

Letter from the Vicar

Saturday 8 May 2021

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Well...it's raining. Something of an odd experience this spring as there has been so little rainfall. But then again it is a Saturday at the start of the cricket season. I have memories as a school boy of it being dry all week and then, just as we were preparing to play at the weekend, down would come the rain. Although it is/was mildly annoying I can't deny it's not needed. This will save watering the roses at church or indeed the peas and fruit canes Emma is trying to grow.

This Sunday we are celebrating our Patronal Festival: St John the Evangelist. St John is believed to be the author of the Gospel according to St John and the Letters 1,2,3 John. It is also believed he wrote the Book of Revelation although there is a little bit of scholarly debate concerning this. One thing we do know is that a Christian community emerged with John as a key figure. This community already knew the life story of Jesus from the gospel accounts by Matthew, Mark, and Luke so John set about expanding their spiritual understanding of Jesus. His Gospel, uses some of the simplest language possible to explore some of the most intricate theological issues. For instance, in John 1 the author states Jesus (the Word) was there at the beginning of creation and that he then became human. This has been a matter of theological discussion ever since and has, in part, formed our doctrine of the Trinity.

St John also uses the key themes of light and darkness, life and death, love and forgiveness more than the gospel writers. He is concerned with building a fellowship of Jesus-shaped followers who live and breathe the values of Christ – who instinctively choose the ways of Christ and do not succumb to the temptations of the world. This model of community is both exciting and demanding. As a Parish, we are trying to emulate this community as stated in our Mission Action Plan. We are trying to live our lives in Christ knowing that he came so that we might have abundant life. We are trying to live in Christ's light knowing that his light dispels darkness, banishes fear and sin, and enables us to be confident in speaking the truth. We are trying to live in Christ's love knowing that his love is sacrificial, all embracing, unquantifiable, unending, and totally undeserved, and yet so transformative and inclusive that it reaches out to all and brings comfort and peace.

As we emerge out of lockdown, my hope and prayer is that this is the kind of Church we want to be: Jesus centred; rooted in the scriptures, the sacraments, and prayer; filled with his light, love, and life and willing to share this with everyone – both those who are members of our Church community and those who haven't yet. It's a challenge, but one that – with God's grace and strength – we can achieve.

I hope you are all keeping well and, as always, I send you my love and prayers. May the love and light of the Risen Christ bring us all joy and hope in believing, for:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ is Risen.
He is Risen indeed. Alleluia! Alleluia”



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