Dear friends,

I have produced a little reflection on the readings of the day which basically is about “Having found the way, having the courage to stick to it”. To access this just click on this link.

<https://youtu.be/auhYHIGIeVA>

I have also loaded it onto my Blog if you’d prefer to read it which you can access by clicking here.<https://revmartinjacques.blogspot.com/2020/06/finding-way-and-keeping-to-it.html>

The Lectionary

How are the readings that we use on Sundays, and that I comment and preach on arrived at? Well all churches in the Anglican communion all over the world use the same lectionary, which in turn is based on the “Ordo Lectionum Missae” of the Roman Catholic church which they arrived at after the second Vatican council, so we as a constituent part of the “one holy catholic and apostolic church” are all singing from the same hymn sheet! It was officially published in 1994 after a nine-year trial period.

The lectionary has a three year cycle – years A, B, and C . In year A, the prominent gospel is Matthew, in year B it is Mark and in year C it is Luke. John’s gospel doesn’t have a specific year but pops up regularly in various feast days where it is most pertinent. The church year starts at Advent so from Advent 2019 to Advent 2020 this year we are in year A so we are concentrating on Matthew’s gospel at the moment.

A further complication that in ordinary time such as now we have tracks 1 and 2. In both tracks the epistle and gospel are the same but there is a different Old Testament reading and psalm. Track one follows an old testament book through semi-continuously no matter what the gospel or epistle may be about but track 2 chooses an old Testament reading that is (in theory) themed with the other two readings. Like the vast majority of churches everywhere I have been, here in the RMC we use track 2 (which helps the preacher enormously).

The greatest gift of the lectionary is its catholicity, but also having a fixed lection stops you cherry picking favourite passages and forces you to unpack difficult passages of scripture that you may not have chosen voluntarily. A case in point is this Sunday’s reading of Jesus saying that he did not came to bring peace but a sword!

Thought for Today

The two funerals I presided at on Thursday threw the inconsistencies of the current situation into stark relief. At one we buried a person at St. Peter’s burial ground in the pouring rain which was difficult and uncomfortable because of course we cannot currently hold a funeral in church. At the other funeral at the crematorium we held a full service with singing for about twenty people with no problem. As the lockdown unwinds it is these obvious contradictions that play on your mind!

The Prayer for Today is a teenager’s prayer from Harare, Zimbabwe

**God help me to be human.**

**Help me to be able to appreciate and bring out**

**The best in everyone around me.**

**You have created man, so he is able to appreciate consciously**

**All the gifts that you have given him.**

**Lord, help me to appreciate all that you have given me.**

**Help me to be human.**

Love and prayers,

Martin

Please note my new email address is vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk