

Dear friends,

It was a day of contrasts on Sunday which was of course All Saints Sunday and the patronal festival of the church in East Budleigh. Afterwards at St. Michael's it was the 20th anniversary of the Benefice choir, and they sang beautifully but it was also when we hold our All-Souls service at St. Peter's in the afternoon. This is the opportunity to pray and perhaps light a candle for loved ones who have died either recently or as an anniversary and is as you might imagine a solemn and poignant occasion.

On Monday at the other extreme, we held the annual "Bun throwing" celebration – yes you heard that right – where we throw iced buns off of the tower at All Saints to pupils from Drakes school. In the good old days, the children used to try and catch them but in the modern era of 'elf and safety the buns are thrown, and the children then rush to pick them up. The celebration has its roots in the old custom of giving cakes and fruit on Holy days and this remnant of that practice takes place as near to All Saints Day as practical.

For those who haven't yet heard, Chris Parrish died peacefully in his sleep early on Saturday morning which marks the end of an era. He and Janet were pivotal in the life of St. Peter's and the fact that he died at home at 94 and 8 months was a real blessing

Sunday 9th November – Remembrance Sunday – 3rd before Advent

I will preside at the service at All Saints at 9.30 and then lead the remembrance service at the East Budleigh war memorial at around 11am. Rev Jean Burrows will lead the act of remembrance at the Otterton war memorial at around 10.50am and then preside at the morning service which follows directly afterwards. Archdeacon Trevor Jones will preside at both services at St. Peter's in the morning. I will then lead the service at the war memorial in Budleigh Salterton at 2pm and then the annual Royal British Legion service in St. Peter's at 2.45pm.

Job 19: 23 – 27a. No matter what terrible, tragic things have befallen Job in his life, He is absolutely cast iron sure of the faithful love and care of God. "I know that my redeemer lives" and on the instance of his death he will find God standing alongside him.

2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5, 13-17. The day of the Lord is not upon us but is yet to come. According to the words of Jesus not even he knows the date or time of the day of the Lord – only the Father knows. Until that day, in the meantime, hold fast to what Paul has told them, presumably not to be swayed by false prophets and the Judaizers.

Luke 20: 27 - 38. Sadducees were urbane metropolitan upper-class people who were very religiously conservative and only saw the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) as authoritative and dismissed resurrection as impossible. They tried as so many others did, to trap Jesus and shame him in

front of the crowds and they posited this riddle about the seven brothers and the one wife. Jesus' answer describes both the continuity and the discontinuity of God. Sexuality is absolutely necessary to this life because of the existence of death. But in a sphere where all things are eternal, sexuality is not necessary. That is perhaps all we can learn from Jesus' answer to this disingenuous riddle. The continuity comes from God, who is eternal.

Thought for the Day.

I've been giving transience and death a lot of thought lately. A constant flow of funerals of course keeps the topic uppermost in the mind anyway but with All Souls day followed by remembrance Sunday the week afterwards certainly reinforces the notion that we are all going to die. I think of my mum and dad who were both fine people, but all their friends are dead and they only live on the memories of me and my brother and sister and when we are gone it will be as if they never existed at all. They'll just be names on a family tree. The readings this week also deal with the reality of death and the annual remembrance of millions of war dead. But their names, especially from the first world war are already obscure and only personally remembered by a very small percentage of the population.

Even the greatest musical and acting stars of my generation are already just historical figures to the very young, though it once seemed that their significance would last for ever. I have spoken before about a family photo taken in Gainford in county Durham just a few years ago, where I am the only one left alive in that photo.

Jesus bucks this trend of course. Two thousand years after he lived and died and was raised we are still poring over his legacy, his words and his actions and rightly every Sunday we remember what he did and what he said and what he achieved for humanity. That is true significance. Jesus, the Son of the Father in heaven is the one truly significant and important figure in this world. He is eternal and I gain MY significance only by attaching myself to him. I have never put any faith in status. I know that I will be not even a footnote in this world and after my inevitable death I will be forgotten pretty quickly but in Christ I am seen as being eternally worthy and righteous. That is where I find my peace, in that the only status I have ever sought is as being a child of God.

The Prayer for Today is by St. Ignatius of Loyola

**Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O Good Jesus, hear me.
Within your wounds hide me.
Permit me not to be separated from you.
From the wicked foe, defend me.
At the hour of my death, call me
and bid me come to you**

**That with your saints I may praise you
For ever and ever. Amen.**

Love and peace,
Martin