



St Peter's Parish

e-newsletter

8th July 2020

www.stpeterrealing.org.uk

The Vicar's Letter Fruits of the Spirit – love (Galatians 5.22-23)

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul has offered us a list of nine fruits of the spirit; what can be expected of those who live in the light and obedience of Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit, our advocate and guide. Over the past few weeks we have been looking at each of them. We have done so in no particular order, except for this final one; love. Unlike Paul, I have chosen to come to love last. Each of the other fruits (joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control, faithfulness and goodness) come from this first, love. Love is the one we should concentrate on. Not because the others are less important but because I think love can be the most difficult and it is rooted in love that these other fruits blossom.

Love is a complex emotion. A small, four letter word that covers so much. The love between two or more human beings has so many levels (life partners; parents; siblings; friends). We can love a pet, love a flower, love a cake. The same four-letter word with so many interpretations.

I left love until last because it is a difficult word to deal with. Difficult because it is so important and so widely interpreted and often misused. Yet love is at the centre of the Christian faith. It is love that brought Christ into the world and took him to the cross and was proclaimed in the dawn light of Easter morning.

What each of the fruits of the spirit teach us about love is that it is costly. Love is not something we can simply take up and put down. Love is to be weighed, considered and when given, given freely without any expectation. Love is given in generosity of spirit and, with that, vulnerability. Then love can bring pain as well as joy. In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul tells us love is patient and kind, non-judgemental, it is not proud or boastful, self-seeking or rude (1Corinthians 13.4-7). Although modern music is full of songs about love, love maybe described as being counter cultural. Love is not based on me and what I can get out of it, what I am entitled to, what is my right. Love is based the other, on what we can give, what we can offer. Thankfully, one of the things we have seen these past few months is the power of love. Love is not dead by any means in our communities. People have given of themselves to help others, most obviously in the intensive care units and wards of our hospitals; through shopping programmes; grassroots neighbourhood care projects; banners in windows. Sadly, sight of love is easily masked or lost in the hubbub of life. All we then see is the pushing and shoving of survival in a busy metropolitan district. Love is ever present, though some may not call it that. We see it everyday though we may not always recognise it. Small gestures, kind words, smiles and gentle greetings all mark something much deeper. We just need to find ways to draw it out into the light so we can recognise it more; if only so we could know how much we are loved too.

Fr David

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We are open ~ Can You Help?

Being open is becoming an increasingly important witness to God's presence in our community. We can only be open with your help. As August approaches and we are all taking well-earned breaks the need for volunteers is becoming even more important. We need more church sitters. Please, offer what time you can, as often as you can so that we can keep the doors of St Peters open for others to find comfort and peace in prayer and quiet. Fr Adam is taking over the running of this project. So please let him know if you can help.



Testing in these testing times.

We are being told testing and tracing is going to be vital for this next stage in our community's release from lock down. We have been asked to make sure you know how to get tested if necessary. Firstly, it is necessary if you think you are coming down with the condition no matter how mild the symptoms may be. Advice on getting tested can be found on the Government website (www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested) or the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus>). Call 111 for further advice or check with your GP. This is important and could save lives.



Stewardship and Giving

What we have begun to explore in this rather longer than expected series of articles on stewardship is that this is an important part of our life. I was going to use the term faith life but that suggests faith and life can be two separate things. As Christians faith is all of our existence. It is not

something we take out of its gilded box on Sunday morning and put back again after the parish mass. When Jesus calls us to follow him it is a 24/7 calling. Everything we do and say, every decision we take and reason behind an action must be built on, founded on our faith, our understanding of God and God's place in our lives.

A while ago I was approached by with a question. The person had a job which had questionable intent. They worked for a large multinational and their job was to nuke anyone who infringed their company's rights and privileges. No matter who they were, what they were, whether the infringement was accidental; this person's job was to take them to the cleaners; even if the unfortunate soul's intent was to get justice from the multinational. There were occasions when the person in question knew the case against their company was just and fair, but no matter, they used their heel to grind their opponent into the dust if they possibly could. Nice job...

The question was, could this person still be a Christian? They wanted the answer "Yes". They knew the answer had to be "No". Surely, the place of a Christian in any walk of life is to stand up for justice, and if the job they are doing makes them act unjustly surely they should change jobs. I asked the person what they thought the answer should be. They

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squirmed for a little and then blurted out, “But it’s my job”. It was a very highly paid job too and allowed this person a good quality of life.

Its not quite the same but there are echoes here of Jesus encounter with the ruler in Luke’s Gospel (18.18-24) who asks Jesus “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”. He knew the answer before he asked the question, he was hoping he was wrong.

Stewardship has to come into every aspect of our lives, even how we earn a living. Stewardship is about applying our faith, what we learn from the scriptures and what God puts upon our hearts, to everything in life. For everything in life comes from God, our intellect, our skills, our possessions, our families and our friends, our money. It is in being good stewards of all this that we give praise and glory to God.

Fr David

P.S. As we open for worship, we are being encouraged to pay our regular stewardship via BAC transfer and Standing Order. We are not taking cash collections. We will have a card reader for contactless payments. The difficulty with this is a potential loss of income. Some members still prefer to pay using cash. Please do consider if this is really necessary and help us to stay afloat. Money is still very tight and moving back into church, maintaining zoom and improving our Wi-Fi provision is incurring costs. You can use the Parish Bank Details below to make your regular offering:

Bank: HSBC

Account Name: Parochial Church Council of St Peters Ealing Parish

Account Number: 60377082 Sort Code: 40 11 58

Finding Your Way Round Your Bible: Letters 2

Last time we noted that the order in which Paul wrote his letters to the young Christian communities he was visiting and planting differs to the order we have them in our Bibles.

Although the letters to the Galatians and the Thessalonians are believed to be the first written, we find after the book of Acts in our Bibles Paul’s letters to the Romans and to the Corinthians. The first a community he had yet to visit at the time of his writing, and the second a place he spent a large proportion of his time during his journeys.

Their place and precedence are due largely to the length of these letters - 16 chapters to the Romans and 29 chapters in total the Corinthians. It is also because it is in these letters we have the fullest working out of Paul’s response to the questions troubling and dangers besetting the first century church.

For reasons which I hope will become clearer, I am disrupting our bookshop journey and tangling our Bible bookmarks, by leaving the letter to Rome until last, and so today we are meeting the people of the church in Corinth. The church prompting some of Paul’s most beautiful and most heated responses.

Corinth lies on an isthmus joining southern Greece to northern Greece. All the traffic from Athens and the north had to go through this narrow neck of land. Additionally, the greater part of the east west traffic of the Mediterranean passed through Corinth.

Corinth was therefore a wealthy mercantile hub. It has been called the Piccadilly Circus of the Mediterranean. A little illustration which shows this is that the dried fruits that passed through this city are known throughout the world as “corinths” – English spelling has

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rendered this as “currants” and are with us to this day, though few now have been through their namesake to get to us.

Corinth was also a byword for loose-living, debauchery and pagan excesses, focused on the great temple of Aphrodite overlooking the town. It is here that some of the troubles that have been bubbling up in the churches Paul has visited begin to spill-over. There are factions amongst the church members, party-politics, accusations of sexual immorality and – crucially – a reliance on human wisdom rather than God’s grace. A need for real love.

To get to grips with Paul’s fraught relationship with Corinth, we need to remind ourselves that we only have one side of the correspondence. There are plenty of hints that letters have gone backwards and forwards. Other people have sent Paul news of the goings-on and Paul himself seems to have made a flying visit back there at one point. The letters to the Corinthians as we have them iron out these backs and forths, but the creases are still there.

William Barclay, in his commentary on the letters to Corinth reminds us that chapter divisions were only put in later and suggests that we see the order of events as follows – and that we should read them in this order too:

- 2 Corinthians 6 verse 14 – 7 verse 1 (this might be the “previous letter” that begins Paul’s response to the problems.)
- 1 Corinthians (encouraging and extolling them to better ways)
- 2 Corinthians chapters 10 -13 (the “severe letter” really taking them to task after they have ignored the advice of 1 Corinthians.)
- 2 Corinthians chapters 1 – 9 (the “letter of reconciliation”). *

*This order differs from last week’s table but see what you think.

Read like this we get a better idea of Paul at work and reinforces our recognition that Paul is reacting to the specific situations of individual churches, something we shall return to later.

Having got our heads and hands round these letters and their context we shall now look at what Paul actually writes:

I Corinthians

- Chapter 1 verses 10 -17: the factions “I belong to Paul”, “I belong to Peter”
- Chapter 1 verse 18 – 2 verse 16: the real wisdom is God’s not human (see 1 vv 26 - 31)
- Chapter 3: the folly of factions – only God gives the growth.
- Chapters 5 -7: Teaching on sexual immorality and marriage has a definite Corinthian context – NB the shrine of Aphrodite.
- Chapter 8: Food offered to idols – worlds collide: Jewish dietary laws: Gentile practices (see verse 8 – 13 for Paul’s powerful argument here and again in Chapter 10 verses 23 - 33).
- Chapter 11 verses 23 – 26 The institution of the Lord’s Supper (showing that this is established practice in the church by at least the late 40s AD).
- Chapter 12 verses 12 -31: One body many members.

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- Chapter 13: Here it is, Paul’s message to the Corinthians and to us through the centuries and all eternity. To stop factions, to be Christ to one another we must have the greatest gift of love.
(I imagine Paul dictating the words which now form chapter 12, and then suddenly having a moment of seeing through the glass darkly Christ’s message face to face as he had on the road to Damascus. Look at that wonderful transition now: “...And I will show you a still more excellent way - If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels but have not love...”)
- Chapter 15 verses 35 -58: Teaching on the resurrection of the body – something else that was troubling the carnally-minded Corinthians.

2 Corinthians

For the reasons we have thought about above, this is one of Paul’s most personal letters. In his determination to make the errant church at Corinth hear him, he speaks very much from the heart:

- Chapter 1 verse 12 – 2 verse 4: Reasons for his delayed visit to Corinth.
- Chapter 4: Treasure in clay jars, and living by faith.
- Chapter 6 verses 14 – 7 verse 1: Relationships with unbelievers, again note the Corinthian context for this teaching
- Chapter 11 verses 16 -32: Paul’s sufferings and some tough talk.
- Chapter 13 verses 11 – 13: Paul’s appeal “Put things in order, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace be with you”. As good a call today as 2000 years ago.

Next time we shall look at some shorter “postcards” to some young churches, before addressing the accusations against Paul, notably his reframing of the gospel and his view of women. Lots to look forward to!

Susan Peatfield

WLL Community Shopping Service.



Thank you to everyone who has been part of this project. A special thank you to Revd Margaret who has taken this idea and knocked into shape. As the COVID 19 scene changes and society makes moves towards some level of normality so we are beginning to moth ball the shopping programme. It is not coming to a complete end yet. if you find you are having to self-isolate and need some help or support please do get in touch. We still have a team who are willing and able to help the phone number to use is 07595 911178.

Please also note the new Ealing Borough website: <https://ealingtogether.org/> Loads of information help and advice is there.

Contributions.

A big thank you to those who have already contributed pieces to this newsletter. It is so great (and makes my life easier) to have contributions from our readers. It would be great to have more. Material to me at the email below by Wednesday would be great.

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Pilgrimage 2020 – Along the Camino to Santiago

Many of you will know we have been planning the parish pilgrimage for September when we were due to travel to Spain to journey along the Camino by coach and on foot to Santiago De Compostela. With the arrival and settling of the coronavirus these plans as you can imagine have been put on hold. Now we can share that the Pilgrimage has been rescheduled for 19th-28th May 2021. Here is a little taster of what to expect:



In the 9th century, the king of Spain believed he had found the burial place of Saint James and, ever since, pilgrims have made the long journey to his shrine in the magnificent Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. Ideally, people walked the whole of El Camino, 'The Way of St James', whilst still young and carrying a pilgrim's scallop shell - our journey will be a little different.

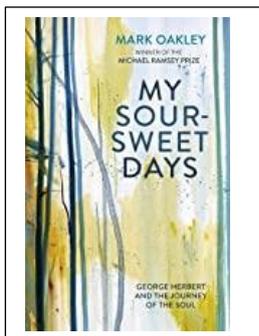
Our 10 day pilgrimage is by plane and coach, but we will be walking some of the most interesting segments of the route (though this is optional). In addition to these walks, we will visit towns and cities along the way, seeing the cathedrals, monasteries, Romanesque churches, wayside chapels and bridges which stood on the ancient Way. We start our journey in the French Pyrenees and follow The Way across northern Spain, staying en route in very comfortable hotels.

This part of Spain has a mild climate and from May to September temperatures range from around 16-22°C, making it an ideal time to visit .

A pilgrimage is a spiritual adventure, where the journey itself is as important as the destination. This will be a wonderful opportunity to walk, talk and share stories with each other, traditional ones and our own, as we travel together.

Those already booked will have been contacted by McCabe. If you have not yet booked and would like to please let Fr David know. He can send you a brochure with prices and booking procedures. Come and join us.

Fr David



Book Review

My Sour-Sweet Days: George Herbert and the Journey of the Soul by Mark Oakley published by SPCK 2019

The poetry of George Herbert (1593-1633) has spoken to British Christians through four hundred years. His intellect and skill with words had for him only one aim, to share the love of God. He had been noted by the Royal Court having been Orator at Cambridge University and was encouraged to sit in the House of Parliament. His intention had always been to be ordained. After a brief spell at Westminster, in 1629 Herbert was ordained and became Rector of Fugglestone St Peter with Bemerton near Salisbury. Here he continued to write poetry and prayerfully reflected on what it meant to be a priest. Being a man of ill health, he died in 1633 of consumption.

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Mark Oakley, once Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral is Dean of St John's College Cambridge and visiting Lecturer in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Kings College London. Mark is a writer, thinker and broadcaster who has a great skill in exploring words. He has written several books, including a compilation of literature reflecting on some of life's great times of passage.

Mark clearly loves the writing of George Herbert. In this book he helps the reader reflect on some of Herbert's more well-known poems, getting into the writer's words and phrases, exploring what was behind Herbert's thinking and spiritual journey. This is a lovely book I have and continue to take great pleasure in dipping into. It can be read cover to cover. It can be read chapter by chapter as and when you are ready, each chapter being self-contained and each chapter having much to savour. Mark does not approach the poems as an academic exercise but as a lover who seeks to show others what there is to love; as a man of prayer who wants to share Herbert's spiritual journey with his reader, all within a couple of pages for each poem chosen. As Mark says, "George Herbert is a good companion with whom to examine the journey of our own soul" and describes Herbert's poems as both "heart-work and heaven-work".

Fr David

Contemplative Prayer Gathering.

Prayer is a funny thing. As Christians we all know we should pray. Some of us love to pray; some of us hate prayer. Often because we have no idea what prayer truly is or how it is done. I know in my youth I always thought prayer was really an activity of the specialist, someone skilled in difficult techniques of concentration.

Then I was momentarily lured by the exotic prayer of Buddhist chant and sandalwood incense. It was not until a parish priest said to me one day, just be quiet, God will do the rest. Sitting in silence is not always that easy, but then those things that are worth doing are not always easy either. What the priest was trying to tell me, it took a while to sink in, was that this was all up to God.

We may think prayer is about bombarding God with petitions and requests. We get annoyed when God does not seem to be listening to us; do we ever stop and listen to God? There are times in prayer when we want or need to put things at the feet of God asking his guidance, wisdom and help. Often what we should be doing is just be in God's presence. Contemplative Prayer helps develop that approach to prayer. To be silent, focused on God, being in God's presence. As the writer of the Cloud of Unknowing says, "Lift up your heart towards God with a humble stirring of love; and think of himself, not of any good to be gained from him."(Chapter 3) As silence is not a natural part of who we are it takes a little practice and it is better to practice in company. Come and join us on Wednesdays at 5pm.



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Thank you for continuing to support ealing foodbank with food donations. During covid19, we have made 1000 deliveries to families in need. Thank you for your help to make this possible! Please find our July shopping list below:

Savoury biscuits/crackers; Tinned fruit & vegetables; Peanut butter; Ketchup & mayo; Baked beans; Cooking oil – 250ml or 500ml or 1litre; Feminine hygiene – towels are more popular than tampons; Shower gel/hand wash/bars of soap; Shaving foam & razors; Nappies - sizes 2 and 6

We have got plenty of:

Pasta; Meat; Fish; Uht milk

This foodbank is run in partnership with local churches, facilitated by Ealing Foodbank. Registered charity number 1156369 | Registered in England and Wales

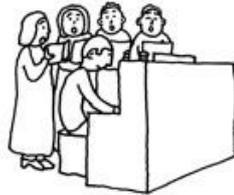
Dave Walker Cartoon

WE ARE INCREDIBLY BUSY

WITH CHURCH ACTIVITIES



DOING THE FLOWERS



PRACTISING THIS SUNDAY'S MUSIC



GOING TO COMMITTEE MEETINGS



DEBATING SEXUALITY

UNFORTUNATELY THIS MEANS WE DO NOT REALLY HAVE TIME TO THINK ABOUT POVERTY OR DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT



@davewalker

A quick note about Zoom and Sunday Mass

We got the message that many of you valued watching Parish Mass, but the sound was rubbish...to varying degrees. Just to let you know we have a sound engineer on it and hope to have the sound improved soon. We are just waiting for a quotation to see if we can afford it...always the issue. Sorry. Fr D

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Prayer requests:

Please pray for:

Suzi; Cicely Pratt; Elaine Dunkley; Keith Win; John Pullan.
 Madeleine Anthony; baby Peter Spagnolo; Marlene Sladen
 Recently deceased: Gerald Reddington (priest); Mercena Campbell
 Parish Family: David Blumline; Ian, Jane, Leah & James Bradshaw;
 Michael, Susan and Sebastian Brewin; Bill & Lesley Brooks;
 Charlotte, Adam, Lydia & Joshua Brown.

(If you would like names added to this list please send them to Fr David)



Keep us, good Lord,
 under the shadow of your mercy.
 Sustain and support the anxious,
 be with those who care for the sick,
 and lift up all who are brought low;
 that we may find comfort
 knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
 in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

Worship this week:

Sunday 12th July – Trinity 5 (Dedication Festival)

09.15am Kids Church for all our
 younger members (via Zoom)
 10.00am Parish Mass (Church & Zoom)
 5.30pm Evening Prayer (via Zoom)

Monday – Friday

9am Morning Prayer (Church)

Monday-Tuesday, Thursday – Friday

5pm Evening Prayer (Church)

Wednesday

5pm Contemplative Prayer (Church)

Tuesday & Thursday

9.30pm Compline (via Zoom)

Sunday 19th July – Trinity 6

10.00am Parish Mass (Church & Zoom)
 5.30pm Evening Prayer (via Zoom)

You can download Zoom onto your device, or you can call in by phone, dialling the number given in the email.



Contact Details:

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Susan Peatfield	sipeatfield@aol.com	020 8997 8376

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