

Vicar's Pastoral Letter

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Subject : Finding time for God and finding his peace.

Dear Friends.

It is interesting listening to "Thought for the Day" on Radio 4 each morning, as those of different faiths reflect on ethical, spiritual or religious issues. Some of the thoughts challenge and question our personal beliefs and behaviour, some are reassuring and comforting, while others are memorable, as they speak straight to the heart.

One such thought, based on a true story of an expedition in Nepal, has stayed with me for a long time. The wonderful Sherpers, supporting the expedition, set up camp each night, awaking early each morning to prepare for the day ahead. This continued day after gruelling day, often in treacherous mountain terrain, until one morning - there was stillness, one morning - there was silence. The leader of the expedition awoke and troubled by the inactivity, hurried to the Sherpers' tents. "What is happening", he shouted. "Nothing is happening," came the reply. "We are simply sitting still and waiting. We are waiting for our souls to catch up with our bodies."

For us, that is quite an unusual way of putting things, but I expect that all who were listening that morning, knew exactly what was meant. Our lives are so busy, so complicated, so hectic or cluttered, so fast, that our souls are anywhere and everywhere, except calm and still within us.

The Sherpers, probably Hindus, have a lesson for us all. The spirit of God is within all of us, the spirit of God is at the heart of all of us and we need to be still, to know His presence and His peace.

Then our lives will find meaning and order.

It is so easy to pack our lives with such a multiplicity of interests and responsibilities that there is no time, or energy, left for God. The more complicated our lives become, the more necessary it is to see that our priorities are right, because there are so many things which seek to push God to the sidelines and how easy it is for us to make excuses for doing so.

We don't have to look up to find God. His spirit is here, down to earth, with us and within us.

So let us use this holiday season as a time to come into God's presence, because being with Him, gives a peace beyond our understanding.

Whatever your plans this summer, whether you are travelling far and wide, or staying at home, may you have a very blessed and refreshing time and may you find your peace.

With every blessing for this holiday season, and always,

Libby

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