

Dear friends,

On Tuesday I got a terrible sore throat and runny nose. Because of the current situation and the vulnerability of many people I meet (even though they aren't classic Covid-19 symptoms) I thought it prudent to get myself tested so Louise and I both arranged for this to happen at our local testing station in Exeter. The result, received by text the next morning, as expected was NEGATIVE for both of us so Hurray (!) and better safe than sorry.

The test was a bit uncomfortable it has to be said but the procedure for booking the test and receiving the result worked seamlessly but it did leave me wondering that if you don't have a computer, the internet, a mobile phone and a car what on earth are you supposed to do?

Speaking of Covid-19 the church of England has upgraded its advice on the wearing of facemasks in Worship from "recommended" to "strongly advised" but is not mandatory. This is obviously in response to the highly controversial new laws on the wearing of facemasks in shops of course. This is all *supposed* to make us feel safe to shop of course, but in my interactions with people it has mostly just persuaded them not to go into shops at all if they can avoid it so could backfire economically.

I am at **St. Peter's** Budleigh Salterton this Sunday at 10am. And Rev. Karen Young will preside at **All Saints** (9.30) and **St. Michael's** (11.00). I have recorded a ten minute reflection on the readings of the day called "Accessing God's wisdom" and you can access that right here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gW-mWjzU5MA&feature=youtu.be>

Alternatively, you can read it on my Blog if you prefer right here.

<https://revmartinjacques.blogspot.com/2020/07/accessing-gods-wisdom.html>

There be Dragons!

On our Friday walk near the village of Broadhembury (incidentally one of the prettiest villages I have ever laid eyes on) there is a massive airfield which is the H.Q. of the Devon and Somerset Gliding club. On the perimeter we came across this Dragon's head seat carved in memory of one of their alumni.



During the week I wrote something about how precious and indispensable we all are which prompted Rachel, a long-time recipient of “soul food” to send something that she had read which she thought was rather insightful and beautiful. I agree so I reproduce that here as my thought for the day. I have read many things about happiness – I have a whole book by the Dalai Lama all about it - but this is by Pope Francis and I think he nails it.

Thought for the day

You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but do not forget that your life is the greatest enterprise in the world. Only you can stop it from going bust. Many appreciate you, admire you and love you. Remember that to be happy is not to have a sky without a storm, a road without accidents, work without fatigue, relationships without disappointments. To be happy is to find strength in forgiveness, hope in battles, security in the stage of fear, love in discord. It is not only to enjoy the smile, but also to reflect on the sadness. It is not only to celebrate the successes, but to learn lessons from the failures. It is not only to feel happy with the applause, but to be happy in anonymity.

Being happy is not a fatality of destiny, but an achievement for those who can travel within themselves. To be happy is to stop feeling like a victim and become your destiny's author. It is to cross deserts, yet to be able to find an oasis in the depths of our soul. It is to thank God for every morning, for the miracle of life. Being happy is not being afraid of your own feelings. It's to be able to talk about you. It is having the courage to hear a "no". It is confidence in the face of criticism, even when unjustified. It is to kiss your children, pamper your parents, to live poetic moments with friends, even when they hurt us.

The Prayer for Today is from the Episcopal church of the USA

**Jesus Christ, Son of God,
Make yourself known through me.
Jesus Christ, Son of the living God
Speak through me for others.**

Love and peace,
Martin

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