

Dear friends,

There's nothing like walking on Dartmoor and soaking up the sun in Salcombe to refresh the soul. So, I return slightly sunburnt and a bit heavier but rested and refreshed.

While away we always sample the local Anglican fare, so we went along to Salcombe parish church which was a delight. It was what I would describe as "modern catholic" in that while the priest was fully vested in chasuble and there was a robed server and the clergy were addressed as "Father" – we sat on comfy chairs – no pews -, the atmosphere was relaxed and two women with guitars and beautiful voices sang modern hymns. The Trinity Sunday sermon was delivered by a very young-looking man introduced as their "intern" which is an interesting concept, but he was very competent and quite learned. We stayed in our seats and the priest brought the wafers to us at communion. That wouldn't work here where we have fixed pews of course and St. Peter's is far too big anyway, but it is always interesting to see how others do things.

June 13th – second Sunday after Trinity – Proper 6

I am presiding at both services at St. Peter's and the venerable Trevor Jones is presiding at All Saints and St. Michael's.

Ezekiel 17:22-24. An elaborate and complex re-working of an allegory used at the time of the Babylonian exile to envisage the divine restoration of the House of David. This new kingdom will enjoy universal rule and will provide safety and shelter for people far and wide. This is an expression of hope for a new world where God reverses human notions of rank, success, and failure.

2 Corinthians 5: 6-10(11-13)14-17. Often difficult to follow, the thing that these letters seems to want to articulate is the difference between how things appear to be (to non-Christians) and how they really are (to Christian believers). The reason for this difference of perception is because of the cross of Christ (V.14). Because believers see the truth -the inside – of the cross we judge everything not by outward appearances but by what is going on inside – in the heart. This radical change in our way of thinking results in nothing less than a "new creation"

Mark 4:26-34. Coming after the parable of the sower, these few verses emphasise the twin qualities of mysterious hiddenness but assured future of the kingdom of God. Hiddenness will not last forever, but in the meantime it takes people of great wisdom and discernment to see the signs and growing seeds of the kingdom of God.

Garden party -26th June at 3.30pm

What started as a very simple affair is developing nicely. Mary Leat from St. Peter's choir is co-ordinating nibbles and cakes, David Ottley from Otterton is letting us borrow his Marquee so the food will be protected (and we'll somewhere extra to shelter from any possible rain?), and Mike Scrivener from East Budleigh has offered to play some cool jazz in the background for us as well. A real RMC occasion!

Thought for the day

"By their fruits you shall know them". This simple maxim from the lips of Jesus tells you all you need to know about recognising a man or woman of God. If you put this saying together with "not everyone who says to me Lord, lord will enter the kingdom of heaven but only those who do the will of my Father in heaven" and you have a cast iron set of criteria for making a judgement of where people are on their journey of faith. If someone habitually lies, cheats and steals to take an extreme example you can be sure that they are very far from the kingdom of God no matter how loudly or confidently they profess the opposite.

One of the paradoxes of the parable about the sheep and the goats is that a professed faith is never mentioned as one of the criteria when any "sorting out" occurs. It is all about the fruit that you show in your way of life, and being, and shown by what you actually do and how you are.

The prayer for Today. Humour is a very important God-given grace that is invaluable in allowing us to navigate our path through life. Apparently, Pope Francis prays this prayer, written by Saint Thomas More every day after morning prayer and I have started doing so as well.

**Grant me O lord a sense of good humour.
Allow me the grace to be able to take a joke
And discover in life a bit of joy,
And to be able to share it with others.**

Love and peace,
Martin

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