

Dear friends,

Weddings are a sign of light and love in a world that often appears to need to snuff out light and love and the wedding between Harriet and Dan on Saturday at All Saints East Budleigh was a superb example.



They are both local Farmers so when we left the church, they emerged through a guard of honour of youngsters carrying pitchforks.

In case this photo gets turned on its side in the sending process you can see this and other photos (the right way up) on our wedding photo gallery on our website. <https://www.raleighmissioncommunity.org.uk/wedding-photo-galleries.html> Lucinda Stuart-Banks has loaded loads of great photos of our area and churches on our home page and at various other places on the site so why not take a quick look?

Sunday 30th August – Trinity 12 (Proper 17)

I am presiding at All Saints at 9.30am and St. Michael's at 11am and Rev. Karen Young is presiding at St. Peter's at the 10am service.

Jeremiah 15: 15-21. A pained and disillusioned prophet accuses God of misleading him. He endures great suffering and estrangement for preaching God's word. In God's response, he assures Jeremiah that if he continues to be a prophet that people will have to respond to him because what he is saying is true. This passage is a profound insight into the mystery of being caught up in God's plan which can bring pain as well as ecstasy.

Romans 12: 9-21. Ethical teaching which draws on both Old Testament and perhaps teaching of Jesus (Paul never quotes any of Jesus' sayings or parables, except relaying the Eucharistic rite). He starts with how Christians in the same fellowship ought to treat each other, and then Christians in other churches, and how to deal with outsiders and outright opposition. Repaying evil with good produces the intriguing sentence "For in doing so you heap burning coals on their head" is not easy to interpret but probably means that it will make them feel ashamed.

Matthew 16: 21-28. "Get thee behind me Satan" has entered the English language to describe someone who tempts one down a wrong path. Peter goes from "the rock" to Satan in one easy move, proving that we all have feet of clay no matter how lofty our intentions. Jesus says that some will not die "before they see him coming in his Kingdom". What this means is not clear but could be a cryptic reference to the cross, or the coming of the Holy Spirit, but one assumes from Matthew's words themselves in chapter 28: 16-20 that he thinks it refers to the resurrection itself.

Thought for the day

The sense of being manipulated by others, whether those "others" may be Government, private companies, the media generally, social media providers, religions, or unappointed single-issue campaigners, is probably more prevalent now than ever before. The desire to channel, cajole and mould others has obviously always been there but only latterly has the technology been so powerful or omnipresent to make it so easy for those that would seek to abuse that technology. "Algorithms" for example – a word we are getting used to - while they can be helpful and useful generally, they can like most things, also be used harmfully and in the wrong hands can be dangerous. Christians talk about "Freedom in Christ" but what does that freedom look like

in a world where everyone seems hell bent on controlling and channelling our minds and bodies in certain directions. You might say that Christianity is just another body that seeks to channel and control, (and this has been unfortunately true in many expressions of Christianity) but I'd say that the main difference is that the church (at its best) is a conduit for an ultimate truth and reality, and it seeks not to mould people for any personal advantage or temporal gain but to the character and nature and will of an objective reality that transcends the temporal concerns of the world. We seeks to mould the human spirit by exposing/immersing ourselves through the means of prayer (private and corporate), worship, and discerning God's Spirit through the scriptures to discern the will and purposes of our divine creator, sustainer, and redeemer. This provides us with a powerful corrective influence when the world and his wife tries to guide us down paths not necessarily chosen by us. As Jesus said, when confronted by the world, "be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves".

The prayer for today is from the 16th century and it is thought based on Erasmus.

**O Lord Jesus Christ,
Who hast said that thou art the way, the truth and the life;
Suffer us not at any time to stray from thee, who art the way,
Nor to distrust thy promises which art the truth,
Nor to rest in any other thing than thee, who art the life,
Beyond which there is nothing to be desired, neither in heaven, nor in earth,
For thy names sake.**

Love and peace,
Martin

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