

CV 43 CHRISTMAS



Thought for the day – The Nativity

There is not much that needs to be said, since we are at The Nativity and Christmas, and there is much more awareness generally of the message of Christmas than the rest of the Christian faith. On this Christmas perhaps we are rather more aware of one another, of the warmth and kindness shown by so many, often just strangers to us, although we miss the contacts and meeting that animate our society. Our former lives have been moved away from us, and we remember them with a slight hesitation. Things are not likely to return as they were.

The message of Christmas is simple. Mary received an angelic vision. Before long her body told her that it wasn't a dream. Her relative confirmed that events were as the vision predicted. In due course the child was born. That child, foretold in a vision, was of God, divine. As he was born of a human mother as are we, he was completely human. He was the human face and voice of God, living among us, just as Zechariah had prophesied 500 years earlier.

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never travelled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself...

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying His executioners gambled for the only

piece of property He had on earth – His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is a centrepiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.

God did indeed come to live among us. Amen.

Please remember that Boxing Day this year is St.Stephen's day, the first martyr, and on the 27th we remember St.John, apostle and evangelist, author of the fourth Gospel.

I hope you like the Nativity scene. It reminded me of when Su and I led the Open the Book teaching at St. Minver School. One December as we assembled in the school library we rehearsed, and Mary (Betty Bishop) looked for the baby Jesus – a toy doll. Someone had forgotten it. In desperation we found a teddy bear, wrapped it in "swaddling clothes", and it looked OK. That is, of course, until the children playing the part of shepherds wanted to see Jesus (as children would). They were rather taken aback on seeing that Jesus had a brown furry face.

I cannot resist a good joke – I am sure God has a sense of humour – and a favourite cartoon was a beauty, some years ago. Just the job for the week after Christmas.

God Bless, Didymus.

