

The Rector's Pint – August 2025

For many, August is the month when much-anticipated holidays are taken.

I have already had mine, at the end of June and the beginning of July. The second week was spent in our house in Gloucestershire but for the first week we rented a cottage near Penzance. Whilst there I was in communication with a friend, and commented to him about the sense of peace I was experiencing. The reply I had back was a heartfelt cry of despair about the world and how nothing made sense. This was my response. (He is not a Christian, although he is not un-sympathetic, but writing this felt like a bit of a risk!)

“Well, I agree with the diagnosis, can we though find healing? I do believe that in the face of chaos and mayhem, we can find and know peace. It is peace in the knowledge that there is ultimate hope and meaning. It is peace in incarnation, death and resurrection, the defeat of darkness and the presence of hope. Despite my foolishness (there remains plenty of that) it continues to seek me out, find me, often rebuke me, but always to restore me. It is the hound of heaven. It is ‘the Peace of God that passeth all understanding’ (from the Book of Common Prayer). It is so easy to catch the spiritual malaise that results from what you have described here. I know it in myself, (the danger of vicar-ing is simply going through the motions) but when I purposefully seek it out, yes, there is true peace and clarity. The key is desire and spiritual thirst and to recognise it for the poverty it is. Then we encounter a renaissance moment, that there is reason, and truth, there is goodness and there is love. It defies the madness and stupidity that we as a race succumb to. It is a ‘holy discontent’ with the world. It rises up and shouts out against the control and coercion. It defies the complacency and indifference of the age. It cannot be beaten. You can’t keep Christ, God as man, down. He is the source and bringer of peace. He will defy the lie, defeat the cynicism, and restore the hope.

We have to be willing partners in this as it can only be by God’s grace that we find the way. God though is a “gentle” man, he does not tarry where he is not welcome. He is, at the same time the greatest power and strength we could ever hope for or know. but I believe true peace is there. ‘Seek and you shall find.’”

While away, of course I heard the very sad news about Tony Jefferis. It was very complicated to get Tony home but he was repatriated to the JR in Oxford. Sadly, this was a brief pause before Tony’s final journey. He died peacefully surrounded by his family on 24th July. Tony will be greatly missed, he was a supportive colleague and a friend to me and his ministry and service around the Benefice was hugely valued.

Simon