

A few words from the Vicar

So, August has arrived! Some of you will be away on holiday, sunning yourselves. But for me, unless something unexpected crops up (not unusual in the life of a Priest), the pace will slacken, allowing me to do some of the things I have been forced to put to one side.

Tidying my office would be a good place to start and clearing out the debris stored under the Communion Table is another thing on my To Do list. Whether I get around to doing those things, depends upon how fast I process the other, more important, outstanding tasks on my list.

For starters, I need to get to grips with my new role as Borough Dean for Bury. So far, so good. I have had some very productive meetings with folk from the Town Hall, made some good contacts and have joined a couple of committees; the Strategic Interfaith Group and the Holocaust Memorial Event Steering Group (HMESG).

Both groups do what they say on the tin. The first is a meeting of leaders from the different faiths represented in the Borough. The second is tasked with organising the Borough's annual Holocaust Memorial event (held in January). I look forward to serving on both committees.

The last time I attended the Holocaust event, I found it to be very poignant, a reminder of the sin of Racism and the evil that can arise from the hatred of others who are unlike ourselves.

Then there is the additional work associated with my new role as Revd Debra's Training Incumbent. A lot of people seem to think that, when a newly-minted Curate arrives, the Vicar's workload decreases. In fact, the opposite is true. Not that I would have it any other way. As a parish, we are truly fortunate to have Revd Elaine and Revd Debra exercising their ministries here.

By the way, Debra is still training. Yes, Debra has been ordained as a Deacon, but her training continues for another three years. So, there will still be times when Debra is unavailable because she is obliged to give priority to her training commitments and, somehow, find time for her family. However, I am sure we will all give her all the support she needs.

What else is on my To Do list?

Well, we need to refresh our Mission Action Plan (MAP). In July 2013, the PCC agreed a series of initiatives for serving the local community in additional ways and growing our church. This has been partially implemented (Coffee and Conversation is just the latest example). After four years, our MAP is becoming dated and needs an upgrade. This will mean a lot of prayer and a lot of work, but I know what God has in store for us will be well worth the effort!

Then, finally, we need to move towards forming a Mission Partnership with the Radcliffe parishes. This has been on the cards for a few years, since the failed attempt to form a team ministry in this area. The reality is, in the Church of England today, especially with the decline in the number of stipendiary priests, it is not possible for parishes like ours to operate in splendid isolation. We need to engage in mission jointly with others and forming a Mission Partnership is one way of doing this. I won't elaborate as I am running out of space, perhaps another time. Nonetheless, I am sure I will be in discussion about this with other local clergy in the very near future.

Hmm, come to think of it, I don't think the pace for me will slacken in August after all! Not to worry, as far as I am concerned, being a Vicar is the best job going!

Every Blessing

Dave