

ST PETER'S WEEKLY NEWS

1 AUGUST 2021



Growing healthy Christians

Seventh mark: does a few things and does them well

Most of us are busy people, even those of us who are retired wonder how on earth we had time to go to work. It is always surprising how our time is constantly filled. When the pandemic first hit I was told I would have to stay home, meetings were cancelled, we even worshipped on line. I remember clearly being told I would have lots of time to catch up on reading and have plenty of time for preparation. Hurm...was not my experience and wasn't the experience of most people I know. There is so much going on in our lives it is surprising we have any time to ourselves.

Doing a few things and doing them well in the context of the Christian life is about balance. Rather than filling our days with activity and doing loads of 'stuff' we are challenged to balance our time: for us, for God and for others. Easier said than done when others make calls upon your time. The boss wants a document ready by yesterday, the children need their clothes ironed, the parents need some shopping; when can you find time for you and when can you find time for God?

This is a challenge, a challenge to be met rather than ignored. Mindfulness has become a 'trendy' concept often linked to good mental health. It has been around in the Christian tradition, though not necessarily with that label, for centuries. The Desert Mothers and Fathers practiced mindfulness in the deserts of Egypt and Sinai in the early centuries of the Christian Church. Jesus practiced it in the Gospels. As life got busy and complex Jesus would still take himself, often described as up a mountain, to pray. Taking time out, just 'to be' with yourself and God has always been an important part of the Christian tradition, as it has in many other traditions and world faiths.

To make this work time must be planned in the programme of the day. It does not need and probably should not be hours but it does need to be quality minutes, set aside for the express purpose of prayer and reflection. To be with God and ourselves in his presence, some call this contemplation when we consciously work to be in God's presence and nothing more. You might just find, as you practice this Christian mindfulness you find the re-balancing that allows you to do a few things well.

Love and prayers,

Fr D