefers to use it to collect loose change in order to help him live as he has no home of his own. However.....if he doesn't have his hat on he will get wet because the roof has started to leak and is dripping on to his head! It would seem that April showers have arrived!



Ambrose has already found out that the roof is leaking in some places.

He is checking to see where the roof is leaking so he can put the buckets in the right places!

He has even been very good and made a poster to warn people when they come into church to avoid standing near a bucket as it is catching rain water drips from the leaking roof!

Even old Ernie, the churchyard gardener, has let the church borrow his old rusty bucket to catch the drips!

Sepp, the rat, is investigating and Nunc Dimittis, the church mouse, is not far behind.....



Priscilla Jane is SO good!

She has joined Ambrose and is helping him to mop up the puddles on the church floor before all the congregation and children arrive for the Palm Sunday service.



Ben has made some of the palm crosses this year after he offered to

make them. He still remembers how to make them as Esther, their Sunday School teacher, has already taught them. He can't resist showing them off to Poppy can he? He is such a show off! Poppy doesn't look THAT impressed does she?

Can you see two other visitors to church this morning? It is Esme and Ernest, the local mallard ducks! They have heard all about the leaking roof and have decided to come and see if they can enjoy a paddle in any of the puddles on the church floor. However.....they are now very disappointed because it has stopped raining outside and Ambrose has already mopped them ALL up with the help of Priscilla Jane.



The vicar is now ready to take the service.

However he is feeling a bit upset and sad and tells the children that he feels very guilty because he has let them down. He tells them that he should have realised how bad the roof was BEFORE it started to leak and he didn't.

Ben is the first to speak up as he immediately feels sorry for the vicar. He reminds the vicar how often, in his sermons, he has told them that God loves them and that Jesus lived and died to save them all from their sins. So the vicar must remember that God has already forgiven him for not checking the roof as often as he should!



The vicar has asked all the children to move into the chancel as the roof is more secure and, if it rains, they won't get wet! He has just blessed all the palm crosses that Ben has made and brought to church. He is now giving them to the children as they queue up. The children each receive a palm cross from the vicar.

The vicar explains to the children that the palm cross will remind them that Jesus died for them and everything that they have done wrong or ever will do wrong!





Easter Day

Easter Day is always a special day in every church in the world because it celebrates the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. This is celebrated in many different ways. Eggs are often used, both chocolate and real eggs as an egg is a symbol of new life. Eggs can even be painted in some countries. In St. Hilary's the children always enjoy Easter Day.

You will all be pleased to know that the vicar arranged for some roofing experts to visit the church during the week and the leaks have ALL been repaired so Homer doesn't have to worry about wearing his hat in church again for a VERY long time.....

Find out how Easter in St. Hilary's wentand what happened when the egg hunt had a rather unexpected addition to it.....and it involves.....fish!

It is the Saturday before Easter Day and Esther has brought the freshly washed and laundered altar cloth



which is used at Easter to put on to the altar.

The altar was stripped on Maundy Thursday during a special communion service. The altar has been left bare until Easter to represent the fact that Jesus had died on the cross but had not yet risen from the dead..

Oh dear.....it looks like she has some little helpers in the form of Sepp, Syd, Esme and Ernest! They think that they can help her place the cloth "just right" on to the altar!

Esther is having a little chat with them as they all work out how they can each help dress the altar. They all agree to help unwrap the altar cloth together, each taking a corner.



Goodness! Time has moved on this Saturday afternoon and the flower ladies have already been VERY busy at work!

Alice admires the sanctuary and altar Easter flower arrangements. She particularly loves the beautiful white lilies the flower ladies have used this year.

The church is now ready for Easter Sunday morning when all the congregation celebrate joyfully the fact that Jesus has beaten death and rose again after three days in the tomb.



It is early Easter Sunday morning. Homer, poor man, has slept in church last night because he had nowhere to go....not ONE hostel had a space for him.

He is so grateful that the vicar never turns him away and lets him sleep in church when times are really hard.

WHAT is young Priscilla Jane doing here? Ummmm.....she is having a little word with Homer. She is asking him to keep a big secret because she wants to have a special hunt for the two cats, Tinker and Magnifi-Cat. She knows that there is to be an Easter egg hunt after the morning service and thought that it was unfair that the cats were going to be left out.

So she has brought two fish to church and wants to hide one



of them under Homer's pew for one of the two cats to find!

Ambrose and Alice are organising the egg hunt for the children after the Easter morning service.

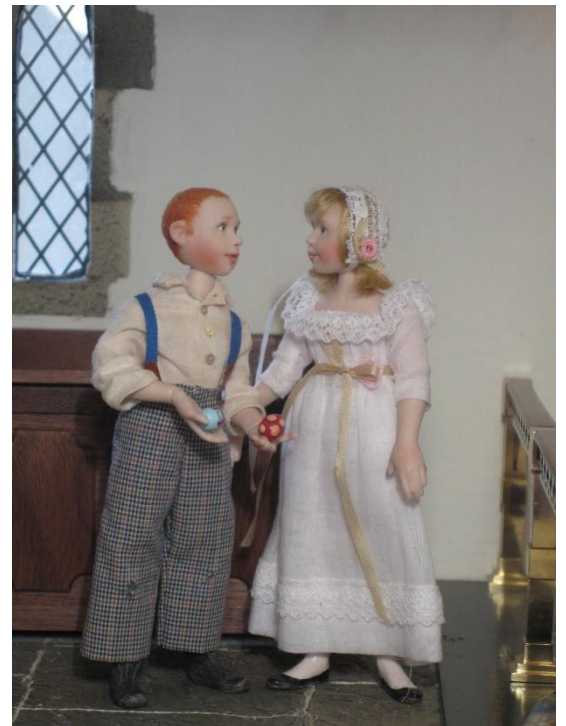
Haven't they brought a wonderful selection of eggs and Easter bunnies?

Oh dear.....can anyone see something has happened to the ink pot on the table? One of the church mice must have been playing on the visitors' book table and knocked it over and even the pen has fallen on the floor too!



Ambrose is showing off these pretty little eggs he has brought to hide for the children in the church.

Ambrose has chosen to put one with the sanctuary flower arrangement



The Easter Sunday service cannot begin properly until the Paschal candle is lit.

(The Paschal candle represents Jesus present on earth from Easter Sunday until he rises to heaven on Ascension Day)

Ambrose has offered to light it this year. However, he is struggling here as he works out how to reach the wick at the top before he lights it for real.



The vicar has a very special announcement to make today.

He is thrilled to present the congregation with some lovely new hymn books.

They are "Ancient and Modern Revised".

The vicar asks Adele to come and pick one of the hymn books up and show it to the other children.



Snowy and Nunc Dimittis the two church mice, scuttle into their little home under the lectern.....can you see them both?

Suddenly they

could all smell a smell of.....err.....fish.....and then some loud miaows too! What is going on here?

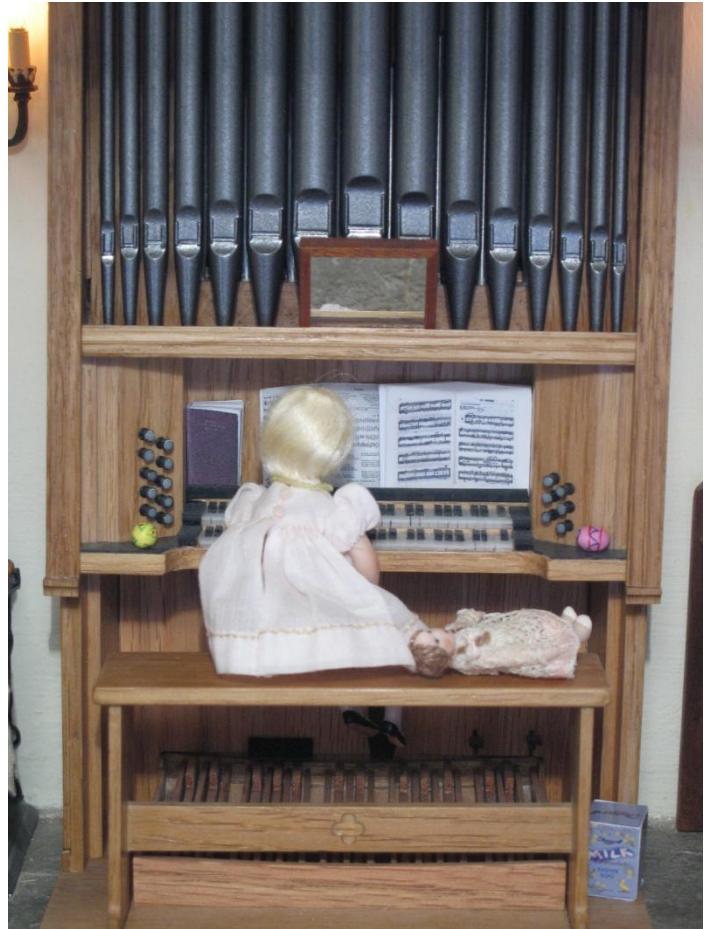
Tinker and Magnifi-Cat don't know that Priscilla Jane has made sure they each had a fish and the other one is hidden elsewhere. So they are having a little argument.....we hope that Tinker does NOT hit poor Magnifi-Cat!

The vicar has to quickly tell them to calm down and Priscilla Jane too, feeling a bit guilty now, tells both cats that there IS another fish in the church and she does go and fetch it for them both.



Phoebe is SO busy looking at her music after the Easter Sunday service she has not noticed something.....can you see what it is.....or should we say.....what THEY are?

They are Easter eggs of course which Ambrose and Alice hid before the morning service.



Tom HAS found an Easter egg whilst on his own Easter egg hunt.....can you also see that there is a little foil wrapped Easter bunny too?

The children are really enjoying Easter Sunday this year and especially the Easter Egg hunt in church.



Pentecost - A Birthday for the Church!

It is Whit Sunday morning or "Pentecost" as it is also called because it is the day that celebrates the time when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus' disciples after he ascended to heaven on Ascension Day and they all started to speak in many different languages as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This morning the vicar has asked Alice and Esther to show the children how to make some party things during their Sunday School time in the morning service! This afternoon there is going to be a special birthday party for the children and congregation of St. Hilary's.....find out who's birthday it is.....

Alice is showing the children a beautiful paper chain that she and Ambrose made yesterday at home.

The vicar asks the children which colours Ambrose and Alice have used. Tom is the first to answer....."Red, orange, white and yellow". "Well done Tom", says the vicar!

The vicar reminds them that these are the colours which are traditionally used to represent the Holy Spirit which descended on to the disciples at Pentecost.



The Holy Spirit is often represented as a fire or as a dove. When the disciples received the Holy Spirit they became the very first Christian church as they went out and made more people disciples of Jesus.

He tells the children that today, therefore, is the birthday of the church. As a special treat for them he is holding a birthday party for them all this afternoon and they will be making things in their Sunday School lesson time this morning for the party and to decorate the church.

The children take a really good look at this paper chain.....and wonder if they will find it easy to make their own to decorate the church.

Alice and Esther gather the children to the table with all the things on which they will use to make some more paper chains.

They have also brought some red, orange, white and yellow tissue paper because the children will need to wear paper hats! So they will be making their very own paper hat to wear at the party this afternoon!

Alice tells them that they will have to make sure they only use the orange, white, red and yellow paper strips when they make their chains. You can see that some paper strips are not the proper colours but Alice didn't have time this morning to take them out of the packets.

We hope that nobody forgets!



Adele has made her chain VERY quickly and is quick to show it off to the camera as Tom takes this photograph!



Amelia.....oh dear.....she is NOT looking so happy is she.....that is because she is cross with herself as she has not been as fast as Adele.....come on Amelia.....don't let Adele beat you!



If we all thought that Amelia was slow.....look at poor Robert Alexander!

He has only just reached the starting post and has picked up one yellow strip to make his paper chain!

Trust Priscilla Jane to be different! Just as everyone else wanted to make those paper chains SHE decided she would make her birthday party hat instead.....but hasn't she done a good job?!

Well done Priscilla Jane!

We think that even Georgie, Robert Alexander's pet dog, is impressed with her!

Look who else has made himself a crown and is wearing it.....just to show the children how it should look.?! It is Ambrose!



The children have now finished making all the paper chains needed to decorate the church for Pentecost and the party this afternoon.

However.....SOMEONE had to put this paper chain up didn't they? So Ambrose volunteers as the other children were not tall enough to reach.

Tom thinks this is another great photo opportunity and has made poor Ambrose pose on the chair holding the end of the paper chain for ages before he manages to focus his camera lens on him in order to take that perfect shot! Poor poor Ambrose.....his arm is soon aching very badly as a result!



The afternoon has finally arrived and it is time for the party!

Can you see that the table is now laden with cakes, fruit and even some Pringles. (a kind of crisp or chip)

Magnifi-Cat felt SO left out in the morning when the children were making themselves party hats because HE wanted one too! He even had a moan to Priscilla Jane, but little did he know that she has brought him a little treat.....his very own party hat! He is so excited.....and of course Tinker is quite jealous too! Poor Rev Ken.....whoever made his hat has made it just a bit too big!



Doesn't Magnifi-Cat look smart with this orange party hat Priscilla Jane has made him? Well done Priscilla Jane!

Poor Tinker though.....she SO would like a hat of her own too.....but it is now too late..... Priscilla Jane promises Tinker though that she TOO will have a party hat at the next church party as she will make it for her!

Priscilla Jane is now going to enjoy her fruit juice and cake!

The vicar is even wearing his very own party hat too! Doesn't he suit red really well



AND it matches his red stole which he always wears at Pentecost.

Alice has wheeled the trolley out with the urn, drinks, tea and coffee on for the children and congregation to enjoy some refreshments.

Tom.....he HAS to take another picture doesn't he.....trust Tom to show off with his grandfather's camera.....yet again!



Megan can't resist having a little peep into the sanctuary to admire the beautiful Pentecost flowers.

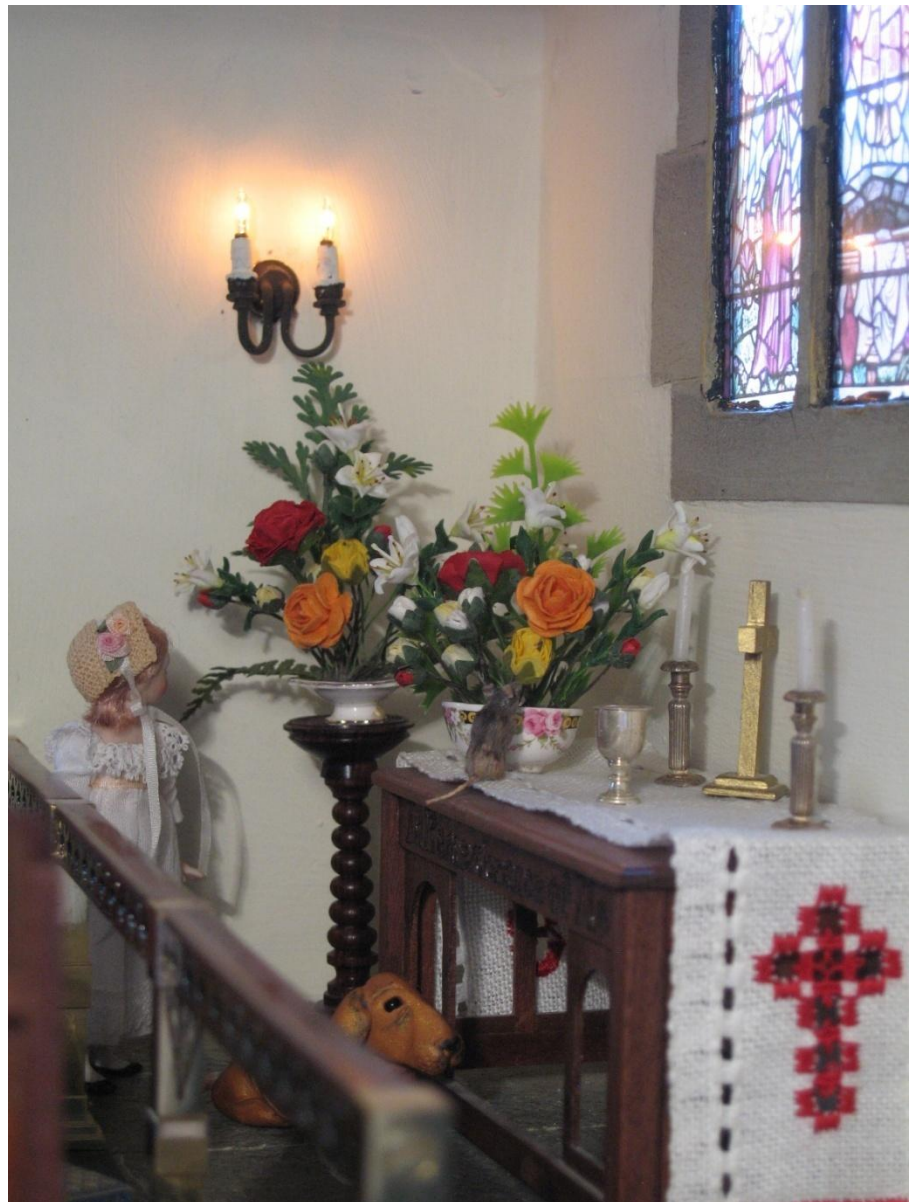
She notices how the flower ladies have been VERY careful to only include flowers that are white, red, orange or yellow.

Can you see someone else has sneaked in too to have a look?

It is Bardsley, the bishop's dog!

The bishop may have gone away again for a short while but he knows that the vicar will take good care of him in his absence.

Ah.....but there is also someone else here as well as Bardsley.....can you spot her? Sepp, Homer's pet rat, has decided to take a little sniff of the flowers too! She is VERY clever because she can climb up on to the altar with no problem at all!



Adele was having a little peek too at the flowers in the sanctuary.....but Megan was too transfixed to notice!

Bishop Cuthbert and Bardsley!

Bishop Cuthbert is the vicar's cousin. He has been away from home for some considerable time on a long holiday - a world tour! He had to leave his poor pet dog, Bardsley, behind to be looked after by the vicar. Bishop Cuthbert is now home.....see how he gets along when he meets his dear pet dog, Bardsley, after all of this time away

Bardsley was SO thrilled to have his master home that he HAD to leap on to his lap for a cuddle!

Poor Cuthbert though. He is feeling VERY guilty for leaving poor Bardsley for so long whilst he was on his extended travels around the world.

So he has bought Bardsley a real treat in order to make up to him for leaving him for so long.....can you see what it is?



It is a NEW dog bowl. However he has also put some luxury dog food in it for Bardsley as a special treat!



Bishop Cuthbert has decided to put the dog bowl on the floor so that Bardsley won't make a terrible mess by getting dog food on to the lovely choir stalls!

Oh dear! WHAT has happened here?

Belle and Georgie could smell something delicious in the chancel and had hot footed there to see what was going on! They soon homed in on the lovely luxury dog food that Bishop Cuthbert has given to Bardsley.....poor Bardsley!

Can you see that some pets can't read? It is Esme and Ernest, the local mallard ducks who live in the local village pond. THEY think that the word "dog" is really "duck"!!

Bardsley and Belle do their best to put them right but they are NOT having it!

We hope that they don't try to eat it.....because we know that they will HATE it because it has got no nice duck and swan food in it.....not even a tiny bit.....AND it is the wrong colour too!

Even Magnifi-Cat has smelt the dog food and has come into the chancel to see what is going on!

Syd too has come along to join in.....he had NO idea what was going on but if Magnifi-Cat was here then it MUST be interesting!

The vicar has asked his cousin, Bishop Cuthbert, to give a little talk to the children about his travels around the world.

Megan has never met Bishop Cuthbert before and she is transfixed when she sees him for the first time. She has NEVER seen such a tall man in all of her life.....EVEN taller than their own vicar!



She asks him why he wears a “pinky purple shirt” as she has NEVER seen their vicar wear one.

Bishop Cuthbert explains that ALL bishops wear this colour of shirt with their dog collar. This means that, when someone sees them, they will know immediately that they are bishops.

Bishop Cuthbert asks Alice to come up to the front and point to the country on the globe when he is speaking about his travels in that country.

Here you can see she is pointing to Africa. The bishop tells them about all the wonderful animals he saw when he went

out on a safari whilst there
.....lions.....tigers.....elephants.....goodness he had problems remembering them all! The children really enjoyed hearing all about the bishop's travels around the world!

Bardsley, however, has not listened to ONE word of his master's talk to the children. Instead he is enjoying lapping up his luxury dog food in his lovely new dog bowl!

