

Dear friends,

**We** have a wedding in church on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August!

That wouldn't be a remarkable statement at any other time, but it is now!

Now, it is a further sign of life stuttering back to normal.

A wedding banquet, has traditionally been the most potent celebratory feast that, in the church, has always symbolised (in normal times) the coming together of God and the world (or Christ and his church) at the end of time.

This chimes with the theme today in the lectionary readings of the completely satisfying food and drink of God's very being, sustaining us through life.

"Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8)

In fact, as the Eucharist is essentially a communal meal, during the coronavirus panic I am considering getting the RMC re-classified as a restaurant! (only joking)

**We** are powering through the year now and it'll be August this weekend.

The services are as follows.

**9.30am** Holy Communion at All Saints East Budleigh with myself.

**10am** Holy Communion with Rev. Karen Young at St. Peter's and

**11am.** Service of the word with John Archibald

## Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August is Trinity 8 – Proper 13

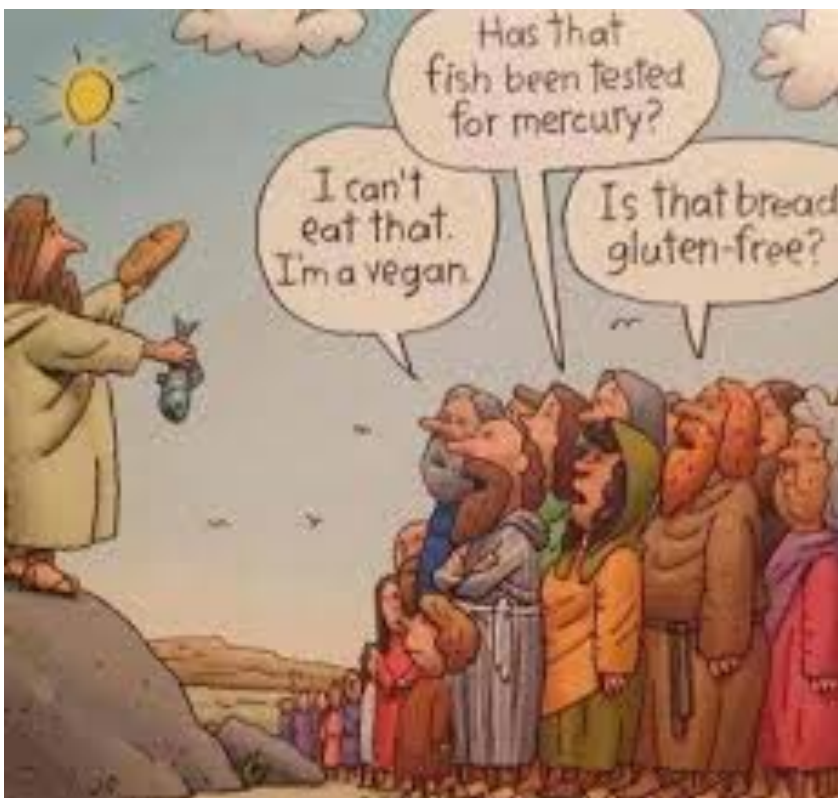
**Isaiah 55: 1-5.** A wonderful passage extolling all people to hunger and thirst for the really essential life-nourishing sustenance. Implicit in this piece is the fact that human beings spend so much of their time and energy on ephemeral inconsequential things. So, what does really feed us? For Isaiah, he would refer you to the perfect law of God, which Christians have had spelled out to them in Christ is the law of Love made perceptible through God's Spirit – made tangible through the sacraments of the church. In the Eucharist we literally feed on God's very self.

**Romans 9: 1-5.** Paul articulates his pain and confusion that he is convinced that Jesus is the Messiah and saviour of all, and yet confused as to where that leaves the Jewish people (of which of course Paul is one – as was Jesus). There is much heartfelt internal wrangling for Paul and this central dilemma has muddied Christian/Jewish relations ever since to this

day. Some Christian commentators might say that Christianity has simply “replaced” Judaism though personally I prefer to say that the Christian faith has “fulfilled” Judaism

**Matthew 14: 13-21.** There is rich symbolism in the feeding of the 5000. It recalls the Israelites being fed by Manna from heaven. Here in this “deserted place” Jesus is the new Moses who brings slavery and want. Secondly it recalls the feeding/multiplication miracles of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha and thirdly it foreshadows the Christian Eucharist “he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the bread”. This moves the emphasis away from ordinary sustenance to the greater miracle of faith in the sacrifice of Jesus. The sheer abundance of food, 5000 men plus an equal number of women and children all fed with twelve basketfuls of scraps left over, speaks of the super-abundance of love and Grace at the heavenly banquet.

## The Lighter side!



Jesus in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain

## Thought for the day

Whilst I long for the day when we can sing again in church services, the paring down of our Sunday services has forced us to concentrate on what it is we are actually doing. We dress it up and decorate it but pared back to its bare essentials, we gather on Sunday mornings to share a sacred meal. In this sacred meal we commune with God and each other. That is the main difference between mainstream Christianity and more Protestant offshoots – our sacramental understanding of this world. We believe that God can be directly apprehended in and through the material world. Sunday morning worship is a direct spiritual and physical encounter with God. This is why I never gets tired of doing what I do because in every Eucharist I am offering God to a hungry and thirsty flock. This incidentally is why I would never dream of asking whether someone was baptised or confirmed or anything else for that matter before giving the sacrament. Anyone who comes with open hands wishing to receive God is more worthy to receive Him than I am worthy to give Him.

**The Prayer for Today** is the traditional hymn “Come Holy Ghost our hearts inspire”

**Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire  
and lighten with celestial fire;  
thou the anointing Spirit art,  
who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.  
Thy blessed unction from above  
is comfort, life, and fire of love;  
enable with perpetual light  
the dullness of our mortal sight.  
Teach us to know the Father, Son,  
and thee, of both, to be but one;  
that through the ages all along  
this may be our endless song:  
Praise to thine eternal merit,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

Love and peace,  
Martin

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