

Vicar's Pastoral Letter

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Subject : God always allows our "expenses".

Dear Friends,

Well, were you shocked? If you managed to get to the screening of "Finger of God" at the end of last month then I'm sure you were certainly very surprised and probably shocked at the things that God is up to in our world today. If you did miss it then don't worry because it will be shown again in St. Mary's in the Autumn.

There have been a number of shocking revelations recently not least of which have been expenses claimed by MPs at our expense for things like swimming pools at second homes and such excessive claims have been made by politicians of all the major parties. I don't know about you but none of this comes as a shock to me because I always suspected that many of them would be on the fiddle because it's human nature. If you can get away with something then don't you? Are you and I any different? I have to say that one of the things that's kept me roughly on the straight and narrow is the fear of being caught and the consequences that might ensue. I know it's a sad fact but human nature is often sad and that's why we call it sin. There's an awful lot of finger pointing going on at the moment but I always remember what someone once told me "when you point a finger at anyone then there's three fingers pointing back at you!"

All I can say is that it's a jolly good job that the "finger of God" doesn't point at us in the same way. Talk about excessive expenses! We're making unbelievably excessive claims on God's love and mercy all the time. The price of our sin was paid by Jesus when He died for us on the cross. Jesus received a death sentence of inconceivable agony and abandonment on the Cross of Calvary and we received a pardon that gave us forgiveness, peace, freedom and love everlasting. From God's point of view it's not much of a bargain is it? It's a good job that God doesn't demand His payment back! But that's the whole point in that He doesn't because God goes on giving and loving even when we turn our backs on Him.

All of our claims on God's love are illegitimate and undeserved and yet in return He provides us with forgiveness and not only "swimming pools" but mansions in heaven and a life of eternal bliss. "It was not that we first loved God but that He loved us and gave His life for us for whilst we were yet sinners Jesus died for us." God has given you a second home allowance free of charge and completely undeserved and the only payment that's required is that you put your trust in Him and what His Son, Jesus, did for you on the Cross. But, don't worry, if you're not willing to claim your benefits now God won't prosecute you, withdraw them or claim them back. You can put in an expenses claim at any time for the rest of your earthly life and it will be met in full and without question. The only trouble is that none of us know how long we've got left and so it might be as well to claim your expenses now.

At some point in our lives we all have a date with God. On a less dramatic note there are a few other dates that I don't want you to miss and, unlike your date with God, these are completely optional but I do hope you'll come!

The first is the **Open Air Songs of Praise on Sunday 14th June at 3.30pm at the Seaborne Inn, Kempsey followed by tea and delicious cakes.** There is no charge for this but we'd very much like you to join us and make a lovely afternoon of it. You'll also be near the bar at the Seaborne and so if you fancy something a bit stronger than tea you won't have far to go. If you're coming then please bring a garden chair and if the weather is poor then we'll meet in St. Mary's Church at the same time: either way, we'll have a great afternoon. The other things are **THE SUMMER FETES! The St. Denys' Fete is on Saturday 20th June at 2:00pm on the Village Green at Severn Stoke and the St. Mary's Fete is on Saturday 4th July from 2:00pm.** Both Fetes will be brilliant occasions with more stalls than ever and lots of things for the whole family to do and enjoy including Donkey Rides on both occasions. So do please come along and have a great time.

Please remember that we're only on this earth once and that we really should do our best to enjoy it and make the most of it despite all the trials and tribulations that we might face. Why not put in a claim to God right now for a lifetime of true joy, freedom, peace and love knowing that Jesus has already paid the price for you? It will always be granted and no one will ever ask for it back.

God Bless you and hope to see you at our various summer events.

Peter

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