Christ Church Freemantle
Sunday 7th March – Third Sunday of Lent

"March brings breezes loud and shrill,
Stirs the dancing daffodil."
(Sara Coleridge.)

The bleak winter landscape is suddenly enlivened by these bright, yellow, bursts of light. We know that Spring is finally here.

March also brings the annual 'Daffodil Appeal' for the Marie Curie Charity, which has claimed the flower as its logo. It provides care for people with a terminal illness, and gives help and support to their loved ones. During the first 'Daffodil Appeal' in 1986, real daffodils were given out in return for donations. In 1995 the fresh flowers were replaced with fabric ones. There will be no street collection this year but donations can be made online via 'The Great Daffodil Appeal.' (www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil)

Marie Curie was the scientist remembered for her discovery of radium and polonium, and her huge contribution to finding treatments for cancer. She also founded and championed the use of portable x -ray machines in World War 1. She even drove an ambulance herself, containing one, and trained nurses how to operate the machines. Maria Skolowska, born in Warsaw, Poland in 1867, was the fifth and youngest child of well-known teachers. There was very little money and her mother died when she was ten. Despite this, and and the discrimination against women having a good education, she excelled academically.

She and her sister Bronya made a pact to help each other with their studies. Living on next to nothing, she worked as a governess to support her sister while continuing to educate herself. Later, she lived in her sister's married home, while attending the Sorbonne in Paris, and with a little help from her father, studied by day and tutored in the evening.

In 1903 she was the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize - (jointly with her husband Pierre Curie and Henri Becquerel - in physics for radioactivity. In 1911 she became the first person to receive the Nobel prize for a second time, this time in chemistry.
She worked selflessly for many years, happy to share her research for the advancement of science without making money from it. She died in 1934, aged 67 from prolonged exposure to radiation.

We are greatly indebted to her for her ground-breaking scientific research, and in particular for the development of x rays, and in the treatment of cancer. In addition, she sets us such a wonderful example of patience, determination and perseverance.

Mary Scott