

Dear friends,

After Thursday morning prayer at Otterton Mill we were greeted by a magnificent display by this colourful gentleman.



The weather has been lovely recently and we walked down to Budleigh beach on Saturday and had an ice cream and it was bliss – still, calm, and for a few moments everything in the world was just fine.

Not how I'm feeling right now of course as I prepare to invigilate SATs exams in Drakes local primary school – we never did these things when I was at school – oh well every day is a school day as they say.

The Common Cup

I received notification from the Diocese last week that unless there are very good reasons not to – we should be offering the common cup in all churches. After two years there is obviously no rush to reintroduce this part of communion but over the next few weeks we should all be working towards introducing the practice according to our local situation. I should state straight away that drinking from the common cup is optional, but it will be offered as a matter of course and as we have had drummed into us over the last two years, communion in one kind (bread only) is FULL communion so don't feel pressured. We will do so as local circumstances allow and as we have all got our annual general meetings coming up we might discuss how we manage this. And to pre-empt any suggestions in advance, individual cups of the kind used by non-conformist churches are NOT sanctioned by the C of E.

All Saints churchyard – East Budleigh

Is now included on the caring for God's acre website and it looks excellent.

<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/churchyard/ebudleigh-allsaints/>

Sunday May 15th – Easter 5

Acts 11:1-18. There is an interesting trinitarian dimension to this reading. It is God who made all things clean (thus rendering the food laws as always misguided), the risen Lord who speaks to Peter in his vision and the Spirit who empowers the household of the centurion. Of course Paul recalls a very different story and talks about his disagreements with Peter and him

being cowardly for refusing to eat with Gentiles (Galatians 2: 7-14) but Luke wants to accentuate church unity on this point.

Revelation 21: 1-6. The essential characteristic of the new age is that everything that separated mankind from God – the rebellion and conflict - has been overcome. There is union between heaven and earth resulting in a divine peace. There is no sea because the sea symbolises the old order of things unsubdued by God. This is a reading popular at funerals nowadays.

John 13: 31-35. The “now” in verse 31 is significant because Jesus’ moment of exultation honour and praise occurs at the same time as the very act of betrayal, showing us these betrayals cannot thwart the divine intention. The mutual glorification of both Father and Son underscores their functional unity just as the “I and the Father are one” did last week. What makes the commandment “new” is that we now have a concrete demonstration – a new concrete model of what it means to love in the life and death of Jesus. New also because it inaugurates a new era, the life of the church which will be marked by mutual love for each other.

Musical interlude!

As we are having a lunchtime concert featuring a trombone, that prompted me to recall one of my favourite modern pieces of dance music that I started to listen to after I was introduced to “Ibiza chill” music. One of the few modern songs I can think of that has a trombone centre stage. So relax, chill out for 8 minutes of Groove Armada – At the river!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdP4AfKGr-I>

Music at St. Peter’s

The popular lunchtime concerts are resuming after a two year hiatus this **Friday 13th at 1.30pm** when Dylan Brewer on Trombone and Stephen Tanner on organ. There will be further lunchtime concerts on the 27th May and the 10th June, both also at 1.30pm.

Sunday 22nd May at 6.30pm – A festival choir of over 100 singers will sing at the Sylvia Pritchard Memorial concert to include selections from The

creation (Haydn) Messiah (Handel) and Five mystical songs (Vaughan Williams)

Sunday 5th June 6.30pm – The Queen's Platinum Jubilee concert

Thought for the day

The news that my Dad failed his home assessment and will have to go into a nursing home marks a chapter in my family's life that most, if not all of you will recognise. Even when something is expected, when it finally happens you enter a kind of shock that the person that cared for you and brought you up now can't look after himself. Coming all too hot on the heels of my mum's decline and death, everything changes and you can't help thinking about your own life in ways that you didn't when you were young. As dad enters the final stages of his life you need to keep in the forefront of your mind that whatever his current physical or mental condition, he is the same person that he ever was. Our belief is that everybody is made in the image of God and is "very good" as the book of Genesis says. As you may also know, I believe in universal salvation, so the vision of bliss that the passage from revelation speaks about this week will be all of our futures. Our understanding that each person is loved and cherished by God and that God's love doesn't stop at incapacity, illness or death is a fundamental, integral part of my Christian faith. Every human being is of infinite worth, and if you, me, my dad or anyone else were the last person on earth Jesus would willingly die for us.

The Prayer for Today

Patient Trust by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Above all, trust in the slow work of God

**We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.**

We should like to skip the intermediate stages.

We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.

And yet it is the law of all progress

that it is made by passing through

some stages of instability – and that it may take a very long time.

And so, I think it is with you;

your ideas mature gradually – let them grow,

let them shape themselves, without undue haste.

Don't try to force them on,

as though you could be today what time

(that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will)

will make of you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be.

Give Our Lord the benefit of believing

that his hand is leading you,

and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself

in suspense and incomplete.

- Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ

Love and peace,

Martin