

THE OLD CHURCH NEWS

OPEN TO ALL - OPEN TO GOD
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 4 OCTOBER 2013



IMITATION IS NOT ENOUGH

In his book "Modern man in search of a Soul" written nearly a century ago the psychiatrist, C G Jung, writes about the difficulty for the Christian in following the example of Christ. He writes, "It is no easy matter to live a life that is modeled on Christ's but it is unspeakably harder to live one's own life as truly as Christ lived his." Jesus, the man born of Mary, lived his own life as a human being unique as every human being must be. We are called to be first of all ourselves, with all the unpleasant selfishness that our limited free will brings. The constant battle with the ego of self and wanting things to be in our own image is far from the self giving of Christ. Very easily we fall into the trap of being defensive when our way of seeing things is challenged. The flow of love from Jesus in the gospel stories is gracious and seems effortless and easy but it came at great cost. The result of this openness was that people took advantage of this when they wanted something from him, but finally rejected him and tortured him to death. This pattern of self giving is hard to follow. The inner workings of the human mind defeat varied kinds of examination. Personal

motivation is often a mixture of the selfish alongside self giving. The inner self is often guarded from the pain of too much awareness of the needs of others. We can easily become absorbed with our own survival at all costs. Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem before entering it. Clearly the conflicts of human beings then and now are enough to cause great sorrow or anger in any human being. The idea that his death has redeemed the world will, to many, seem merely a pious hope and contemplating his suffering a useless exercise.

How do we, like Jesus, take on our small part of the world and challenge? The sheer weight of human cruelty across the world can seem unbearable. Did the death of Jesus really take away the sins of the world? Cruelty still piles up and forgiveness is constantly needed. Jesus still inspires his followers to forgive and demands we try again, often against terrible odds or else with weary resignation. The joy of life can easily be lacking in our burden of care. The sense of our being set against all the odds brings us most profoundly to know the Jesus of real, earthly experience and authentic life.

Michael Goss

LAST MONTH'S NEWS

A moving and thoughtful evening service of hymns and readings, to mark Holy Cross Day, was held in Old Church at the beginning of September. The service was well attended and included friends from Holy Trinity.

Members of our congregation attended Holy Trinity's 175th celebration of their dedication. Their hospitality was much appreciated and the exhibition of the history of the Smethwick parishes that make up the current parish of The Resurrection brought back memories for some.

During a Tuesday morning communion

service, Mehran and Sasan were baptised and members of the congregation that were present, welcomed them into the church family. We continue to pray for them both.

Smethwick Foodbank is experiencing a huge increase of people needing food. On a recent Friday 76 households were fed, the most they have ever done in one session. At that one session they gave out 411 kg of food. They need donations of tinned meats, tinned fish, tins of spaghetti, tins of tomatoes, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit, pasta sauce, sugar, jars of coffee, rice and cartons of fruit juice.

THE WOLVES WITHIN

A Grandfather, whose grandson came to him angry that a schoolmate had done him an injustice, said "Let me tell you a story. I too, at times, have felt hatred for those that have tricked and mistreated me with no sorrow for what they have done. But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die. I have struggled with these feelings many times."

He continued, "It is as if there are two wolves inside me, one is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him and does not take offence when no offence was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way."

"But the other wolf, ah! He is full of anger. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit."

The boy looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which one wins, Grandfather?"

The Grandfather solemnly said, "The one I feed."

Which wolf do you feed?



OCTOBER

- 5th 12.30 pm **Wedding** of Carl and Laura
- 5th 6.30 pm **Harvest Supper** in the Dorothy Parkes Centre
- 6th 10.15 am **Holy Communion** and **Harvest Thanksgiving Service**
- 17th **Discoverers' Outing** - venue to be confirmed
- 19th 2.00 pm **Table Top Sale** in the Dorothy Parkes Centre
- 19th 4.00 pm **Wedding** of Adrian and Alison
- 27th 12.15 pm **Baptism** of Barry and Tracy followed by the baptism of baby Kelsey
- 31st 2.30 pm meet for **Prayers** in The Old Church (see Rose Guest for details)
- 31st 7.00 pm **Compline** in The Old Church (see Wendy Fullerton for further details)

Sing praise to the LORD, You saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

For His anger is but for a moment, His favour is for life;

*Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy comes in the morning.*

Psalm 30:4-5

Butterfly Struggles

Before a butterfly can emerge out of its chrysalis it has to go through a lot of struggling. Yes, struggling.

Each time it lunges out to escape, acids are being removed from its wings.

If someone were to come along and break the chrysalis open for it then the butterfly would die from those acids. In essence the struggle is necessary for the butterfly to survive.

**Then in the stillness, when the struggle is over,
the butterfly can come out and share its beauty with the world.**

We as humans are not any different.

There are times that we need to struggle, to rid ourselves of the acids that make up sadness, fear, and anger.

It is only at this time when we are exhausted and still,

that we begin to hear God whisper to us.