

Thoughts about News of International Events

An extract from a statement by Bishop Robert

... our television screens are full of pictures of the civil unrest in the United States following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis at the hands of a police officer. Racism, and the injustice it breeds, is an affront to human dignity and ultimately to God. But the wave of unrest also shows how fragile communities can be. Which is why, as we emerge from lockdown, shaping worship that will articulate the cries of people's hearts and bear them into the presence of God will be so important. (Ad Clerum)

So many of us have been so caught up in recent months with the issues that directly impact upon us and rightly so. But there remain issues around the world which are destabilising and threaten the moral and spiritual life of everyone. Prejudice in all its forms, and the response to it, should be real for us all.

When we look at people – as individuals or communities – it is not for us to judge them as good or bad, especially based upon characteristics of similarity or difference. Our role is to offer love – the same love that Christ has for those individuals and communities.

So often we see things on the media which we feel are inappropriate or even disgraceful – but they take place elsewhere : they don't happen here – not with us !

Over recent weeks we have expressed our support for NHS and front line key workers by standing on our doorsteps and clapping each Thursday evening. We have shown our support for good people and the feedback is that it encouraged and motivated those who were involved. It added our involvement to theirs.

As we consider those significant events in the world – even though they may appear to be a long way from us, let's remember :

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”—

Edmund Burke (in a letter addressed to Thomas Mercer).

We are those good people and we need to see ourselves as involved in the overcoming of prejudice and evil. Every one of us can offer prayer into the situation – seeking God’s peace and seeking fairness and equality for all.

We should also be aware of the effect we can have through the use of our tongues and speech. What we say and how we express ourselves can and does affect the way others understand and respond to situations. We can use words to pacify or to exacerbate.

As God’s people may we genuinely promote God’s love in the world – to every person – undermining acts of aggression, prejudice and domination with words and acts of peace and care.

Clive Sedgewick

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