

Reverend Christine and Martin White

Christine and Martin met, got engaged and were married all within the space of a year. It was a very happy marriage that was to last for almost 48 years until Christine's death in 2017.



Whatever Christine tackled, she did it full on. An only child, born in Weston-super-Mare in November 1946, Christine swam for her county and worked towards gaining her Duke of Edinburgh Awards, eventually achieving her Gold Award. She then went on to train as a teacher and started her working life as a Secondary School teacher, switching after a short time to Primary School teaching. When she and Martin moved south to

Worcester Park, Christine discovered that she was pregnant with Kathryn, their first child, and decided that she would stay at home to raise her children which she did for about 12 years. "Family was always very important to her and had priority over everything else", says Martin.

During this time, whilst raising Kathryn and Elizabeth, Christine became an antenatal teacher for the National Childbirth Trust, joined the young families committee of the Mothers' Union at Diocesan level, and taught swimming at her girls' primary school, only returning to the classroom in the late 80s. In addition, Christine was the Duke of Edinburgh Award coordinator for the

local Scouts. In 1996, Christine obtained a degree from Kingston University and, after several years of working as a Special Educational Needs Coordinator, she then went on to work with refugees in Kingston, extending their schooling and teaching them English as well as valuable life skills.

Christine played a huge role in the life of St. Mary's and was much loved by all who knew her. She was a calm, wise and joyful presence who cared deeply about people and helped the lives of many who were troubled. As well as being part of the Mothers' Union, Christine helped run marriage preparation classes, sang in the choir, became a Guide leader, all in addition to helping out with many of the activities involved in the daily running of the Church. In 2003, after being Churchwarden, Christine, encouraged by the Vicar at the time, Robin Harvey, applied for election to

the priesthood. Christine became a Deacon of the Church in 2007 and was ordained into the priesthood in 2008. She assisted the incumbents, helped with pastoral life and, together with Sue Ayling, helped run the parish during two vacancies, where they became a much loved double act.

Christine later went on to help out at Ruxley Lane Church. She made a commitment to assist the Church there, and she held fast to her commitment. She was a woman of great integrity and she is much missed.



Martin was born in October 1943, the middle of three brothers. As a boy he grew up in the house in which he now lives. Martin attended Malden

Parochial School, and then Tiffin Boys School, as did both his brothers. When he reached eighteen, Martin decided that he wanted to do an apprenticeship before he took up a place at UCL to read electrical engineering, so he enrolled on a 1:3:1 apprenticeship course with GEC in Coventry, where you work as an apprentice for a year, go to University for three years, and then do a year as a graduate where you first started.

During this final graduate year, he was introduced to all sorts of jobs at GEC, but finally found his niche when he was headhunted about three years later into what was then known as data processing. In those days this would have been a main frame, punch cards, music line listing, and so on – the very beginnings of modern computers. He never looked back, and has never done any electrical engineering since.

Martin met Christine when he was volunteered to

be her date at her going-down ball at her teacher training college in Coventry. He was volunteered by his workmate, who was engaged to Christine's house mate at the time. They struck up an instant rapport and got engaged three months later. They married within the year in 1969.

They both worked for a while in the Midlands before moving to Worcester Park in 1974 following the death of Martin's parents. Martin got a job in computing for a company in the watch trade in Hatton Garden. From there he



Martin & Christine on their wedding day

went to work for the British Oxygen Company in Hammersmith, and then went on to Thorn EMI. He subsequently went to work for HMV records, and was ultimately made redundant from them. Martin then worked for a short time for Kingston Polytechnic, after which he secured a job at the Church Missionary Society at Waterloo, where he worked for 14 years until they moved to Oxford, at which point he decided to retire.

Martin became involved with St. Mary's because of Cubs and Scouts and he would attend St. Mary's for Church parades. When Martin moved back to Worcester Park with Christine, they were impressed by Harvey Pentreath, who was the Vicar of St. Mary's at the time. Martin got baptised and confirmed, as he had not been so as a child, and they both got involved with the life of the Church almost immediately. Both Martin and Christine have held many positions at St. Mary's, both being Churchwardens at different times, and

Martin is still Chairman of the Estates Committee – a position he has held for many years, and which he does extremely well.

Christine and Martin, as a couple, have been an integral part of the life of St. Mary's. Christine was a wise and much-loved leader of men, whilst at the same time being a caring support to many. Martin is an equally-loved steady, reliable and infinitely resourceful man, whom Christine described as being her rock.

As their daughter Kathryn said in her eulogy at Christine's funeral, "I have witnessed the most amazing testament to love this last year and marriage vows truly lived out". They are an example to us all.