

# New Start 2010

## A robust Christian faith: standing up to challenges

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>**

### **Will there be Muslims in heaven?**

1. Yes, we have a lot in common with other faiths.
  - a) “People of the book”
  - b) Genesis 4.16 (Cain), 14 (Melchizedek), and 16.13 (Ishmael) – evidence of close kin in the faith
  - c) See *The ornament of the world* by Maria Rosa Menocal
2. Yes, our Christian faith is distinct even from Jews and Muslims.
  - a) See *Future Tense* by Jonathan Sacks
  - b) Jeremiah 29.7 “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you”
  - c) Isaiah 49.6 “I will give you as a light to the nations”
  - d) Zechariah 8.23 “In those days 10 men from the nations will take hold of a Jew....”
  - e) Paul: Romans 2.10 “Jews first and also the Greeks...” and Galatians 3.28 “.. no longer Jew nor Greek..”
  - f) John 8.32 “you will know the truth and the truth will set you free”
3. Yes, there is value in living a Christian life.
  - a) “*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*”: outside the Church there is no salvation
  - b) The comprehensiveness of John 1: the Word of God
  - c) The exclusivity of John 14.6 “... no one comes to the Father except through me”
  - d) Vindication rather than reward from God: Job 19.25
  - e) Matthew 20: the parable of the Labourers in the vineyard

*Teach us, good Lord,  
to serve you as you deserve,  
to give and not to count the cost,  
to fight and not to heed the wounds,  
to toil and not to seek for rest,  
to labour and not to ask for any reward,  
save that of knowing that we do your will. Amen.*

**March 1<sup>st</sup>**

### **Is the Pope Catholic?**

Why do public pronouncements from the Roman Catholic Church and the Vatican rile so many English people?

**March 8<sup>th</sup>**

### **Is every life sacred?**

As we discuss this, please be aware of profoundly held views rooted in deep emotions – and respect the passion and vulnerability of yourself and others as we discuss this.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>**

### **Do women belong in the kitchen?**

A ridiculous question yet, 2 clergymen recently said: “women should remain silent if questions could be legitimately answered by their husbands” and “high divorce rate can be blamed on women no longer submitting to their husbands”.

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

### **Beyond sex: permanent, faithful, stable**

‘Permanent, faithful stable’: is that a good starting point for describing what is good about any relationship? What other words might you want to use to guide those who are single or elderly or ....?

**March 29<sup>th</sup>**

### **The Passover Seder Meal**

A Passover meal, drawing on our Jewish heritage, marking the Passover, and designed to help us prepare for Holy Week and Easter