

Dear friends,

Let's start on a positive and smiley note. I was asked to read this poem out at the end of the service yesterday and it was so appreciated that I was asked to print it out here on my weekly email. This poem has been attributed to Spike Milligan but apparently was originally by Jez Alborough and it is simply called "a Smile"

Smiling Is Infectious

*by Jez Alborough**

Smiling is infectious,
you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner
and someone saw my grin.
When he smiled I realized
I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile,
then I realized its worth.
A single smile, just like mine
could travel round the earth.
So, if you feel a smile begin,
don't leave it undetected.
Let's start an epidemic quick,
and get the world infected!

Of course, I wasn't very Smiley on Monday morning when I arrived at Lloyds pharmacy for my pre-booked flu jab to find that the Pharmacy was closed and in darkness. The pharmacy over the road told me to go back and knock so I did. The lady who answered just said that all flu vaccinations had been cancelled and the Pharmacy was closed all day because there was no Pharmacist – I must have been contacted? No, I hadn't. In fact, I had been asked to fill in an on-line registration form to "save time at the Pharmacy" only that morning.

What did cheer me up immensely though is that a young mum from Otterton church, Stacey James is wanting to set up something for young people in the RMC. Early days, but our idea is that this will run once a month in the Peter Hall and be for any children from our catchment area. I floated the idea at the morning Eucharist and have had two more people interested to be on the team. So, start small and see where it leads. Anyone from All Saints or St. Michael's wanting to get involved, inform me in the first instance and pass on your contact details to Stacey.

Don't Forget that the clocks go back one hour this Saturday night!

Sunday 30th October – All Saints Sunday

Canon Mike Williams is presiding at St. Peter's and I will be presiding at both services at All Saints and St. Michael's at 9.30 and 11 am respectively. These are the readings transferred from All Saints day (which falls on Tuesday) and will be the readings for St. Peter's and St. Michael's. I will be back at St. Peter's in the afternoon for the All-Souls service.

Note: For logistical reasons All Saints church are having their Patronal festival on the 6th November They will have these readings then on the 6th November and I will use the readings for the fourth Sunday before Advent for them only this coming Sunday and they are Isaiah 1: 10-18, 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 and Luke 19: 1-10.

Daniel 7: 1-3, 15-18. Apocalyptic writings (Like Daniel and the book of revelation) have a particular style and use fantastic imagery and symbols that represent what is happening on earth. What every single image means has intrigued and confused people for generations but the central theme of this kind of scripture is clear. Whatever is happening on earth or however bad things seem to be (This writing emerges in time of great persecution) have confidence that God is still in control of events and his divine will and purposes will be fulfilled and victory will be His.

Ephesians 1: 11-23. This wonderful, expansive and rather inspiring piece describes how in Christ, those purposes of God that are written about in Daniel reached their fulfilment in Christ. The final glorious vision that has

been inaugurated in Christ will reach its climax when as Paul says Christ will be “all in all”

Luke 6: 20-31. The Lukan “sermon on the plain” is much less well known than Matthew’s “sermon on the mount” and is shorter having only four beatitudes and corresponding four woes. It does not glorify poverty, hunger, the distraught and despised because the emphasis is on the reversal of fortune that is promised to the faithful. It is part of the Biblical “levelling up agenda” when in the Kingdom of God, we all enjoy a radical equality.

Our All Souls service is at 3pm in the afternoon on the 30th October when we remember the souls of all the faithful departed. This picture is by Aladar Kolosfoi Kriesch



Thought for the Day.

As their former priest, I have been invited back to Bucharest, Romania to attend their much-delayed centenary celebrations for the weekend of the 6th and 7th November. This is an occasion I am both looking forward to and am also a little anxious about.

On the one hand, the three years I spent in Romania were one of the most exciting, informative, and spiritual times of my life and as a small part of their history it will be good to be there to celebrate with them.

But a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since then. My wife died a year after we returned. Expatriate churches have a huge turnover in terms of congregation so the people I recognise may be few and far between after 13 years absence.

I, and my friend and colleague Fr. John Barker (Now a priest in London) still have a close affection for the place. John met and married a Romanian woman and theirs was my first marriage that I conducted on my return to the UK. My daughter was educated there, and I have fond memories of my association with the Orthodox church and my main contact Fr. Mihai Spatarellu sitting under a tree in the blazing heat eating pumpkin seeds (“very good for gentlemen”). It was here that my view and understanding of Christianity was deepened and widened to encompass the great Eastern Christian church which alongside the Catholic church shares the distinction of being the original “One Holy Catholic and Apostolic church”.

After I return from Bucharest we are spending a few days with Fr. John and Ella in their parish in London, hopefully renewed and refreshed. Wherever bread and wine are broken and shared, wherever love is shown and received, the same Spirit is present and active, whether that is Bucharest, Sophia, London, or indeed Budleigh Salterton, East Budleigh or Otterton.

The Prayer for Today is from the Orthodox church and is addressed to the Holy Spirit.

O heavenly king, O comforter, the Spirit of truth,

Who art everywhere and fillest all things,

The treasure of blessings and giver of life,

Come and abide in us.

Cleanse us from all impurity,

And of thy goodness save our souls.

Love and peace,

Martin