

Dear friends,

The gift day we held at St. Peter's on Saturday raised at least £3,500 to alleviate some of the stress on our finances and I want to thank everyone, whoever you may be, for digging so deep. Your generosity is very much appreciated!

Sunday 1st November – All Saints day

I will be presiding at the 8am and 10am services at St. Peter's and also at our popular annual "All Souls service" at 3pm where we remember our recently departed loved ones. John Archibald will preside at the 11am service of the word at St. Michael's Otterton and while Karen is signed off sick, we will endeavour to confirm the 9.30 at All Saints East Budleigh as soon as possible.

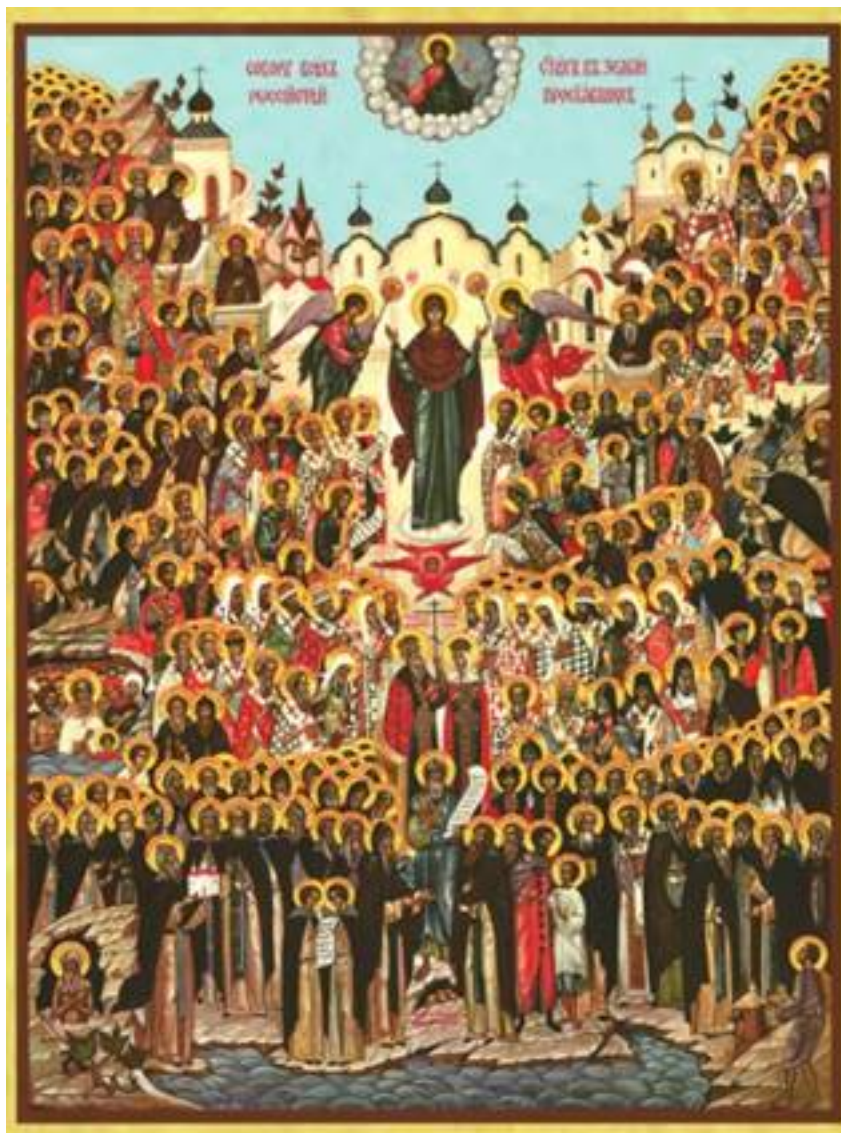
Revelation 7: 9-17. Who are the great multitude John sees in heaven? If the 144,000 just referenced in verses 4-8 are Jewish, the great multitude by contrast would be gentiles. God's true chosen people are from all the nations on earth and most importantly they are all Martyrs who hold a special significance for the seer. John extends the meaning of the Greek word "Martus" meaning a witness, to mean specifically someone who witnesses through death, who has shared in the suffering of Christ and have won salvation.

1 John 3: 1-3. However fully "realized" the fourth gospel may be, meaning that the presence and salvation of God are fully here now – the first letter of John holds out the vision of a future yet to be revealed. And that future aspect holds out the glorious hope of a spiritual union with the divine ("We will be like him"). This doctrine of growing more God-like ending in unity is known as Divinization or theosis in the East and as Sanctification in the West.

Matthew 5: 1-12. The statements in the first half of the beatitudes refer to everyone who is to enter the coming age, not a set of alternatives – we are all poor, meek, mourning for the way things are in the world, longing for God to rule, abandoning status and privilege, peacemakers and you will be persecuted. Similarly, the reward contained in the promises are in effect all one reward, entry to the kingdom of heaven!

Remembrance Sunday

Just to be clear, because of Government restrictions all three public remembrance Sunday services (this year on the 8th November) in Budleigh Salterton, East Budleigh and Otterton have been cancelled. The organisations that would normally lay a wreath will be doing so privately between the 8th and 11th November. Obviously, I would hope that some observance within the usual worship services in each church will be offered by whoever is leading the service.



Russian icon of the communion of saints

Thought for the day

Louise and I read a chapter of the Bible every day and after a long haul ploughing through the Old Testament book of Joshua I suggested our next book ought to be more uplifting and with Ephesians having been cited by Richard Rohr in his latest book I suggested we read that. I mean we've both read everything before, but you read with different eyes and understanding whenever you read even well-known bits. What a difference! After the deathly boring interminable lists of place names in Joshua we visited an exalted and rich theology of all things from the dawn of time to the end of time and our place as part of the whole. The contrast led us to comment on just how radical and different Jesus was when he came into the world and how he changed the way people thought and acted and simply "were" as human beings. It is no wonder that the world still measures all time from anything that happened before (BC) he was born to anything that happened afterwards (AD). This is obscured now by the media and academia who insist on using "Common era" to be politically correct but the fact remains that there was a monumental sea change in human self-understanding that Jesus inaugurated and our dating system remain a lasting testimony to that sea change in history when with the birth of Jesus Christ there was a paradigm shift in human perception. It was almost as if God had walked on earth.....

The Prayer for Today is the opening of the service of light for All Saints from the liturgical book "The promise of his glory"

**Blessed are you Lord God, king of the universe
To you be glory and praise for ever
We rejoice in the glorious splendour of your majesty.
For you have given us a share
In the inheritance of the saints in light.
In the darkness of this passing age
Your saints proclaim the glory of your kingdom.
Chosen as lights in the world
They surround our steps as we journey on
Towards that eternal city of light
Where they sing the triumphal song.
Open our eyes to behold your glory
And free our tongues to join our song with theirs
For great and wonderful are your deeds, O lord God almighty;
Just and true are your ways, O king of the ages.
To you be praise and glory, now and forever. Amen.**

Love and peace,
Martin

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