

Beginnings (in May?)

Everything starts somewhere, though many physicists disagree. But people have always been dimly aware of the problem with the start of things. They wonder how the snowplough driver gets to work, or how the maker of dictionaries look up the spelling of words. — Terry Pratchett

According to the Big Bang theory, the universe began by ‘exploding’ from a hot super-dense state. — Patrick Moore

There are many months we always remember in terms of beginnings: January for the New Year, April for the tax year, September for the school year. May, however, is not a month normally associated with the beginning of things. Yet it was the start of life for John Wayne, Sigmund Freud, Johannes Brahms, Salvador Dali, John F Kennedy, and Clint Eastwood, among others.

May was also the month of Charles Lindbergh’s first solo crossing of the Atlantic (1927), the first Chelsea Flower Show (1939), the first of 617 Squadron’s Dambusters raids with their bouncing bomb (1943), the Comet airliner’s first commercial jet flight (1952), and when Alan Shepherd became the first American astronaut in space (1962).

It was also the beginning of the Church. It was in May, seven weeks exactly after Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Day, when the Holy Spirit came upon the first disciples as they gathered in the Upper Room. They went forth from there to preach the message, and the rest is history—including the presence of St Swithun’s Church in our village today.

It was the beginning of faith for a young man who had also been born in May. He was a self confessed non-believer, but Mere Christianity by C S Lewis had made him think. Hoping that no one would come in and see him, he knelt down and said “God, if you are real and Jesus Christ is your son, I want to know what life is all about.” As he said that prayer he felt foolish, but as soon as it was finished he knew that in some way God had broken through to him and was real. It took time to understand more fully about the Christian faith and what Jesus Christ had done through His death and resurrection, but for this young man, now old, life has never been the same since.

On behalf of the clergy team I wish you a good May and perhaps a May when you experience new beginnings. We celebrate Whit Sunday this year on the 20th .

Tony Rogerson