

Dear friends,

Saturday night was the final concert of Budleigh music festival and St. Peter's rocked to the sound of the London African Gospel choir. To give you an idea of how loud it was, stewards were handing out complimentary ear plugs! Very different to the classical fare normally expected of the music festival but goes to prove the length and breadth of the festival. A packed church had everyone up dancing the pigeon, chicken wings, picking an apple (don't ask) and great fun was had by all. The choir were from Ghana, Ivory coast, Uganda, Congo, Guadeloupe and Jamaica.

Thankfully it was one of those rare occasions that I only had one service on a Sunday morning and comes every now and then on the first Sunday of the month and it was All Saints East Budleigh where I preached on the subject that Paul articulated in Galatians – “You reap what you sow”.

Sunday 13th July – 4 after Trinity – Proper 10

Rev. Christ Cant will preside at the 8am service at St. Peter's and Rev. Ken Parry at the 10am. I will preside at both services at All Saints and St. Michael's at 9.30am and 11am respectively. I will also preside at Choral Evensong at 6pm and the choir will be conducted by Mark Perry as Stephen Tanner is in the middle of moving house.

Deuteronomy 30: 9-14. The word of the Lord is close to us in our mouths and hearts- not a distant thing outside of ourselves. And if we follow God's commandments in our daily actions – which were boiled down to “Love God and love your neighbour” by Jesus - we will prosper as individuals and as a people.

Colossians 1: 1-14. Paul is highly complementary to the people in Colossae in that they have grasped the gospel of Grace and are growing in understanding the full ramifications of the gospel. Paul prays that they are filled to the brim with the knowledge of God's will, spiritual wisdom and understanding and they bear even more fruit than they are doing so already. So they are doing well, but there is always room for growth.

Luke 10: 25-32. We have heard the story of the Good Samaritan so many times, there is the danger that we listen but don't really “hear” the message. The central message is that all people are our neighbours – even our enemies – that God has infinite concern for every one of us no matter who you are or what kind of person you are and sees everyone as a child of God. “Think ill of no man that Jesus saw fit to die”

Thought for Today

The 7th July was just a random date for most British people until that day twenty years ago when the day shook to the death and destruction of Islamic terrorism on the streets of London. The death cult that preaches death and destruction to the West and all infidels were not however Pakistani nationals; they were British born. After knowing and experiencing British life they had

decided that what we all really needed was Sharia law like in Afghanistan or Iran. The power that these death cults exert over their followers thinking is almost total. It is akin to the total devotion of young Germans to Adolf Hitler in the dying light of the Nazi regime in a smouldering Berlin in 1945. Such fanaticism in all its forms stems from believing that my ideology is absolutely right and all other points of view are absolutely wrong. The world is Black and White with no shade or nuance. There is a hint of that kind of thinking in most religious and political groupings and I think most people are rightly wary of it. Any religion whatever your persuasion rightly has firm beliefs and firm practices but that cannot be allowed to expunge a tolerance towards the “other” who don’t share your beliefs. To further say that actively killing them (and yourself) is a kind of righteous martyrdom in my view pushes them over the edge from religious belief to mental illness. As our parable next Sunday says, everyone is our neighbour, and to wish death upon our neighbour is so wrong as to rightly deserve the epithet Evil. Thankfully for me, the 7th July has another connotation as it is my daughter’s birthday. New Life versus death – no contest. “Love is as strong as death, passion fierce as the grave” (Song of Solomon)

The Prayer for Today. This prayer by St. Teresa of Avila is remarkable because she wants God to have free reign in her life even regarding any wish granted that might contradict his will as a punishment.

**Govern all by your wisdom, O Lord,
So that my soul may always be serving you
As you will
And not as I choose.
Do not punish me, I beseech you
By granting that which I wish or ask,
If it offend your love which would always live in me.
Let me die to myself that I may serve you.
Let me live to you who in yourself are the true life.**

Love and peace,
Martin
