

Church Newsround – November 2007

THE BISHOP'S LETTER "The Soul in Repose Grows Wiser"

This classical quotation features prominently in Mark Mills' best selling novel *The Savage Garden*. I read it during my period of Study Leave during the summer, and so you can understand why this particular aphorism caught my eye.

In fact, although we had a good two weeks' holiday in Florence (where *The Savage Garden* is set, incidentally), and two weeks Retreat in West Wales, my soul was not always in repose. This precious time to simply read, reflect and write set my mind racing around issues to do with religion and faith in the world of today and tomorrow.

My working hypothesis was that there is too much religion in the world and not enough faith. This builds on Dean Swift's question: "Why is there just enough religion in the world to make us hate one another, and not enough to make us love one another?" That question has never been more relevant than it is now.

My feeling is that religion remains extremely vulnerable to being hi-jacked by interests and ideologies which are far removed from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, faith is not so much about recruiting God to serve our agendas, as about putting our agendas at the service of God.

Faith I define as:

"A disposition of the heart and mind to entrust oneself and one's interests to the reality, reliability and benevolence of the living God".

Religion then becomes the formalising of faith in the shape of sacred texts, creeds, institutions, membership rules, codes of conduct etc. etc. All these are vital to the preservation and transmission of the Gospel, but they must only ever be the servants of faith, and must never become ends in themselves.

Anyway, thanks to the generosity of my colleagues who shouldered additional responsibilities while I was away, I have been able to produce a set of written variations on this theme which might get published somewhere, sometime. If it stimulates a debate in the Diocese, and further afield, then others will be able to judge whether or not my soul in repose did indeed grow wiser!

+ John Lincoln

From The Rev'd Alan Greenhough:

I would like to say a big "Thank-you" to all who helped make my Ruby Anniversary of ordination to the priesthood such a happy and memorable occasion.

June joins me in saying how much the efforts and presence of so many friends, old and new, meant to us both, especially those who so kindly took on the various responsibilities which made it all run so smoothly, from dispensing tea and wine etc. to clearing up afterwards, not to mention Charles and the Church Council, who gave me a free hand to 'do my own thing'. We both feel very privileged to have been accepted into such a caring community as the Metheringham Group of Churches and Villages.

I have been asked if I would consider putting some recollections and experiences into an article for this Magazine, and I will - (consider it, that is) - for a later edition.

Again, thank-you for all the kindness and generosity shown to us both.

Alan.

“Forces within the Church are inexorable”

Notes of the Mission Area Planning Meeting 8th October

Charles Sowden and I went to the meeting, which included Bishop Tim, Lay Readers and Non-Stipendiary Clergy as well as the usual MAPG members.

The Plan has had to be changed again, for two reasons – there is simply not enough money in the pot, because some parishes are either unable or unwilling to pay their parish share in full; and the numbers seeking ordination is going down, meaning there are fewer priests.

So the revised plan is for 2 stipendiary clergy in each cluster, (you remember the deanery is divided into 3 clusters, based on postcode so we are the Eastern, or LN4 cluster) making a total of 6 in all. These will perform the role of “Team Leader” of teams of laity. However, it is felt that 6 clergy is too few, too close to the bone, so the plan is to have two house-for-duty priests, each equivalent to ¼ stipend, one for the Eastern and one for the Western cluster, making a total of 6 ½ stipends in all. The COST of a stipendiary priest (NOT salary) is £37,000.

Some people felt that as their benefice paid their full parish share – enough for a stipend – then they should have a priest, but Bishop Tim suggested that the collection is to the mission of the church, not to stipends or to buildings, and as such belongs to everyone.

Bishop Tim explained that over the past three years the Diocese had been accruing debt of between £ ½ and £ ¾ million per year, and this cannot continue, so in New Era, the control of finances have been passed to each local area.

He sees the clergy as a Sacramental, Teaching, and Pastoral resource, and is concerned about the levels of stress they are working under at the moment. It is important that the MAP groups should define clearly what has to be done by the priest and what can be done by local teams of laity.

There was much discussion at the meeting, not least over the vacancy in Branston. It is not clear whether the plan to place one stipendiary in Washingborough and one in Metheringham, with the house-for-duty priest in Branston will go ahead. Primarily because, although our cluster has only one stipendiary priest, there are still more than 6 ½ in the Deanery, so there are no funds for another priest. It isn't clear whether one of the priests from another cluster will be asked to move. They can't be made to move as they all have freehold.

The group will meet again on 17th January, but in the meantime each cluster is asked to think and pray about the situation, and decide what is our vision for the future. Think how we can “Become a thriving church”.

I am happy to meet with anyone who has thoughts on this, individually or as a group. Do let me know what you think. I can't really represent you unless you do!

On a lighter note, following the last successful Cluster service, the next is on Sunday 25th November at 6pm at St Wilfrid's Metheringham, and there's also a Christmas party – a Bring and Share or Faith Supper on 5th January at 6pm in Branston Village Hall.

Adrienne Jones

If you would like to take part in these meetings please contact Adrienne (01526 321678) or the Vicar. - Ed.

Weddings

We pray for those beginning married life together:

29th September Paula Barnes & Nicholas Ward at St Oswald's Blankney.

Dunston Parish News.

Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. However, all the Swiss league records were unfortunately destroyed in a fire, and we'll never know for whom the Tells Bowled!

Just another little snippet that I have garnered. “Garnered”, a lovely old fashioned word that means gathered or collect. It also means to “deposit” as into a granary which in turns means “harvest”. Are you following so far? If not this month is lateral thinking to the word “Harvest”. I know it is a little bit late in the season to be thinking of harvest. It should really be September, BUT as I was crossing the fields on one of my walks just lately I thought about what to talk to you about this month.

HARVEST, we usually think of this as about gathering the harvest of grown crops, corn, potatoes, fruit etc. Lets us think of harvesting other things over our lifetime. How about life's

experiences, friends and even material things (these I'm afraid come to the bottom of my list). This year to me I have had fabulous experiences. Sitting with gorillas in Rwanda, Lion cubs in Kenya, 'All Our Yesterday's' in Dunston. I have, also, had sad moments which I will relate later.

Each and every one of us over our lives 'Harvest' all sorts of things without realising it. The problem with this is what we, individually, do with our 'Harvest'. Do we keep it to ourselves on the premise I gathered it so I am going to keep it. OR do we share it with friends, neighbours or people who have not had the fortune to gather what we have got but we want to share it with them?

Has anyone thought of what a 'Harvest' we have in friends! Let us think laterally again – "Friends" are they human or animal (here I include every living creature) ?

Earlier in the year I received from a friend an 'E' mail which contained another snippet. I also told you that I had had a sad moment this year in my life.

On August 13th 2007 I took the very difficult decision to put my Border Collie, 'Brock' to sleep for medical reasons. He had been in our family over 14 years, which in human terms is over 98 years. It is to him that I dedicate the following:-

People and animals come into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime.

When you know which one it is, you will know what to do for that person or animal.

When someone is in your life for a REASON, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. They seem a godsend and they are. They are there for a reason you need them to be.

Then without any wrongdoing on your part or at an inconvenient time this person or animal will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end.

Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand. What we must realise is that our need has been met our desire fulfilled, their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered and now it is time to move on.

Some people or animals come into your life for a SEASON, because your turn has come to share, grow or learn. They bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it, it is real. BUT only for a 'SEASON'.

LIFETIME relationships teach you lifetime lessons, things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person, or animal, and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life. It is said that love is blind but friendship is clairvoyant.

Thank you for being part of my life, whether you were a Reason, a Season or a Lifetime.

To Brock:- It was a lifetime.

To All my readers I ask; What is your 'Harvest'?

To each and every one of you may your God go with you.

Stuart Rogerson.

Notes For Your Diary

14th December: Christmas Concert starting at 6.30 p.m. Home grown entertainment, with St. Peter's School and Thursday Club.

20th December: Carol Service starting at 6.30 p.m. in St Peter's Church. With St Peter's School and the Youth Brass Band taking part

25th December at 10.00 a.m. Christmas Family Communion.

Competition With a Difference.

I aim to produce a calendar for 2009. To this end the competition is simply this: from December 2007 and each month I need a picture of Dunston or the surrounding area that depicts life in the village, whether a building or a view.

A panel will decide which picture for each month is the best and this will be used as the month's picture. All the other pictures received will be put into a booklet for production. All profits will go to St. Peter's fabric fund for the installation of toilet facilities in the church.

So..... Please send your photo's (6" X 4" preferably) in colour or black and white either printed or 'E' mail to me at: Calendar Photo Competition, Mulberry House, Middle Street, Dunston, Lincoln. LN4 2EW or deepjoy7@btinternet.com. Please put your name, address and telephone number with the photograph. All photographs received cannot be returned and are sent on the express understanding that they can, if chosen, be used for the calendar and St Peter's reserve the copyright of all material so received.

The Prize? Your photograph on the month selected and acknowledged on the calendar.

So all you budding David Bailey's get clicking!

Stuart Rogerson

Christmas Is A Coming!

Thinking of a present for your aunt or friend? How about a 'Dunston' tea towel. I still have a few left. These make good presents which can be posted (If we have a postal system left). A bargain at £2.99p each. Give a call on 323183 or at Mulberry House, Middle Street, Dunston or any Church member.

Thought For The Month.

He that has no cross deserves no crown.

SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER

Thursday 1st

9.00am

All Saints Day - (and each Thursday)

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Friday 2nd

7.30pm

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

– St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Sunday 4th

8.00am

9.00am

10.30am

All Saints Sunday

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

United Service – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Sunday 11th

8.00am

10.00am

10.40am

Remembrance Sunday

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Remembrance Sunday Service at Metheringham Methodist Church, processing to the War Memorial and then on to the War Graves in the Churchyard

British Legion Remembrance Day Service - St. Peter's Dunston

Sunday 18th

8.00am

9.00am

10.30am

2nd Sunday Before Advent

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

Morning worship – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Sunday 25th

9.00am

Blankney

10.30am

6.00pm

Christ The King

Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion – St. Oswald's

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham S.School / Crèche

East Graffoe Cluster Evening Service

December

Sunday 2nd

8.00am

9.00am

10.30am

1st Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion – St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

Holy Communion – St. Peter's Dunston

Morning Worship with Baptism - St. Wilfrid's Metheringham

DON'T FORGET !!

ST ANDREW'S NIGHT MEAL ON 30 NOVEMBER 2007.

ST. WILFRID'S CHURCH HALL at 7.30PM

ENTERTAINMENT BUT PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS.

A RAFFLE WITH A SCOTTISH FLAVOUR

ALL PROCEEDS IN AID OF THE FABRIC FUND

TICKETS £8 AVAILABLE FROM :- Margaret Amos, Ann DeVries or Another Chance shop.

Metheringham Over 60's Club

The Harvest Service & Auction was very attended, thanks to all who donated to the Harvest and your generosity in buying the produce. The final total for Club Funds was £203.75. We have our Coffee Morning on Saturday 3rd November at 10am there will be all our usual stalls so come along and enjoy a coffee and who knows you may find a Christmas present or two. November meeting sees the return of the popular duo Nick & Anita. December is the Christmas Dinner (for members only), please remember you must have attended TWO meetings between September and November to be eligible for the dinner.

Diary Dates

3rd November Coffee Morning 7th November Nick & Anita 14th November Chatsworth House.

Ann Crooks Secretary.

W.I Report

The WI were given a talk by Sarah Williamson about her work in a Veterinary Clinic. Sarah had a very practical yet sympathetic approach regarding her job as a Veterinary nurse.

Animals were usually brought in to the clinic for the following reasons :

Broken Limbs - these were either pinned or removed. A pet dog or cat can manage with 3 limbs.

Poor husbandry - Exotic pets were given inappropriate diets. Rabbits with in growing incisors owing to a lack of hard food.

Major operations - These needed if an animal had swallowed an unsuitable object eg a puppy that had eaten gravel !

Injured wildlife - It was always kinder to put them to sleep. There were occasional cases of cruelty but these were rare.

She left us with the ethics of pet insurance and expensive operations to ponder. Hove we gone too far ?

Also the importance of friendship among animals. She brought in a rabbit and guinea pig who were very content sharing living quarters.

Next meeting - Wednesday 21st November where there will be a talk by Tony Stephens entitled a Windy Evening. About Musical instruments.

A SORT OF PRAYERFUL PEOPLE-WATCHING

Creative "people watching" at Communion can become prayer.

Give thanks for families as you watch parents and children go up to communion, praying that the members may knit together in affection.

Pray for single parents and those who live alone.

Pray for those who have had a death in the family: it is not easy to come back to church for a while.

Give thanks for the older people who find it quite an effort to get to church and up to communion, yet they are there.

Pray for all those who have great responsibility in the community or in business and thank God for their commitment.

Ask for help for all those who have personal or family troubles.

Rejoice at the young people who are present.

Thank God for all those who are living routine lives with dignity, good humour and responsibility.

Bless God for the newly marrieds, the new parents and newcomers.

Pray for the stranger.

Give thanks for those who, for the past number of years, have come to Holy Communion here for pardon and renewal, for solace and for strength, with faith and thanksgiving.

AJ

BONES

The membership of any organisation is made up of four sets of bones.

There are the Wishbones, who spend all their time Wishing someone else would do the work, Along with the Jawbones, who do all the talking but very little else.

Another group is the Knuckle bones they knock everything that anybody else tries to do.

But most valuable are the Backbones. Who get under the load and actually do the work.

To which set do you belong?

AJ

A Story

An elderly Chinese woman had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walks from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water.

Of course the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream

I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house".

The old woman smiled,

Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? that's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them."

For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house".

Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding".

You've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them.

AJ

Green issues challenge international security =

Climate change is not just a green issue; it is also a security concern, according to a briefing paper published by the Church of England. "Drought and other climate-related shocks risk sparking violence and conflict," the paper warns.

Climate security is now a core foreign policy priority intimately connected with foreign and trade policy, security and geopolitics, as it threatens to push many communities still further into poverty and frustrates international efforts to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals, says the paper from the Church's Mission and Public Affairs division.

"As the implications of climate security become more noticeable, and as the negotiations gear up to find a way forward in a post-2012 world (when the Kyoto protocol is due to be replaced), climate change related issues, which were once marginal and peripheral concerns to international decision makers, will become an ever larger part of international relations," the briefing contends.

"Climate change poses a serious, ongoing threat to human development and human security," the briefing notes. PP

Thank you Iris !

What do you give a man who has everything ? A kiss.

I.C.

Churchyards

Local burial places can give you a real insight into the local people, their culture, customs and beliefs. In many places in Greece, the ground is too hard or rocky to dig graves. So they build up in concrete from the ground instead, and then cover the structure in marble. Modern graves have an etched photograph of the person as well as their name and age. Most have a glance fronted area in which there is an oil lamp, clearly often refilled and lit by their local family, with incense sticks also.

In India you can see Hindus cremating their dead relatives on the banks of the Ganges, and then putting the ashes into the river, as this is considered a sacred place and brings one to re-birth. Not everyone can afford the cremation, so for those who cannot do so their families may well just put their body, whole, into the river.

What do our churchyards say about ourselves and our beliefs?

Individuals did not always have a personal marker at death. There was a time when bodies would simply be placed in a sarcophagus for a year until just the skeleton was left and then the bones would be disposed of in a collective space – an ossuary - and the sarcophagus reused.

Why do we need a marker? Perhaps there are two reasons. Firstly, because those who are grieving wish to have a physical place to come to mourn. Today we often see roadside shrines where there has been a traffic death, some temporary at the time of the accident, but others are permanent. This becomes the 'place' of mourning.

Secondly, because we want to leave a mark: we don't want to just be 'gone' with no visible record. Although we know there are plenty of 'marks' and records in other ways, such as our children or our work, our friends and neighbours, but even so we want something 'particular'.

This month: Have a walk around an old churchyard or cemetery. What different types of monument can you see; are similar ones close together or in date order? What do the inscriptions or carvings tell you about the people they mark? If you were designing your own monument, what would it be like?

Churches call for full ban on cluster bombs

On the recent tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Union of Great Britain called on the UK Government to end their use of cluster bombs by UK forces.

The churches are also asking the Foreign Secretary David Miliband to actively support an international treaty to ban such weapons.

Cluster bombs are air or ground launched devices that scatter smaller bombs (or submunitions) over a large area. The submunitions that fail to explode pose a unique threat to civilians. These unexploded bombs effectively create minefields and maim and kill children or adults who disturb them later on. In the two months after the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, three or four civilians were killed, on average, every day by unexploded cluster bombs. On average, a child died each day as a result of these weapons. PP

Help your hedgehogs this autumn

With our warmer British autumns, hedgehogs now tend to begin hibernation later – in December or January. In the meantime, it is critical that they build up enough body weight to get them through those lean, bleak weeks of January to April... so now is the time to help them, by feeding them.

The hedgehog is carnivorous and, in the wild, lives on a diet of beetles, earthworms and other invertebrates. But in the winter, the bugs are dead or buried, and the worms deep underground. So – a hedgehog would appreciate your help! But don't put out milk and bread – both are actually bad for hedgehogs. Instead, they will thrive on tins of dog-food or non-fishy cat-food and water.

And while your spiny guests are noisily munching their dinner, you can prepare a bedroom, should they decide to move in. A nice deep compost heap will keep a hedgehog warm. It is also possible to buy hedgehog hibernation nests – ask our local wildlife centre or the RSPCA for details. PP

Some more miscellaneous observations on life...

Men best show their character in trifles, where they are not on their guard. Arthur Schopenhauer

Happiness is not the end of life; character is. Henry Ward Beecher
Catty remarks have more lives than a cat.
Why is 'abbreviation' such a long word?
In dog years, I'm dead.
God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.
Dear God, I have a problem, it's the big me.
Growing old is inevitable .. growing UP is optional.
There is no key to happiness. The door is always open.
Silence is often misinterpreted but never misquoted.
Do the maths .. count your blessings.
Faith is the ability to not panic.
Laugh every day, it's like inner jogging.
If you worry, you didn't pray . If you pray, don't worry.

That first kiss

At the end of their first date, a young man took the girl home. Emboldened by the night, he decided to try for that important first kiss. So with a put-on air of confidence, he leaned casually against the wall and said: "Well, how about a goodnight kiss?"

She gasped: "Are you mad? My parents will see us!"

"Oh come on! Who's gonna see us at this hour?"

"No, please. Can you imagine if we get caught?"

"Oh come on, there's nobody around, they're all sleeping!"

"No way. It's just too risky!"

"Oh please, please, I like you so much!!"

"No, no, and no. I like you too, but I just can't!"

"Oh yes you can. Please?"

"NO, no. I just can't."

"Pleeeeeease?..."

Out of the blue, the porch light suddenly went on. The door opened and the girl's sister stood there sleepily in her nightgown, her hair disheveled. Drowsily she said: "Daddy says please will you go ahead and give this guy a kiss. Or I can do it. Or if need be, he'll come down himself and do it. But for crying out loud, tell him to stop leaning on the intercom button!"