

Dear friends,

We had a wonderful week meeting many old friends along the way in our “tour of the North” and we found ourselves in St. Mary’s Gainford for Sunday morning worship, where along with St. Andrew’s Winston I spent many happy and fulfilling years. The only surprise was that Tom, the youth worker who I thought I’d never met - it turns out I presided at his father’s funeral many years ago – so I couldn’t have put him off too much! Eileen, my replacement is of Singaporean Chinese extraction and distributed the host (real bread) with chopsticks. My chopstick skills I’m afraid are not up to that so rest assured I won’t be trying that.

## Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August – 13 after Trinity – Proper 17

This Sunday I will be presiding at both services at St. Peter’s and Reverend Chris Cant will be at All Saints and St. Michael’s.

**Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9.** God’s laws are so self-evidently good and just that they will be recognized even by people who do not acknowledge the God of Israel. From the Christian church’s point of view it must be possible to present the faith in such a way that even non-believers can see there is something of excellence contained within them that will at least induce respect and possibly even draw people in to the faith themselves.

**James 1: 17-27.** The main theme of James’ letter is that there must be integrity of word and action. To be a “doer of the word” is the content of a Christian life and James starts this section by saying that everything that is good, just and true comes from God. Our reward is received in the very act of doing the will of God as we are “blessed in the doing” of the act.

**Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23.** Mark here says that Jesus distinguishes between the commands of God and human traditions. Many things that are elevated to high status (like ritual washing before meals) are counted as “human traditions” and not Divine commands. This freedom is ascribed to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and it is amazing how the earliest Christians (who had all been practicing Jews) felt able to abandon customs and traditions that

had provided the bedrock of their lives so easily on the understanding that this had been revealed to them in Christ.

**Our first RMC walk** has been organised (rather brilliantly) by Sally Rogers while I was away and I take my hat off to Sally. It gives an end point and time to the walk – 3pm Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September - at the lovely little Colaton Raleigh church where a Cream Tea has been arranged. How you get there and what route you take is entirely up to you which is the genius bit. You can do anything from the full Budleigh, E. Budleigh, Otterton round route which is a substantial walk to walking from your own front door or any of our churches. Alternatively for those unable to walk that far you can just turn up at Colaton Raleigh for the cream tea! We'll probably have a prayer and a hymn in the church to send everyone on their way. Apparently Colaton church were chuffed to bits to be asked to host us which is brilliant. More details soon!

**There** is also our first Joint PCC meeting in the Peter Hall on the 28<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm which will be addressed by our Archdeacon Andrew Beane who will talk about the way forward for the RMC.

**What with** Solos and Rendezvous getting going again and planning for our first dinner club at the E. Devon Golf course on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October, A Friends event wine tasting in the Peter Hall (12<sup>th</sup> November), Cream Tea concert at All Saints church Hall this Saturday, Jane's Jams in Otterton on 29<sup>th</sup> August, "Open the book" meeting to plan the future to name but a few things – there are real signs of enthusiastic re-engagement and the future looks bright for each church in the RMC. Keep your eye on the pew sheet for more details of all the above and more.

## **Musical interlude!**

Waking up in Tynemouth on a dull and murky morning (It got out very nicely later on) we walked to North Shields fish quay along the mouth of the Tyne with ships fog horns eerily escaping from the murk and naturally what came to mind was the Geordie classic "Fog on the Tyne" sung by North-eastern royalty Lindisfarne. Enjoy! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tm\\_KZSYSiGc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tm_KZSYSiGc)

## Thought for the day

I was searching for a subject for this week's email when I read my daily email from Richard Rohr and because it mirrors the central theme of next Sunday's readings I'll quote the first paragraph.

For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, everything visible and everything invisible . . . —Colossians 1:16

The true and essential work of all religion is to help us recognize the divine image in everyone and every thing. It is to mirror things correctly, deeply, and fully until all things know who they are. A mirror by its nature reflects impartially, equally, effortlessly, spontaneously, and endlessly. It does not produce the image, nor does it filter the image according to its perceptions or preferences. Authentic mirroring can only call forth what is already there.

Letting the image of God within you emerge fully into existence – following God's spirit and not human/societal traditions – is our task as a community. It is what Jesus calls bearing fruit for the kingdom. Goodness, truth, honesty and beauty are all hallmarks of this kingdom of God and we can mirror these things and every good gift when we realise who we are – and we are children of God.

**The Prayer for Today** is quite well known but apparently the source is unknown.

**God be in my head, and in my understanding;  
God be in mine eyes and in my looking;  
God be in my mouth and in my speaking;  
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;  
God be at mine end, and in my departing.**

Love and peace,  
Martin

Please note my new email address is [vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk](mailto:vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk)