

by
Didymus

Evensong readings:

Genesis ch.50, vv4-end

1 Cor ch.14 (OMIT)

Gospel: Mark ch.6, vv45-52



So far it's been an amazing Summer, getting just a bit too warm for elderly crustaceans, and too dry for our farming friends. Our trees are telling us that it is now Autumn, and golden leaves on elms and oaks are a sign that they are preparing for the winter shutdown already. The colours on the roadside are strongly reminiscent of the sage and onion stuffing which will be plucked from the recesses of the pantry ere long. Only a few months back along Cornwall was in bright pristine colours as if freshly washed but now fields are pale yellow or almost white.

A reminder that time does not stand still. God's Creation is a living and growing Creation. *"Time like an ever-rolling stream, etc, etc"*, or if you love Latin, *"Eheu fugaces labuntur anni"* (Alas the fleeting years fly by).

Not only does it not stand still, but it takes away our loved ones - family, friends and our community. When one learns of a dearly loved member of our family suffering disease that could well become mortal, it is a heavy blow indeed. We always want more and while we have, memories, descendants, and artefacts which bring loved ones back for a while, it is not enough. Those however, are the precious links to loved ones.

When most of us have lost loved ones, I will single out one, Dave Phippin, of Trelights. Although reserving his more caustic wit for the church, he married his knowledge of computing with a love of music so well that he, unable to play a note, was organist at St.Teath church for five years. His choirs performed four major choral works, three by Sir Karl Jenkins and one by Gabriel Fauré, giving considerable pleasure to performers and audiences locally, and twice in Truro Cathedral. Those who knew Dave remember him gladly for what he did, and mourn Mary and her family's loss deeply.

The hereafter can't be all that bad. A loving God cares for even the most awful people. In the words of St.John (ch.14), Jesus told us not to worry. After all, it was Jesus who was executed, but within days was alive, beyond death, Resurrected for many to see.

"Where my Father is, there is room for all, and when the time comes, I will return to take you there so that we will be close by, for ever."



Of the readings, Paul's is a good example of his ability to tie himself and his readers into knots, discussing the relative values of speaking in tongues or intelligently. One reaches for the Good News translation gratefully. Please omit.



Genesis continues with the story of Jacob and his sons in Egypt, and Mark relates the Feeding of the 5,000 and in particular the storm that the Disciples encountered when rowing across Galilee. Mark was a favourite of Bishop Michael, who relished the urgency and pace of his narrative. The same story pops up in the Gospels often with detail differences.

I must admit that Walking on the Water challenges me, and I accept it for what it is. Elsewhere in Matthew ch.14, Peter tries to walk on the water, but in a moment of doubt, he takes his eyes off Jesus, and he is spluttering. I would imagine Jesus is laughing as he pulls him up. Jesus lectured Peter - *"O ye of little faith, wherefor did ye doubt?"*. I think there is a serious point here. Jesus' faith, or more appropriately, knowledge, must have been at a level that no ordinary mortal could attain.

Returning to the sadness of loss for a moment, it reminds me that Lay Ministers once upon a time, took funerals, a great privilege and a powerful ministry. It brought contact with dear old Ron Bray and his dear son David, wonderful people to work with. David has a dry wit and is fluent in the black Cornish humour of his profession.

My brother Richard is married to Sylvi, a Norwegian girl from Aorsta, and in a recent visit there, she told me that she had been to a Viking funeral adapted to the 21st century. After the cremation, the ashes were placed in a model longboat, which was then put in the water, ignited and launched down the fjord.

Knowing David's keen sense of humour, I emailed him with a proposal for a *de luxe* funeral service to offer to his customers. His reply completely floored me.

"I've done one. What I was not prepared for was that the mourners at the Glynn Valley chapel were dressed as Vikings. I shall long remember the look on the mourners' faces waiting for the next cremation, as a horde of Vikings came out after the service!"



AMEN